



The Holy Spirit, Part 2

By

Mark McGee

Chapters

The Holy Spirit in Acts 4

Acts 1 - 2 5

Acts 3 - 4 54

This Bible study was first presented more than 20 years ago and is reproduced here in its original form.

The Holy Spirit in Acts

Acts 1 - 2

The Importance of Acts

The Book of Acts is essential to our understanding of what happened between the Gospel accounts and the letters Paul, Peter, James, Jude and John wrote to individual and groups of Christ's followers.

“Perhaps the best way to see at a glance the value and significance of this book of the New Testament, would be to imagine the New Testament without the Acts of the Apostles. What a gulf would then be opened between the Gospels and the Epistles! ... What discrepancies, what oppositions would be found between the earlier books and the later!” Dean Howson, Hulsean Lectures, 1862, P. 221

“Suppose again the Epistles were there, but the Acts of the Apostles left out, how startling would appear the heading ‘To the Romans,’ which would confront us on turning from the study of the Evangelists! How could we account for the transition involved? How could we explain the great thesis of the Epistles, that there is no difference between Jew and Gentile ... ? The earlier Scriptures will be searched in vain for teaching such as this. Not the Old Testament merely but even the Gospels themselves are seemingly separated from the Epistles by a gulf. To bridge over that gulf is the Divine purpose for which the Acts of the Apostles has been given to the Church. The earlier portion of the book is the completion of and sequel to the Gospels; its concluding narrative is

introductory to the great revelation of Christianity.” Sir Robert Anderson,
The Silence of God, Pp. 54-55

We shall now see just how important Acts is to understanding the Church of
the 21st Century!

Christ Promises The Spirit Will Come

Acts has been called “The Acts of the Apostles,” “The Acts of the Holy Spirit,” and “The Acts of the Church”. There is truth in each title. The Holy Spirit acted upon the lives of the Apostles and they acted upon the lives of the people of Israel. The Spirit saved Paul and used him to impact the world. But the first “Act” was that of Jesus Christ.

“Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” Acts 1:4-5

This harkens back to the early days of Christ’s earthly ministry. John the Baptist told the crowds that followed him: “After me will come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” John the Baptist was the promised prophet who ran ahead of Christ announcing His Coming to Israel.

This is just one of many things Christ reminded and taught His Apostles between His resurrection and ascension. Jesus spent 40 days instructing Peter, James, John and His other apostles about what had happened to Him and what was going to happen to them. The agonizing events of the previous days began to make sense to the disciples. Luke explained it well to Theophilus.

“In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.” Acts 1:1-3

Luke gives us much insight into what Jesus did for the last 40 days He spent on earth. He was busy doing and teaching. He gave the apostles “many convincing proofs” that He was alive. I can imagine what a shock Christ’s death was to the apostles. It must have almost torn the hearts out of their chests with grief and terror. The last chapters of the Gospel accounts of Luke and John include some of the proofs Jesus gave the Apostles. Jesus spoke with them, prayed with them, walked with them, sat with them, cooked for them, ate with them, showed them the wounds in his hands, feet and side, let them touch him, gave them a miraculous catch of fish, walked through walls and vanished from sight, performed many other miracles in their presence, and answered their many questions. Jesus “spoke about the kingdom of God.” Christ explained that He was the Promised Messiah of Israel. He told them how the Old Testament prophets wrote hundreds of years earlier, in great detail, about His Death and Resurrection. Jesus showed them how all the events that unfolded before their eyes were part of God’s Plan to raise up Israel to Kingdom status in the world. Jesus did so much in those 40 days that the Apostle John wrote: “If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.” (John 21:25)

Christ gave instructions to the Apostles “through the Holy Spirit” during those 40 days. How could that be since the Apostles weren’t baptized with the Spirit until days “after” Jesus returned to Heaven? The disciples received the Spirit’s Power and Authority in two steps. The first happened the same day Jesus rose from the grave.

“Again Jesus said, ‘Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.’ And with that he breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.’” John 20:21-23

Jesus “breathed” on the 11 Apostles and they received the HOly Spirit. With that came the power and authority to forgive and not forgive people’s sins. Can you imagine such power on earth? This was not the first time Jesus had taught His Apostles about how the Holy Spirit would work through them. Jesus had given the Apostles authority to drive out evil spirits and heal every disease and sickness in the early days of their ministry with Him.

“These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: ‘Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel ... Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues. On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but

the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.” Matthew 10:5-6, 17-20

Jesus gave the Apostles a foretaste of what they would experience with the Spirit.

“On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.’ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.”
John 7:37-39

The Apostles had not received the Holy Spirit by the time of the Feast of the Tabernacles. They would receive Him after Christ had been “glorified.” Jesus prayed to His Father about glorifying Him just before He went to the Cross.

“Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you ... And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.” John 17:1, 5

Christ’s glorification began with His obedience to Death on the Cross and continued through His Resurrection and Ascension. John gives us more insight into the timing of Christ’s Glorification. These words followed Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

“At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him. “ John 12:16

The Apostles’ understanding about the things that happened to Jesus came during the 40 days that Christ taught them prior to His Ascension to Heaven.

Jesus pointed to His Death as the hour of His glorification.

“Jesus replied, ‘The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life ... Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour?’ No, it was for this very reason that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!’ Then a voice came from heaven, ‘I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.’” John 12:23-28

“Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once.” John 13:31-32

Jesus had been glorified when He spoke with the Apostles the night following His resurrection. The Apostles “received” the Holy Spirit after Christ “breathed” on them. This was the event Christ prophesied when he said, “Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.’ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive.” The Apostles were the first to receive the Holy Spirit in the Kingdom Dispensation.

Jesus “breathed” on them. The Greek for “breathed” is *enephusesen*. It means “to breathe into.” The word is made up of *en* (in, into, on—with the primary idea of rest) and *phusao* (blow in or on, breathe on). *Phusao* comes from *phuo* (to germinate, to grow or spring up, produce). The idea of this amazing event is of someone placing something inside another as the beginning of something that will grow and produce more of the same. That’s what Jesus meant when He said: “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” The Holy Spirit was that stream of living water that began inside the Apostles and then flowed out to meet the needs of a thirsty world.

Jesus “breathed” the Holy Spirit into the Apostles. The Holy Spirit resided fully in the Person of Christ. Jesus was “full” of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit had been upon Jesus from His Holy Conception inside the Virgin Mary. Jesus was “full of the Holy Spirit” when the Spirit led Him into the desert to face Satan’s temptations. Jesus breathed on the Apostles and they “received” the Holy Spirit. God’s Spirit took residence inside them. The Holy Spirit had come “upon” God’s people in the past for special service to God,

but now the Spirit was going to live inside God's people forever. Jesus had promised this to the Apostles earlier.

“If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth.” John 14:15-17

Christ's breathing the Holy Spirit into the Apostles in John 20:22 is the realization of His promise to them in John 14:16. The Spirit would live in them forever. He would always be with them to counsel, teach, empower, and encourage.

