

The Holy Spirit ***The Promise Fulfilled***

Lesson #5 for April 29, 2006

Scriptures: Ex. 23:16; Mark 16:17; John 4:35; 14:16-26; 16:7-13; Acts 1:4,5,14; 2:1-7, 22-35.

1. Ten distinct resurrection appearances of Christ prior to His ascension can be documented in Scripture (cf. also 1 Cor. 15:4). The order of those appearances follows: (1) to Mary Magdalene near the tomb (John 20:11–18; Mark 16:9); (2) to the women returning from the tomb (28:9,10); (3) to Peter (Luke 24:34; 1 Cor. 15:5); (4) to the disciples walking to Emmaus in the evening (Luke 24:13–32); (5) in the upper room to all the disciples except Thomas, who was absent (Luke 24:36–43); [then on later occasions] (6) to the disciples, including Thomas, on Sunday night one week later (John 20:26–31); (7) to seven disciples beside the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1–25); (8) to more than 500 people possibly on an appointed mountain in Galilee (Matthew 28:16–20; possibly parallels 1 Cor. 15:6); (9) to James the half brother of Jesus (1 Cor. 15:7); and (10) to the apostles at the ascension (Acts 1:3–11). (compare Matthew 28:1) and ***after his ascension*** (11) to Paul (in vision?). (1 Corinthians 15:8)
2. **Why didn't Jesus make a grand entrance into the Temple in all His glory so the whole of Jerusalem (and thus the world) would know that He was risen?**
3. Try to imagine yourself traveling with a large group of friends neighbors and associates from Galilee walking down to the Jordan; crossing the Jordan; walking down the full length of Perea on the eastern side of the Jordan; crossing again at Jericho and up to Jerusalem in preparation for the Pentecost seven weeks after the resurrection of Jesus. Did the disciples all travel together? What questions were people asking the disciples? What was going through their minds? Had the disciples stayed together during this period of about 50 days or had they each returned to his own home? What did the disciples do in preparation for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit? Did they have any idea what was coming?
4. **Pentecost is the time of year when the most foreign visitors came to Jerusalem. Do you think this is why God chose it?**
5. What was the purpose of the Pentecost as a Jewish festival? It came 50 days after the Passover and the Feast of the Unleavened Bread. It was known as the Feast of the First Fruits. "In this feast, the children of Israel would present a wave offering of the wheat harvest to the Lord, expressing their thankfulness for His material benefits to them (Leviticus 23:15-21)." (*Adult Teacher's SS Bible Study Guide*, Tuesday, April 25, 2006)
6. The Jewish leaders had also concluded that there was a period of 50 days from the establishment of the children of Israel as a nation when they left Egypt until the giving of the law at Sinai. **Thus the Pentecost came to be regarded as a memorial of the giving of the law and the events at Sinai.** God had commissioned them to be the messengers to carry the gospel to a world lost in sin. Was the condition of the world any better after Jesus' resurrection than it had been at Sinai?
7. **What aspects of the Pentecost experience do you have questions about?**
8. Do you think the disciples had any clear understanding of what was coming? Jesus had promised to send the Holy Spirit—Another Comforter. (John 14:16; 16:7) Were they specifically praying for this coming?
9. **The big question: what were the conditions that made it right for the Holy Spirit to be**

sent? Jesus had said ⁴ “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift I told you about, the gift my Father promised. ⁵John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 1:4,5).

