

Summer 1 – Week 2 – RE

Pentecost is a Greek word meaning ‘the fiftieth Day’. At this feast the Jewish people celebrate Shavuot, the Festival of Weeks. It celebrates the giving of the Torah, that is the first five books of the Bible, at Mount Sinai. In Jesus’ day it would have been a time when there were a lot of people in Jerusalem. This was the time of year when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles and Mary. This is described in Chapter 2 of the Acts of the Apostles.

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

When the day of Pentecost came, all the believers were gathered together in one place. Suddenly there was a noise from the sky which sounded like a strong wind blowing, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire which spread out and touched each person there. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other languages, as the Spirit enabled them to speak.

There were Jews living in Jerusalem, religious people who had come from every country in the world. When they heard this noise, a large crowd gathered. They were all excited, because all of them heard the believers talking in their own languages. In amazement and wonder they exclaimed, “These people who are talking like this are Galileans! How is it, then, that all of us hear them speaking in our own native languages? We are from Parthia, Media, and Elam; from Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia; from Pontus and Asia; from Phrygia and Pamphylia, from Egypt and the regions of Libya near Cyrene. Some of us are from Rome, both Jews and Gentiles converted to Judaism, and some of us are from Crete and Arabia—yet all of us hear them speaking in our own languages about the great things that God has done!”

Peter addresses the crowd

(Notice how Peter tells everyone about Jesus’ Resurrection.)

Then Peter stood up with the other apostles and in a loud voice began to speak to the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, listen to me and let me tell you what this means. This is what the prophet Joel spoke about:

‘Yes, even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will proclaim my message.’

Listen to these words, fellow Israelites! Jesus of Nazareth was a man whose divine authority was clearly proven to you by all the miracles and wonders which God performed through him. You yourselves know this, for it happened here among you.

In accordance with his own plan, God had already decided that Jesus would be handed over to be crucified. But God has raised this very Jesus from death, and we are all witnesses to this fact. All the people of Israel, then, are to know for sure that this Jesus, whom you crucified, is the one that God has made Lord and Messiah!”

When the people heard this, they were deeply troubled and said to Peter and the other apostles, “What shall we do, brothers?” Peter said to them, “Each one of you

must turn away from your sins and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins will be forgiven; and you will receive God's gift, the Holy Spirit. For God's promise was made to you and your children, and to all who are far away—all whom the Lord our God calls to himself."

Many of them believed his message and were baptised, and about three thousand people were added to the group that day. They spent their time in learning from the apostles, taking part in the fellowship, and sharing in the fellowship meals and the prayers.

Based on the Acts of the Apostles

The power of the Holy Spirit is for all Christians and all are called to share the Gospel message. The Good News of Jesus is for the whole world. The event is celebrated in Christian churches on the Feast of Pentecost.