“But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you ... I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.” John 16:5-7, 12-15

John does not record any response from the Apostles to receiving the Holy Spirit from Christ. The Apostles continued to question Christ and have fears about the future. Receiving the Holy Spirit on the night of Resurrection seems to have been a quiet beginning to the powerful ministry the Apostles would have several weeks later.

Christ Ascends to Heaven

The day finally came; the day when Jesus would return to Heaven to remain there until the time came for His return to Israel to set up His earthly Kingdom. The Bible gives us different views of the same event.

“After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.” Mark 16:19-20

“When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.” Luke 24:50-53

“So when they met together, they asked him, ‘Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel? He said to them: ‘It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.’ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ‘Men of Galilee,’ they said, ‘why do you stand here looking into the sky? This

same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.” Acts 1:6-11

The disciples of Christ had just witnessed one of the most remarkable events to ever take place on earth. They had heard the resurrected Messiah of Israel tell them they would receive supernatural power from the Holy Spirit of God. They heard Him say they would be witnesses for Him throughout Israel and across the world. They had witnessed Christ taken from earth to Heaven. Angels told them Christ would return to earth in the same way He had left it.

The Twelfth Apostle

The disciples returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. They met together in an upstairs room in town. They prayed and shared about what was going to happen. Peter the Apostle was spokesman for the group. Christ had given him that special role following His resurrection.

“In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) and said, ‘Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus—he was one of our number and shared in this ministry ... Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from John’s baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of the resurrection.’ Acts 1:15-16, 21-22

The Holy Spirit had prophesied through King David centuries earlier that one of Messiah’s followers would sell him to His enemies. Peter knew from Christ’s teachings that 12 Apostles were necessary to bring in the Kingdom of God on earth; one for each of the 12 tribes. They had 11 and needed one more to take Judas’ place. Peter and the other Apostles “all joined together constantly in prayer.” They bathed their situation in prayer. They did not act hastily. They looked to the Holy Spirit for guidance in their next steps. They chose two men, Justus and Matthias, who qualified to be Apostles. They cast lots and the lot fell to Matthias; “so he was added to

the eleven apostles.” (Acts 1:26) That action completed all events necessary for the Apostles to be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

(We might consider why Peter didn't suggest the name of Paul to become one of the 12 Apostles after Christ's Ascension. Jesus designed the Kingdom Dispensation to have 12 Apostles; no more, no less. 12 was the Spiritual number. Why wasn't Paul named as the 12th Apostle? Why did the Spirit of God lead the 11 Apostles to choose Matthias as the 12th? Why not Paul? Did Peter make a mistake? Did he not understand the leading of the Holy Spirit? Or was Paul never intended to be a member of the 12 Apostles of Christ? Did God have something else in mind for Paul? Could it be that Paul was to be an Apostle of another Dispensation?)

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” Acts 2:1-4

Pentecost was the second of the great Jewish national festivals. Jews observed it on the 50th day from the Paschal Feast. It was seven weeks after the 16th day of Nisan.. The Old Testament called Pentecost “the feast of weeks” and “the feast of harvest.” Moses set exact standards in the Law of obedience to Pentecost. Every male in Israel was to appear before the Lord at the sanctuary on Pentecost. All labor stopped. The people of Israel came before God to give Him thanks for His provision to them. It was designed as a harvest celebration. It was to be a day of great joy. Israelites were to present two loaves of leavened, salted bread to God. The Law specified the size and make-up of each loaf. The people were to give God a free-will offering. Levites, strangers, orphans and widows were to receive liberal gifts from the children of God.

(Pentecost is a transliteration of the the Greek word *pentekostos*. It comes from *pente* (“five”) and means “a fiftieth part).

This was a perfect day for Christ to baptize His Apostles and other disciples with the Holy Spirit. Every male of Israel was assembled in Jerusalem at the sanctuary. What a built-in audience! The Law brought them together for the purpose of rejoicing about what God had done for them. They were in the right place at the right time for what God was going to do for them. It would be unlike any Pentecost in Israel's history. Nothing could be greater than Christ sending His Spirit to prepare Israel to receive her Messiah King. "They were all together in one place." The Apostles were on a mission for God. Jesus told them to "wait for the gift my Father promised." Christ told them they would be "baptized with the Holy Spirit" in a few days. Peter and the Apostles were doing just what Christ had told them to do. They were waiting. Christ spent 40 days with the Apostles, then ascended into Heaven. The Apostles and other disciples of Christ waited another ten days. They prayed and waited. The feast day of Pentecost arrived and the Apostles waited.

"Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting." The disciples had waited and prayed for ten days. They were together in one place. They knew something special was about to happen. "Suddenly." The word is *aphno*. It means "suddenly, unexpectedly, unforeseeably." The disciples knew something was going to happen, but they didn't expect or foresee the coming of the Holy Spirit in this manner. The Apostles had already received the Holy Spirit when Jesus "breathed" the Spirit into them. They had not experienced anything so strong as what happened on Pentecost.

What came into the room with the 12 Apostles and 108 disciples (total of 120) was “a sound like the blowing of a violent wind.” The King James Version called it “a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind.” “Sound” is echos . We get the English word “echo” from it. The writer to Hebrews used the word for a “trumpet blast.” (Hebrews 12:19) Luke used the word for the “roaring” sound of the sea. Luke 21:25)

The “sound” came into the room of waiting disciples suddenly “like the blowing of a violent wind” from heaven. “Violent wind came” (“rushing mighty wind” KJV) is *pheromenes pnoes biaias*. It means a strong, forceful, mighty blast of breath. It was not a gentle breeze that entered ever so softly into the disciples’ room. It was a great, powerful, violent, roaring blast of God’s Spirit into the presence of Christ’s Apostles and disciples! It came straight from the Throne of Heaven to the little upper room in Jerusalem. It was driven (*pheromenes* – present passive participle) with great force and echoed around that room and through the ears and minds of each member of that tiny group of God’s chosen people. The Spirit of God had come in all His Strength to give the Power of God to these 120 special Israelites so that they might accomplish the Will of God in Israel. The Kingdom of Almighty God was upon them!

This powerful sound “filled the whole house where they were sitting.” “Filled” is *eplerosen*. It means “to fill to the full.” The Spirit of God was everywhere. He “filled” the whole house with His Presence and Power. The “sound” was of His entrance from Heaven into the little building where the Apostles waited.

Close your eyes for a minute and “see” the Apostles and disciples sitting together in that room. See them react as the Holy Spirit entered the room with the “sound like the blowing of a violent wind.” Have you ever heard an extremely loud sound? It’s startling, unnerving. It captures all the senses and puts all other thoughts and concerns aside. The only thing you can consider is the sound. What it is? From where did it come? Imagine what the Apostles must have felt as this amazing event unfolded.