10. Acts 1:3 says: **“For 40 days after his death he appeared to them many times in ways that proved beyond doubt that he was alive.”** How many specific incidents do we have recorded in Scripture? How many other appearances do you think occurred? What do you think Jesus said to them during these visits?
11. **Our lesson study guide suggests that the disciples were ready to receive the Holy Spirit because of their faith. What do you think this implies? Did they trust Jesus more now than before? Did they receive a special gift of faith?** (Ephesians 2:8). Do we lack faith today? Is there anything we can do to help our faith grow? Where does faith come from? How do you fit together Ephesians 2:8 and Romans 10:17? **If God gives us the faith, does He give everybody an equal amount? If not, why not?**
12. How does God give faith? What happened to the faith of the disciples during those 40 days?
13. Is it possible that we do not see clearly because we have a veil over our faces? Read 2 Corinthians 3:15-18. How is the Spirit operating in this passage? This is the key passage referred to by Ellen White when she says that “by beholding we are to become changed into God’s image”. How do you think this happens? Colossians 3:1,2 suggests that if we fix our minds on the things of God and focus on our relationship to Him we will be changed. Is this the right way to grow faith?
14. **Our lesson suggests that if we have enough of the right kind of faith it will lead to strict obedience to God’s law. This in turn will lead to unity in the Church. What is the relationship between faith and obedience?** We have songs that say “trust and obey”? Would it be correct also to say “have faith and obey”? What is implied by these words?
15. It seems clear that God had in mind a whole new level of involvement in ministry beginning at Pentecost. Clearly there were many people in Jerusalem still seriously thinking about what had happened at Passover. **The manifestation of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost seemed to convince thousands that they should become followers of Jesus. Were they convinced because of the miracle or because of the evidence preached by Peter and the others? Or were they already pretty much convinced by previous evidence?**
16. What do you think happened to the disciples in those 10 days they waited from the ascension until the Pentecost? We have two passages in Scripture which say they spent time together and they eliminated all their differences. They even shared meals together. Did they stay together in the Upper Room? Could we do something like this today? What form would it take? “they were ‘continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.’ Luke 24:53.” What did the people think when they saw and heard the disciples in the Temple?
17. What are the major differences or dissensions among Seventh-day Adventists today? Are there differences even within your church? Within your Sabbath school?
18. We know that the disciples, right up until the Last Supper, were arguing about who among them should be greatest! (Mark 9:33,34; Luke 22:24) Do we had any discussions of this sort going on in our church today?
19. What does it mean to say “the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul”? (Acts 4:32)

“The disciples began to realize the nature and extent of their work. They were to proclaim to the world the wonderful truths which Christ had entrusted to them. The events of His life,

His death and resurrection, the prophecies that pointed to these events, the sacredness of the law of God, the mysteries of the plan of salvation, the power of Jesus for the remission of sins,—to all these things they were witnesses, and they were to make them known to the world. They were to proclaim the gospel of peace and salvation through repentance and the power of the Saviour... {DA 805.1}

“The Holy Spirit was not yet fully manifested; for Christ had not yet been glorified. The more abundant impartation of the Spirit did not take place till after Christ's ascension. Not until this was received could the disciples fulfill the commission to preach the gospel to the world. But the Spirit was now given for a special purpose. Before the disciples could fulfill their official duties in connection with the church, Christ breathed His Spirit upon them. He was committing to them a most sacred trust, and He desired to impress them with the fact that without the Holy Spirit this work could not be accomplished.” {DA 805.2}

“As the disciples waited for the fulfillment of the promise, they humbled their hearts in true repentance and confessed their unbelief. As they called to remembrance the words that Christ had spoken to them before His death they understood more fully their meaning. **Truths which had passed from their memory were again brought to their minds, and these they repeated to one another. They reproached themselves for their misapprehension of the Saviour. Like a procession, scene after scene of His wonderful life passed before them.** As they meditated upon His pure, holy life they felt that no toil would be too hard, no sacrifice too great, if only they could bear witness in their lives to the loveliness of Christ's character. Oh, if they could but have the past three years to live over, they thought, how differently they would act! If they could only see the Master again, how earnestly they would strive to show Him how deeply they loved Him, and how sincerely they sorrowed for having ever grieved Him by a word or an act of unbelief! But they were comforted by the thought that they were forgiven. And they determined that, so far as possible, they would atone for their unbelief by bravely confessing Him before the world. [37] {AA 36.1}

