19- 25 May 2024 The Holy Spirit poured out for all

Acts 2: 1-21

**2**When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. **2**Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. **3**They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. **4**All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3A+1-21&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26954a)] as the Spirit enabled them.

**5**Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. **6**When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. **7**Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans? **8**Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? **9**Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3A+1-21&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26959b)] **10**Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome **11**(both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” **12**Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”

**13**Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

### Peter Addresses the Crowd

**14**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. **15**These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! **16**No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

**17**“‘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.
**18**Even on my servants, both men and women,
    I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
    and they will prophesy.
**19**I will show wonders in the heavens above
    and signs on the earth below,
    blood and fire and billows of smoke.
**20**The sun will be turned to darkness
    and the moon to blood
    before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.
**21**And everyone who calls
    on the name of the Lord will be saved.’[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3A+1-21&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26971c)]

**Bible notes**

The outpouring of God’s Spirit promised by Jesus (Acts 1:5,8) in fulfilment of prophecy from Joel (2:28-32, quoted in Acts 2:17-21) to John the Baptist (Luke 3:16), takes place at Pentecost. By Jesus’ time Pentecost celebrated the Mosaic covenant and the giving of the law on Sinai (Mishnah Megillah 2:3). Hearing their cry, the Lord came down to deliver the people from Egypt and to give them the law at Mount Sinai, but warned them to keep their distance and not to ascend the mountain when it was wrapped in smoke, signifying the divine presence. At Pentecost, the Lord comes down again to deliver Jesus’ disciples from their failure and fear, but this time the wind of God’s presence fills them, and the fire is among them and upon them, as the Spirit writes the law on their hearts. God had promised, ‘I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God and they shall be my people…for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest’ (Jeremiah 31:31-34). Similarly, Peter here describes what is happening with the words of Joel, affirming that the Spirit is being poured out on ‘all flesh’, female and male, young and old, slave and free. Pillars of cloud and fire led the people of Israel through the wilderness towards the Promised Land, but now the wind and fire of the Spirit empowers Jesus’ apostles to witness to his resurrection, ‘…when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea… and to the ends of the earth’ (1:8).

**Reflection**

Spend a few moments thinking about what stands out for you from the Bible reading. This idea may help.

On our Christian journey we meet all kinds of people, people with different ways of expressing the Christian faith. This can cause us to be anxious and perplexed, especially if we are convinced we are always correct! We can sometimes retreat into our comfort zones and let this prevent us from extending a welcome to others. The disciples had to look ahead and contemplate where an opening of their minds and hearts might take them. What challenges are our church or community facing? Can we widen our tent to include others?

Questions for reflection

*You may wish to use these questions and the picture to help you think about or discuss issues arising from this week’s Bible passage.*

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**Questions**

* What does the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost mean to you? How does it impact your life?
* In what ways does your church building accommodate those with access needs?
* In what ways does your church community welcome all people? What could it do better?

## Prayer

Adapt to your local context.

**A prayer of thanksgiving**

‘I will sing to the Lord all of my life.
I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.’ (Psalm 104:33)
We praise you, Lord, that your Holy Spirit is poured out for everyone.
We claim your power now for ourselves, and each other.
Exchange the ‘power’ with each other:
the power of the Holy Spirit be with you.
**And also with you.**

## **A prayer to end the Bible study**

Loving God,
we have gathered in your name,
and have offered our praise.
We have made our prayers to you,
and have shared our hopes and dreams.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit,
To reveal your glory to the world.
**Amen.**