“They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.” First, the Apostles and disciples heard a great “sound” like a violent wind. Second, they saw what seemed to be “tongues of fire” that separated and came to rest on each Apostle and disciple. The Greek is *glossai osei puros* (“tongues as of fire”). The word *osei* means “resembling.” These were tongues that resembled fire; not actual fire. The word *glossai* is used in the New Testament for an organ of the body (of taste and speech), something shaped like a tongue, metaphorically for speech or language, of a particular language of people, and an unknown language. The disciples hear, then see. The audible is followed by the visible.

These “tongues” that resembled fire “separated.” The word is *diamerzomenai*. It’s the present middle participle of *diamerizo* (to cleave asunder, to cut in pieces). The picture here is of a fire-like appearance that the disciples see first as a single body in the room, then it separates so that a portion of it rests on each person in the room. God sent His Holy Spirit to empower the whole and the one at the same time. The Holy Spirit came

upon the group and each person to give them His Gifts and Strength for the mission at hand — the proclamation of the Kingdom.

“All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit.” Everyone in the room was filled with the Holy Spirit. It wasn’t just the Apostles. Every disciple of Christ was filled with God’s Spirit. Nothing is said about one person getting more or less of the Spirit than another. “All” of them were filled with the Holy Spirit. “Filled” is *eplesthesan*. It’s the aorist passive (meaning that someone else filled them) of *pimplemi*. It was not the doing of the disciples. They did not consider whether or not they wanted to receive the Holy Spirit. They didn’t discuss it. The Spirit came upon them with great volume and “filled” them with Himself.

What happened next is not surprising. Jesus told His disciples that certain signs (*semeia*) would accompany those who believed Christ: “In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.” Christ said that just before He ascended into Heaven. “They will speak in new tongues” is *glossais lalesousin kainais*. The word for “tongues” is the same from Acts 2:3 (tongues resembling fire). The word “new” (*kainais*) means “that which is unaccustomed or unused, new as to form or quality, of different nature from what is contrasted as old, not before known, newly introduced.”

The Holy Spirit gave each of the disciples a new ability: to speak in “other tongues”. The Greek is *heterais glossais*. The word “other” (*heterais*) means “different in character, altered, changed.” The “tongues” the disciples spoke were different than anything spoken before.

The disciples began to speak in other tongues “as the Spirit enabled them.” “Enabled” is *edidou* (imperfect of *didomi*). It means as the Spirit gave them the ability. The disciples did not speak in other tongues as they willed, but as the Spirit of God enabled them. The disciples did not “work up” this ability. God gave it to them without them asking, hoping or wishing for it. The Spirit of God filled them and each disciple began speaking in different tongues.

What They Heard

“Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. Utterly amazed, they asked: ‘Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!’” Acts 2:5-11

Thousands of Jews from every country in the world were in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost. They came from hundreds of miles away to be part of the great Jewish festival. Jews from around the world spoke Hebrew. That was part of their religious training. But they also spoke the native language of the country where they were born and raised. They spoke in Hebrew during religious services and training. They spoke their native language (Egyptian, Greek, etc) in their every day communication. Jews were a bi-lingual people. They would not have been surprised if Christ’s disciples were speaking in Hebrew. The surprise came when Galileans spoke in their native languages.

The surprise came from a belief that “Galileans” were not educated people. Many Galileans were peasant farmers and fishermen. Josephus (himself a Galilean) estimated the population at three million at the time of Christ. The Galileans believed deeply in the promise of the Messiah and were staunch followers of Jesus in his early ministry on earth. 11 or the 12 apostles were Galileans. Jesus grew up as a Galilean in the city of Nazareth. Some examples of the way people thought of Galileans are found in John 1:46 and John 7:52.

“Philip found Nathanael and told him, ‘We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.’ ‘Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?’ Nathaniel asked.”

“Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus earlier and who was one of their own number, asked, ‘Does our law condemn anyone without first hearing him to find out what he is doing?’ They replied, ‘Are you from Galilee, too? Look into it, and you will find that a prophet does not come out of Galilee.’”

The Jews on Pentecost heard a “sound.” The word is *phones*. It can mean a “sound, voice, note, noise, roar, or outcry.” The literal reads, “when this sound happened.” They heard the “sound like the blowing of a violent wind” and the disciples speaking in the native language of each Jew. The multitude came together “in bewilderment” (*sunechuthe*). It means “to pour together, commingle, to trouble or confuse, to stir up, confound.” (The Latin word *confundo* comes from *sunechuthe*.)

The events that surrounded the disciples on Pentecost stirred up the thousands of Jews around them. They had never heard such a thing before and came together in a great crowd. (That's exactly what God had planned to happen.) They were "utterly amazed." That's *existanto de kai ethaumazon*. *existanto* means "to stand out from, be amazed, surprised, astonished, to be beside oneself with wide-open astonishment." *ethaumazon* means "marvelled, wondered." It speaks of a continuing wonderment. The Jews were amazed by what they saw and heard and tried to comprehend what was happening before their eyes and ears.

Their spoken reaction to this was a question: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans?" It's like someone saying, "This can't be happening!" The Jews immediately recognized the disciples as mostly Galileans. That was probably because of their clothes and ornaments. The second part of their question was: "Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language?" The crowd shouted out the names of the different nations, then said: "we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues?" The crowd knew that the Galileans would not have the training to speak in all of the languages assembled in Jerusalem that day. Each one spoke in Hebrew but they were hearing the Galileans speaking clearly in their own native language. This was a miracle! It was not something the Galileans had planned to do. It wasn't a mass hysteria. It was a miracle. Every person in the crowd heard the disciples declaring the wonders of God in their own tongue.

Luke does not explain whether the disciples spoke in one “miracle” tongue that became a native language to each listener as they heard it or if each disciple spoke in a different earthly tongue so that every listener would hear a disciple speaking in their language. That would have been the potential of 120 languages. What we do know is that everyone in the crowd of thousands gathered around the disciples heard their native tongue and were utterly amazed by it. They had never witnessed such a sight. It was more than their minds could comprehend.

The crowd heard the disciples “declaring the wonders of God.” That’s *ta megaleia tou theou*. It means the “great deeds, the mighty, wonderful, magnificent works” of God. Luke doesn’t explain what great deeds of God the disciples spoke, but they may have been about God’s Great Plan of sending Jesus to earth as the Messiah of Israel. What ever it was, the Jews understood the message as “declaring the wonders of God.”

The Jews were “amazed and perplexed” and asked each other, “What does this mean?” “Amazed and perplexed” is *existanto de pantes kai dieporounto*. We’ve already seen the definition of *existanto*. *Dieporounto*, “perplexed”, means “to be at a loss,” It is a compound verb from *dia* (“through”) and *aporeo* (“to be without a way out”). The idea is of someone who goes “through” every possible way of what it might be, but finds no way out. The Jews came up with no explanation about what they were seeing and hearing. They were “perplexed.”