“The disciples prayed with intense earnestness for a fitness to meet men and in their daily intercourse to speak words that would lead sinners to Christ. **Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship. They drew nearer and nearer to God, and as they did this they realized what a privilege had been theirs in being permitted to associate so closely with Christ. Sadness filled their hearts as they thought of how many times they had grieved Him by their slowness of comprehension, their failure to understand the lessons that, for their good, He was trying to teach them.** {AA 37.1}

“These days of preparation were days of deep heart searching. The disciples felt their spiritual need and cried to the Lord for the holy unction that was to fit them for the work of soul saving. **They did not ask for a blessing for themselves merely. They were weighted with the burden of the salvation of souls. They realized that the gospel was to be carried to the world, and they claimed the power that Christ had promised.**” {AA 37.2}

20. Did this “coming together in one accord” last for a long period of time? Or was this just a temporary thing? Did the disciples move from Galilee to the Jerusalem area? They seemed to be in Jerusalem whenever there was a meeting or any kind of a gathering.
21. Throughout the book of Acts we see that the Holy Spirit was poured out on a number of different groups at different times. Does this mean that there was no dissension of any kind among those who were spreading the gospel? What about Galatians 2? Acts 15:1,2; 36-41?
22. Could we receive a similar gift? After discussing the Pentecost experience, Ellen White said:

“God is willing to give us a similar blessing, when we seek for it as earnestly. The Lord did not lock the reservoir of heaven after pouring his Spirit upon the early disciples. **We, also, may receive of the fullness of his blessing. Heaven is full of the treasures of his grace, and those who come to God in faith may claim all that he has promised. If we do not have his power it is because of our spiritual lethargy, our indifference, our indolence. Let us come out of this formality and deadness.**” {RH, June 4, 1889 par. 6,7; 3BC 1152.3,4; 6BC 1055.3,4; AG 193.4; YRP 23.2}

23. Where do you think the disciples were gathered when the Holy Spirit was poured out? (Acts 2:1,2).
24. There are hints in a number of places that the Holy Spirit could be poured out even among our friends and we not know it. How could this happen? In some parts of the world the Holy Spirit seems be working with extraordinary effectiveness at the present time. Look for example at the current remarkable growth of the church in India. Should we as North-American Seventh-day Adventists wait until we see the Holy Spirit being poured out in our area before we get ready to do something significant? **Could we be somehow involved in this latter rain? Do we have any individual responsibility in getting the church ready for the second coming?** (2 Peter 3:12).
25. Look at Peter’s sermon as summarized in Acts 2. What was the main focus? Was he trying to explain why Jesus had come to this earth and died? Should that be the focus of our mission and our message today? **What are we as a Seventh-day Adventist Church saying to the world about the mission of Jesus?**
26. Why do you think Peter talks about David? What was the relationship between this passage from David and the life and death of Jesus? Look at Teachers Study Guide (Page 59-61): **“Peter’s Pentecostal sermon is a full-blown scriptural exposition of the purpose and power of Calvary, and the triumphant reality of Christ’s resurrection. This brings forcibly to our notice that the key to a new Pentecost is immersion in the study and the absorption of the practical benefits of Christ’s atoning sacrifice.”** What do you think this means?
27. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has now exceeded 13 million members. Is God waiting for all 13,000,000 Seventh-day Adventists to be of one accord in one place as were the disciples? Clearly this will never happen! So what is God waiting for in our day?
28. What was the “gift of tongues” that the disciples received at Pentecost?

“The Holy Spirit did for them that which [40] they could not have accomplished for themselves in a lifetime. **They could now proclaim the truths of the gospel abroad, speaking with accuracy the languages of those for whom they were laboring.** This miraculous gift was a strong evidence to the world that their commission bore the signet of Heaven. **From this time forth the language of the disciples was pure, simple, and accurate, whether they spoke in their native tongue or in a foreign language.**” {AA 39.2}

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