There are always a few in a crowd who do little thinking. They just make fun of anything they don't understand. "Some, however, made fun of them and said, 'They have had too much wine.'" This is not a bright, thoughtful view of the event unfolding before them. Everyone heard the Galileans supernaturally speak in the native language of every Jew in the crowd, yet some thought it was the words of drunks. Drunks do not speak in languages they have never learned. The speech of drunks is slurred and unsure. Even so, some of the crowd made fun of the disciples.

Peter and the Crowd

Luke writes that “all” of the disciples “were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” That includes the Apostle Peter. He had experienced many things in his life but probably nothing quite like this. God had given him the ability to speak in languages he had never learned. Peter had felt the Power of God’s Spirit flow through his body. He had heard the roaring noise of the coming of God’s Spirit and had heard languages pouring forth from his mouth and the mouths of all the other disciples. He had watched as thousands of Jews surrounded the disciples. He saw their astonishment. He heard their questions and the attempted answers. God gave Peter “the” answer to what was happening.

“Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: ‘Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ ‘Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by

God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. David said about him: 'I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.' Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him an oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, 'The Lord said to my Lord; 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.' 'Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.' When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?' Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus

Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.’ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, ‘Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.’ Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.” Acts 2:14-41

Peter stood up and spoke to the crowd because he had the authority to do so. Jesus had made Peter the leader and spokesperson of the Messianic disciples. (John 21:15-19; Acts 1:15) God used Peter to preach the great Pentecostal message. But notice that Peter “stood up with the Eleven.” All of the Kingdom Apostles stood in front of the crowd. That was as it should be. The 12 Apostles stood before the 12 tribes of Israel and pronounced the Kingdom Message. The Kingdom message included 12 thrones. Each of the 12 apostles would sit on one of the thrones and would together judge the 12 tribes of Israel. The “Eleven” Apostles were in harmony and support of what Peter preached. They had no division about what was happening. Jesus prepared them for this day. The Spirit of God filled them with cooperation and commitment to what God planned so many years before. Peter preached what has to be one of the greatest sermons of all times. It is short, to the point and full of Scriptural support. Pastors and teachers: look at how Peter constructs his message. It’s insightful for all of us.

1. He first identified himself as being one of them and understanding their needs: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem.”
2. He promised to meet their immediate need to understand what was happening: “let me explain this to you.”
3. He pointed out how important his information was to them: “listen carefully to what I say.”
4. He quickly dealt with the misinformation running through the crowd: “These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning!”
5. He directed their consideration to the proper source to explain what was happening, God’s Word: “No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:”
6. He went to the heart of the explanation by quoting the Words of God, rather than depending on his own words: “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”
7. He quickly drew the crowd’s attention from Old Testament Prophecy to current events to show them the prophecy was coming true before their eyes: “Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and

signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him."

8. He pulled in more Scriptural evidence for the crowd to consider: "David said about him: 'I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.'"
9. He presented the logic of what had happened in light of David's prophecy: "Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him an oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, 'The Lord said to my Lord; 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.' 'Therefore let all Israel be

assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

10. He summarized the message powerfully and drove it home to the crowd in a way that would bring a strong reaction from them: “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”
11. He was prepared for their questions and gave them the only answer possible: “When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’ Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.’”
12. He cared deeply for the people and gave all of himself to meet their needs: “With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, ‘Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.’”
13. He and the other Apostles were obedient to Christ’s commands and did what was necessary to bring the new believers into the congregation of Kingdom Disciples: “Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.”

The Message

Peter quoted from three important sections of Old Testament prophecy in his brief message: Joel 2:28-32; Psalm 16:8-11; and Psalm 110:1.

Joel 2:28-32

Joel began his prophecy with a declaration of devastation (Joel 1:1-12). He called on Israel to repent (Joel 1:13-2:27). He promised a national restoration for Israel that would follow their repentance (Joel 2:18-3:21). The devastation Israel experienced was terrible. It destroyed the land and ruined people's lives and hope for a future.

The repentance Joel called Israel to was awesome. He first told the spiritual leaders of Israel to "Put on sackcloth, O priests, and mourn; wail, you who minister before the altar. Come, spend the night in sackcloth, you who minister before my God; for the grain offerings and drink offerings are withheld from the house of your God." That's where Israel's repentance had to begin, with the priests. People follow leaders. Leaders lead and people follow. That's how it works. Spiritual leaders must be the first to see the need for repentance and repent. It must begin in private, but quickly become public: "Declare a holy fast; call a sacred assembly. Summon the elders and all who live in the land to the house of the Lord your God, and cry out to the Lord." What Joel is calling for is a spiritual "house cleaning." Joel did not have in mind a couple of days of revival meetings with some singing, preaching and praying. What Joel wanted was for the pastors, elders, deacons, trustees, teachers, parents and children to

fast, weep and mourn publicly before God: “Even now,’ declares the Lord, ‘return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.’ Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God.” Joel gives the leaders and followers of Israel good reason to repent: “for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity. Who knows? He may turn and have pity and leave behind a blessing—grain offerings and drink offerings for the Lord your God.”

Joel didn’t suggest that Israel think about it for awhile. He didn’t recommend they line up a committee to look at the various aspects of what repentance might mean to the people. He didn’t look for ways to make repentance easy for people. Joel told Israel to do it God’s way and do it immediately! “Blow the trumpet in Zion, declare a holy fast, call a sacred assembly. Gather the people, consecrate the assembly; bring together the elders, gather the children, those nursing at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room and the bride her chamber. Let the priests, who minister before the Lord, weep between the temple porch and the altar. Let them say, ‘Spare your people, O Lord. Do not make your inheritance an object of scorn, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’”

That was the intensity of Joel’s original message hundreds of years before the Day of Pentecost. That intensity came from the Spirit of God Who was alive in Joel’s prophetic words. The same Spirit brought that same intensity into the heart and mind of Peter on the Day he addressed thousands in Jerusalem.

Peter quoted from the restoration section of Joel. God told Israel that He would be “jealous” for His land and would take “pity” on His people. God promised Israel that He would drive the “northern army” far from them. He told the people He would renew their spiritual and earthly blessings. “And it shall be in the last days,” speaks of the time when God will judge the nations and bless Israel. “In those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. There I will enter into judgment against them concerning my inheritance, my people Israel.” (Joel 3:1-2)

In the last days, God would “pour out” His Spirit on all people. Peter told the crowd that “this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel.” What the Jews witnessed on the Day of Pentecost was the promised coming of the Holy Spirit to cleanse and bless Israel. It was a time “before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.” What would come from this outpouring? “Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.”

God’s Spirit had always been involved in inspiring prophets to speak and write the Words of God (2 Peter 1:20-21). Joel spoke of a time when the Holy Spirit would inspire Israel’s “sons and daughters” and their “servants, both men and women,” to prophesy, “young men” to see visions, and “old men” to dream dreams. It was a very special time for which Israel waited.

The Jews listening to Peter would not have missed the importance or ramifications of his claim. They knew about God’s promise to deliver Israel

from its bondage. They knew about the promised Messiah. What they didn't know was that the Man they had delivered to the Romans for torture and crucifixion weeks earlier was God's Son, the Messiah.

“Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. David said about him: ‘I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.’ Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him an oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, ‘The Lord said to my Lord; ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool

for your feet.’ ‘Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.’”

“Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.” Jesus, the Man crucified and buried, had risen from the grave and ascended to the Right Hand of Almighty God, where He received the promised Holy Spirit and poured out what the Jews saw and heard on the Day of Pentecost.

This was quite a wake-up call for many. They were “cut to the heart” and wanted to know what they should do. The Greek is *katenugesan*. It means “stung, sharp pain.” Peter’s words hit them hard. It was not an easy message for them to hear. They wanted to know what in the world they could do. “Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” “Repent” is *metanoesate*. It means to “change your mind and life.” “And be baptized” is *kai baptistheto ekastos humon*. The literal translation is, “and let be baptized each of you.” Dr. A.T. Robertson wrote, “ Peter promised the crowd that they, too, would receive the “gift of the Holy Spirit” if they repented and were baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins. Repentance is first, followed by baptism in Christ’s Name. Those who obeyed would receive forgiveness of their sins and the “gift” of the Holy Spirit.

The Gift of the Holy Spirit

“Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” Acts 2:38

Peter promised the crowd a “gift” if they repented and were baptized. The act of repentance and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ was for the forgiveness of their sins. The Jews were familiar with some of this since it was part of their heritage to repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of their sins. Many had experienced John’s baptism. The cleansing steps involved in the holy sacrifices in the Law of Moses were also familiar to the Jews. What was different was repentance and baptism “in the name of Jesus Christ.” That was new to the Jews. Some would see it as blasphemous since only God could forgive sins and they didn’t accept Christ as God. Others would be familiar with the claim since Jesus had often spoken about his authority to forgive the sins of the Jews (Matthew 9:1-7; Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26).

Why did the Jews have to repent? Had some been bad parents? Had some stolen from their employers? Had they lied and cheated? Had they committed adultery? They may have done those things, but that’s not why. Peter made it clear that the Jews must repent because they were guilty of murdering the Lord and Messiah of Israel.

“Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross ... Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.’ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’ Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.’”

The terrible sin for which the Jews must repent was the sin of murder. They had killed God’s Son, the Messiah of Israel. No wonder many were “cut to the heart.” No wonder they asked, “Brothers, what shall we do?” They were in big trouble. They had done the worst thing a Jew could possibly do. They had murdered the Messiah. The way Peter answered their question was paramount to the setting up of absolute standards for acceptance into the Kingdom and the return of Messiah Jesus to Israel to set up His Kingdom and Rule from Jerusalem.

It was important for the Jews listening to Peter to clearly understand his message that day. He told them that forgiveness of sins would come from their act of repentance and baptism “in the name of Jesus Christ.” Repentance and baptism in any other name was not acceptable. The Jews had to repent and undergo baptism in the name of Jesus Christ. We see two verses later that the people did understand the message.

“With many other words he [Peter] warned them [the crowd of Jews]; and he pleaded with them, ‘Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.’ Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.” Acts 2:40-41

All of Peter’s sermon comes to the conclusion that if a Jew repented and was baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, they would receive the forgiveness of their sins. “About three thousand” repented and were baptized that day. They did what Peter said and God forgave their sins.

Is that the message Christians should preach today? Some do. Some people follow Peter’s gospel and preach that a person must repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins. That’s biblical. It’s just what Peter preached standing before the crowd on the Day of Pentecost. Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit. God filled him with His Truth. Peter’s message was accurate and indisputable. So, why don’t all Christians preach repentance and baptism for the forgiveness of sins? How can anyone preach otherwise when Peter’s words are so clear?

The problem is the Apostle Paul. Paul preached a different message. It has caused great confusion in the Church through the centuries. People read Peter’s message and Paul’s message and come away trying to make the two work together somehow. The problem is they don’t work together. They are different messages. That’s what Acts 15 and Galatians 2 address. If Peter and Paul preached the same message, the apostles and elders in Jerusalem would have had nothing to discuss. The reason for the “sharp

dispute and debate” was that Paul and Barnabas preached a message to Jews and Gentiles outside of Israel that was different than the one Peter, James and John preached inside Israel. It was only after Peter opened the door of understanding and Paul and Barnabas explained the Gospel of the Grace of God to the Jewish apostles and elders that the Kingdom Jews accepted the difference between Peter’s Gospel and Paul’s messages. (Acts 15:6-21 & Galatians 2:7-10)

Peter promised the crowd of Jews on Pentecost Day more than forgiveness of their sins. He promised them they would receive “the gift of the Holy Spirit” when they repented and were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins. “Gift” is *dorean*. It means “a free gift, without cost.” What was this free gift? Peter said, “of the Holy Spirit.” The Greek reads, *ten dorean tou hagiou pneumatos*. The word for “Spirit” is the genitive of identification. That means the “gift” Peter promised was the Spirit. It’s like promising a child the “gift” of candy. The gift is the candy. The gift Peter promised was the Holy Spirit.

The three thousand who responded favorably to Peter's message on the Day of Pentecost did three things and received three things.

1. They "accepted" Peter's message.
 2. They "repented."
 3. They "were baptized...in the name of Jesus Christ."
-
1. They received "forgiveness" of their sins.
 2. They received the "gift of the Holy Spirit."
 3. They "were added" to the number of Kingdom disciples.

Acts does not indicate whether the three thousand new believers spoke in tongues following their repentance and baptism. It does tell us that:

- "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."
- They were "filled with awe."
- The apostles performed "many wonders and miraculous signs."
- "All the believers were together and had everything in common."
- They sold "their possessions and goods" and "gave to anyone as he had need."
- "Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts."
- "They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people."
- "The Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."

Is this what the vast majority of Christians do today? Do apostles perform wonders and miracles? Are Christians filled with awe? Do Christians sell their possessions, give to everyone as they have need? Do they meet daily in the temple courts? No, we don't do that. Most Christians also don't obey Christ's commandments. Few do what Jesus told His disciples to do:

“All authority is heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you ... Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.” Matthew 28:18-20 & Mark 16:15-18

These are only two of scores of commands Jesus gave His disciples and we already have problems. Christians aren't even obeying these two verses; less all the other things Christ taught. Read the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. It's a pretty clear picture.

Jesus sent out the twelve apostles to minister His Word and said, “Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. As you go, preach this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven is near.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. Do not take along any gold or silver or copper in your belts: take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff; for the worker is worth his keep.” (Matthew 10:5-10) Okay. How much of that do we see in Christian work today? How many pastors, missionaries and evangelists minister each day without taking any money with them? How many go on a trip and don’t take luggage or extra clothing or shoes Few, if any. Why not? Jesus said it. He told His apostles to teach their disciples “to obey everything I have commanded you.” Why don’t we obey what Christ told His apostles?

The problem, once again, is Paul. He taught Christians not to do many of the things Jesus told His disciples to do. Many Christians today try to obey Paul and Peter. They try to do what Jesus told His disciples and what Jesus told Paul to teach us. That’s unnecessary when we understand the difference between the Kingdom Dispensation and the Grace Dispensation. Jesus revealed a gospel to Peter and Peter was firm in preaching it to Israel. Jesus revealed another gospel to Paul and Paul was firm in preaching it to Gentiles and Jews. One Lord, two Gospels, two Dispensations.

The “gift of the Holy Spirit” is the Holy Spirit Himself. That’s Who Jesus gave His apostles on the night following His resurrection. “Again Jesus said, ‘Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.’ And with that he breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’” (John 20:21-22) Peter promised the crowd of Jews on the Day of Pentecost that they too would receive the Holy Spirit when they repented and were baptized.

We see that repeated in Acts 8, but with more insight into the process. We learn how people received the Holy Spirit.

“When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then, Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money and said, ‘Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.’ Peter answered: ‘May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money!’” Acts 8:14-20

Let's get a little background on this. First, read Acts 8:1-25. Who are the Samaritans? Why would Philip go to the Samaritans? Christ told His disciples to go "only to the Jews." Were Samaritans Jews? How did Samaritans come to be baptized in Jesus name?

Samaritans had once been part of the original 12 tribes of Israel. Their tribes followed the likes of Moses, Joshua, Saul, David and Solomon for hundreds of years. Solomon turned to other gods in his later years because of his lust for women.

"The Lord became angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel ... So the Lord said to Solomon, 'Since this is your attitude and you have not kept my covenant and my decrees, which I commanded you, I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your subordinates. Nevertheless, for the sake of David your father, I will tear it out of the hand of your son. Yet I will not tear the whole kingdom from him, but will give him one tribe for the sake of David my servant for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen.'" 1 Kings 11:9-13

That's exactly what happened a short time later. God chose Jeroboam. He was one of Solomon's officials.

"About that time Jeroboam was going out of Jerusalem, and Ahijah the prophet of Shiloh met him on the way, wearing a new cloak. The two of them were alone out in the country, and Ahijah took hold of the

new cloak he was wearing and tore it into twelve pieces. Then he said to Jeroboam, 'Take ten pieces for yourself, for this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'See, I am going to tear the kingdom out of Solomon's hand and give you ten tribes ... But I will not take the whole kingdom out of Solomon's hands ... I will take the kingdom from his son's hands and give you ten tribes. I will give one tribe to his son so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I chose to put my Name. However, as for you, I will take you, and you will rule over all that your heart desires; you will be king over Israel ... I will humble David's descendants because of this, but not forever.'" 1 Kings 11:26-39

Israel rebelled against King Rehoboam shortly after Solomon's death. All the tribes made Jeroboam king, except for the tribe of Judah. "Only the tribe of Judah remained loyal to the house of David." Rehoboam arrived in Jerusalem and "mustered the whole house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin ... to make war against the house of Israel and to regain the kingdom for Rehoboam son of Solomon." However, God told the tribes of Judah and Benjamin not to fight against their brothers, the Israelites. They did as they were told and did not fight. (1 Kings 12:20-24)

The history of the ten tribes of Israel is not pretty. It is full of wickedness. The ten tribes renounced Jerusalem and the temple and made Samaria their capital city. They built a rival temple on Mt. Gerizim. We gain a rich insight into the differences between Jews and Samaritans in John 4:4-42. Christ gave His disciples the example of caring for the Samaritans. Many

believed in Him as the Messiah (“we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.”).

Samaritans represented the ten tribes of Israel. They believed the Law of Moses and worshipped the true God. They also believed in the coming of the promised Messiah. The Jews of Jerusalem looked down on the Samaritans, but the Samaritans were still part of God’s plan. Philip was not out of line or disobedient in preaching Christ to the Samaritans. In fact, it was part of God’s plan to rejoin all the 12 tribes of Israel under the Kingship of Messiah Jesus. It was necessary that Christ be preached to ten of those tribes whose home was in Samaria.

Acts speaks about two Philips. One was an Apostle. He is named in the Gospels and in the list of Apostles in Acts 1:13. The other was one of the men the Twelve Apostles chose to serve the needs of the Grecian Jews. He had special authority from the Apostles to serve the needs of the disciples. He also had special powers Christ had promised to all His disciples: the powers Jesus told the Apostles about in Mark 16. Philip left Jerusalem after Stephen’s death and the beginning of the great persecution against the Kingdom disciples. We know it was not Philip the Apostle because Acts 8:1 reads, “and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria.” Philip went to a city in Samaria and preached Christ. Philip cast out demons and healed paralytics and cripples. The people were amazed by the great signs and miracles they saw. Many Samaritans believed Philip’s preaching about Christ and the Kingdom. Philip baptized many men and women into the name of the Lord Jesus, but the Samaritan disciples did not receive the Holy Spirit. Why? Philip did not

have the authority to give the “gift” of the Holy Spirit. Only the twelve apostles could do that. That’s why they sent Peter and John to Samaria to meet with Philip and the Samaritan disciples. The apostles arrived in the town and prayed “that they might receive the Holy Spirit.” Peter and John could see that the Samaritans had accepted the preaching of Philip, had repented and been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. The one thing remaining was to receive the “gift” and that was the Holy Spirit.

Simon of Samaria was a renowned sorcerer (Acts 8:9). He had amazed the people of Samaria with his magic for a long time (Acts 8:11). He heard Philip’s preaching about Christ, believed and was baptized (Acts 8:13). He followed Philip everywhere, “astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw.” Peter and John arrived in Samaria and immediately prayed for them “that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them.” (Acts 8:15)

“When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money and said, ‘Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.’” Acts 8:18-19

Simon loved power, glory and personal attention. He wanted to do this great thing that Peter and John did. He wanted to be able to “give” the Holy Spirit to new believers. Peter was angry that Simon would try to “buy the gift of God.” That “gift” was the Holy Spirit.

It was obvious to Simon that the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit when Peter and John placed their hands on the Samaritans. “When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles’ hands...” Luke does not record what Simon “saw,” but something happened that made it obvious. It may have been speaking in other tongues or some other sign gift.

It’s important we understand early in our study of the Holy Spirit in Acts that the “gift” of the Spirit is the Holy Spirit Himself. Many have believed, incorrectly, that the gift of the Spirit is something the Spirit does in or through a person. What the Spirit did for a disciple was simply part of what happened when that person “received” the Holy Spirit. The “gift of the Holy Spirit” is the Spirit.

Acts 3 - 4

[The Holy Spirit is not mentioned by name in Acts 3. However, His presence is seen in Peter who ministered the Gospel of the Kingdom in the power of the Spirit. Peter healed a crippled beggar in the power of the Spirit. Peter preached the Kingdom of Christ in the power of the Spirit. Peter called on Israel to repent in the power of the Spirit.]

Acts 4 opens with the priests, Sadducees and the captain of the temple guard seizing Peter and John and throwing them into prison.

“The next day the rulers, elders and teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and the other men of the high priest’s family. They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: ‘By what power or what name did you do this?’ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: ‘Rulers and elders of the people! If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel; It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. He is ‘the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone.’ Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.’ When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they

were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say.” Acts 4:5-14

Peter’s message is strong and straight: Israel’s rulers killed Jesus, but God raised Him from the dead, and salvation is found only in Christ. Peter is “filled with the Holy Spirit.” He is telling Israel exactly what the Spirit is guiding him to say and the message is the death, resurrection and salvation of Jesus Christ. The Kingdom Gospel is not fancy. It’s not complicated. It’s a message Israel should have understood, but didn’t want to understand.

The rulers of Israel saw three things in Peter and John.

1. Courage
2. Unschooled, ordinary men
3. Been with Jesus

Peter and John spoke boldly to the rulers of Israel. This was certainly a change from several weeks earlier when Peter denied Christ. John had accompanied Jesus during His interrogation before Annas and his son-in-law Caiaphas. Peter was so afraid he denied three times he was with Christ. (John 18:15-27). Things were different after the Holy Spirit “filled” Peter. Peter was a new man. He stood tall and strong in the face of the very men who had handed Jesus over to be crucified. Peter did not mince words. He accused Annas, Caiaphas and other men of the high priest’s

family of murdering the Son of God. Peter told them the former cripple stood before them healed because of Jesus. Peter said that the “stone” the rulers had rejected had become the “capstone.” Peter preached that “salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” Peter was bold and showed great courage. Peter and John had not attended a special “courage” school to learn courage. The Holy Spirit gave them courage. The Holy Spirit gave them backbone to stand up to the enemies of God. The rulers of Israel saw it.

This was not a surprise to the Apostles. Christ had prophesied it months earlier.

“But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.”

Matthew 10:19-20

The rulers also noted that Peter and John were unschooled, ordinary men. They did not attend the University of Jerusalem. It’s doubtful they went very far in the Israeli school system. There was nothing special about the career paths they’d chosen. They weren’t doctors, lawyers or educators. They were blue collar people. Peter and John were fishermen; an honest occupation but not one that needed special schooling. Christians often forget that fact. We see Peter, James, John and other disciples as super human. We read about the power of their words and see their ability to work miracles, but forget they were just ordinary people. We forget that

what was “super” about them was the super-natural God Who lived in them. Two things made the disciples extraordinary: they had been with Jesus and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. That’s no different than our experience. We have been with Jesus and the Holy Spirit lives within us. If we are obedient to God’s Word, we too can be filled with the Holy Spirit. Peter and John were great examples of what God can do with anyone who knows Christ, is filled with the Holy Spirit and is willing to be used for God’s service. God is working differently with His children in this Age of Grace, but the principle is the same. God will use “spirit-filled” believers in a powerful and meaningful way.

The rulers of Israel “were astonished” by what they saw and heard and “took note that these men had been with Jesus.” “Astonished” is *ethaumazon*. It means “to gaze in wonder, to marvel, to be amazed.” The high priest and others gazed in wonder at what they were seeing. Here were two unschooled, ordinary men who were speaking to them with great power and authority. Peter and John exhibited tremendous courage in the face of a very difficult situation. It wasn’t that long ago that Annas and Caiaphas had seen John stand quietly beside Jesus during their interrogation of Him. They knew Peter and John had been with Jesus and they marveled at it.

Annas and Caiaphas also had to deal with the proof of Peter’s message. “And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it.” Jews believed healing was Divine. How could the high priest say anything against what Peter and John had done. The healed man, a man all knew had been a cripple from birth, was evidence of

the Divine Power behind Peter and John. The combination of the healing and Peter's clear message should have brought Annas and Caiaphas to their knees in repentance for their sin of killing God's Son, but it didn't. Look at what happened next.

“So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. ‘What are we going to do with these men?’ they asked. ‘Everybody living in Jerusalem knows they have done an outstanding miracle, and we cannot deny it. But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn these men to speak no longer to anyone in this name.’” Acts 4:15-17

Amazing! Annas, Caiaphas and other rulers of Israel knew that what Peter and John had done was an “outstanding miracle.” They couldn't deny it. They would have if they could, but they couldn't. They couldn't deny that Peter and John had worked a miracle, something no one else in Israel could do, but the rulers of Israel wanted it stopped. They didn't want to hear what Peter and John had to say, even though God was in their message. They didn't want the Apostles to bring in the Kingdom of Heaven. Why? Because Annas, Caiaphas the others hated God's Son. Jesus had preached the truth about them and they couldn't stand hearing the truth. They didn't want the kind of Kingdom Jesus and His Apostles would have brought to Israel.

Jesus made it clear to His disciples that the teachings of Israel's leaders were dangerous.

“When they went across the lake, the disciples forgot to take bread. ‘Be careful,’ Jesus said to them, ‘Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees’ ... ‘be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.’ Then they understood that he was not telling them to guard against the yeast in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” Matthew 16:5-6, 11-12

Jesus also warned the crowds that gathered around Him about the leaders of Israel. Remember that representatives of Israel's rulers were always in the crowd, looking for an opportunity to catch Jesus breaking the Law. Jesus knew that. He looked them straight in the eye as He pronounced their woes.

“Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, ‘The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. They tie up heavy loads and put them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them. Everything they do is done for men to see. They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them ‘Rabbi.’ But you are not to be called

'Rabbi,' for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth 'father,' for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor are you to be called 'teacher,' for you have one Teacher, the Christ. The greatest among you will be your servant. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted. 'Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to. Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are. Woe to you, blind guides! You say, 'If anyone swears by the temple, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.' You blind fools! Which is greater; the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred? you also say, 'If anyone swears by the altar, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gift on it, he is bound by his oath.' You blind men! Which is greater; the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred? Therefore, he who swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. And he who swears by the temple swears by it and by the one who dwells in it. And he who swears by heaven swears by God's throne and by the one who sits on it. Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel. Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees,

you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean. Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men's bones and everything unclean. In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness. Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous. And you say, 'If we had lived in the days of our forefathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' So you testify against yourselves that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of the sin of your forefathers. You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? Therefore I am sending you prophets and wise men and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town. And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. I tell you the truth, all this will come upon this generation." Matthew 23:1-36

[It's interesting to note that the Army of Rome destroyed Jerusalem during the generation to which Jesus preached. Everything Jesus prophesied would happen to Israel and His own disciples happened during the 35 years following His death and resurrection. That's within the time of the same generation. History is another evidence of the truth of God's Word.]

Everything Jesus did bothered the rulers of Israel, especially the healings. Why? Because they couldn't do it and they were jealous of Jesus, who could. Healings grabbed the attention and admiration of the people. Attention and admiration were things Annas and Caiaphas wanted. They loved for people to "ooh and aah" as they went by. They loved to get attention and honor when they gave small amounts of money to the poor and prayed and fasted. They wanted everyone to know how important and "religious" they were. They also didn't like the healings and miracles because it verified that Jesus was the Promised Messiah. The rulers of Israel didn't want Jesus as their Messiah. They didn't like His theology. They didn't like His methods. They didn't like His attitude. Jesus didn't fit into their plans. He wouldn't do things the way they wanted to do them. Jesus would have messed up everything for them if He became King. Jesus knew their hypocrisy and warned people about it.

"So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full." Matthew 6:2

“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.”

Matthew 6:5

“When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.” Matthew 6:16

Healing was a primary ministry of Jesus Christ while He was on earth. It was a proof of His Power and Authority from Heaven. It was evidence that He was the long-promised Messiah and King of Israel. However, the rulers of Israel did not want to admit that Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus had said things about the rulers that were harsh and painful; true, but painful. Jesus would have stripped the rulers of their position and power they knew it. They had to find a way to destroy Jesus. They attacked Him at every turn.

“Going from that place, he went into their synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, they asked him, ‘Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?’ He said to them, ‘If any of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not take hold of it and lift it out? How much more valuable is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.’ Then he said to the man, ‘Stretch out your hand.’ So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other. But the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus.” Matthew 12:11-14

The rulers were always trying to embarrass Jesus in front of the crowds. Jesus always used it as an opportunity to teach the Gospel of the Kingdom and point out the sins of the rulers.

“Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, ‘Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you.’ He answered, ‘A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here. The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, and now one greater than Solomon is here. When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, ‘I will return to the house I left.’ When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first. That is how it will be with this wicked generation.” Matthew 12:38-45

“The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from heaven. He replied, ‘When evening comes, you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,’ and

in the morning, 'Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. A wicked and adulterous generation looks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah." Matthew 16:1-4

Jesus also forgave sins; something He certainly had the authority and power to do. That drove the rulers of Israel crazy. They sent representatives to follow Christ so they could catch Him breaking the Law and then prove a case against Him.

"Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, 'Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven. At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, 'This fellow is blaspheming!' Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, 'why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins....' Then he said to the paralytic, 'Get up, take your mat and go home.' And the man got up and went home. when the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to men." Matthew 9:1-8

The leaders of Israel also didn't like the kinds of people to whom Jesus ministered.

“While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and 'sinners' came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and 'sinners.' On hearing this, Jesus said, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” Matthew 9:10-13

Jesus later spoke about the Pharisees' comments.

“The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and 'sinners.' But wisdom is proved right by her actions.” Matthew 11:19

The Pharisees were critical of everything Jesus and His disciples did. They were always trying to find fault with Christ. Their problem was that Jesus knew the Law so much better than they did. The Pharisees presented themselves to the people of Israel as experts on the Law, but they really knew nothing.

“At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, 'Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath.' He answered,

‘Haven’t you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He entered the house of God, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread—which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests. Or haven’t you read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple desecrate the day and yet are innocent? I tell you that one greater than the temple is here. If you had known what these words mean, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice’, you would not have condemned the innocent. For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.” Matthew 12:1-8

“Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, ‘Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don’t wash their hands before they eat!’ Jesus replied, ‘and why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? For God said, ‘Honor your father and mother’ and ‘Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.’ But you say that if a man says to his father or mother, ‘Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is a gift devoted to God,’ he is not to ‘honor his father’ with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition. You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: ‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.’ Jesus called the crowd to him and said, ‘Listen and understand. What goes into a man’s mouth does not make him ‘unclean,’ but what comes out of his mouth, that is what makes him ‘unclean.’ Then the disciples came to him and asked, ‘Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?’

He replied, ‘Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots. Leave them; they are blind guides. If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into the pit.’” Matthew 15:1-14

The rulers of Israel cooked up a plot to arrest Jesus and accuse Him falsely. They enticed Judas, one of Christ’s own disciples, to betray Jesus for 30 silver coins.

“With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people.” Matthew 26:47

Peter tried to defend Christ at first, but Jesus told him to put away his sword.

“Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?” Matthew 26:53

What did the other disciples do when Jesus was arrested?

“Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.” Matthew 26:56

“Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the teachers of the law and the elders had assembled. But Peter followed him at a distance, right up to the courtyard of the high

priest. He entered and sat down with the guards to see the outcome.”
Matthew 26:57-58

“The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death. But they did not find any, though many false witnesses came forward.”
Matthew 26:59-60

Jesus did nothing except tell the truth to His interrogators. Caiaphas finally had enough and knew how to get Jesus. He asked Jesus if He was the Messiah, the Son of God. Caiaphas knew how Jesus would answer.

“Yes, it is as you say,’ Jesus replied. ‘But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.’” Matthew 26:64

“Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, ‘He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?’ ‘He is worthy of death,’ they answered. Then they spit in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him and said, ‘Prophecy to us, Christ. Who hit you?’” Matthew 26:65-67

Jesus did not blaspheme and Caiaphas knew it. I personally believe Caiaphas knew Jesus was God’s Messiah, but didn’t want the One God had sent. Jesus was not the kind of Messiah Caiaphas wanted to rule Israel. Caiaphas loved to rule. He loved the position, the privilege, the honor, the

wealth. He didn't want to give it up to someone like Jesus. Jesus was too good. Jesus cared about people and taught the Law the way God meant for it to be taught. Jesus hated the hypocrisy of Caiaphas. Caiaphas knew that if Jesus lived any longer the people would declare Him their Messiah and King. Caiaphas did what his ancestors had done before him. He killed God's Holy Prophet.

Caiaphas is the same man Peter and John were dealing with in Acts 4. Caiaphas thought he was done with the Messiah when he had Jesus crucified, but things were even worse. Jesus had risen from the dead and poured out His Holy Spirit on His disciples. Caiaphas was having to deal with many courageous men and women. He and the other leaders of Israel thought they might be able to intimidate Peter and John into silence. How wrong they were!

“Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, ‘Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God’s sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.’ After further threats they let them go. They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened. For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old.” Acts 4:21-22

Peter and John went back to the disciples and told them everything that had happened to them. They prayed and remembered the Work of the Holy Spirit. It is a reminder to all of us about the Ministry of God's Spirit.

“Soverign Lord,’ they said, ‘you made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the the mouth of your servant, our father David. ‘Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One.’ Indeed Herod and Pontitus Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.’ After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.” Acts 4:27-31

Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by **Biblica, Inc.®** Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Copyright © 1990-2018 GraceLife Ministries