



Study 2—Tongues of Fire

Acts 2

The story so far

Just before Jesus is taken off in the clouds to his Heavenly coronation, he tells his disciples that it's time for his Kingship to be proclaimed to ALL the nations. If the apostles are thinking about Daniel 7, they shouldn't be surprised by what happens next...

Read again from Daniel 7:13-14...

"In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; **all peoples, nations, and men of every language worshipped him.** His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

When Jesus takes up his place on the throne, it's time for people of every nation and language to worship him. That's the apostles' long term mission. But it's symbolised in a dramatic way in Acts 2.

Read what happens in **Acts 2:1-13.**

a) Describe these events in your own words

b) When modern day "pentecostal" Christians "speak in tongues," they may or may not be experiencing the same thing we see happening here. From verses 6-8, what's the important thing about the "tongues" the apostles are speaking in?

c) Make a list of the nationalities mentioned in verses 9 to 11...

When Israel was crushed by Babylon in 587BC, Jews were scattered everywhere! Their land was smashed, and little remnants of the people were sprinkled in all sorts of places.

Read what Isaiah (11:10-12)says will happen when the "Root of Jesse" (the Messiah) takes his throne...

In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; **the nations** will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious. In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to **reclaim the remnant** that is left of his people from **Assyria**, from **Lower Egypt**, from **Upper Egypt**, from **Cush**, from **Elam**, from **Babylonia**, from **Hamath** and from the **islands of the sea**. He will raise a banner for the **nations** and **gather the exiles of Israel**; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth.

SIDEISSUES TONGUES TODAY

Many Christians today are caught up in the phenomenon they call speaking in tongues. It's interesting to consider whether this is the same thing that's happening here in Acts. These dramatic events were the marker of a whole new era, and a fulfillment of prophecy. In this case, those who heard could understand what was said in their own languages. In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul has the same concern—Make sure there is an interpreter...it's better to speak a few words that can be understood than thousands of words in tongues. That's not often the way the gift of tongues is used today.

If you look at a map, these places look very much like those listed in Acts 2. The first step in the gathering of the nations around the King is the **gathering of the scattered people of Israel.**

So... What do the strange events of Acts 2:1-13 tell you about...

Jesus

the new era that's starting

Yes, here it is - the time they've all been waiting for! The new age promised by Isaiah and Daniel had dawned. Jesus, the "branch from the root of David" is on the throne, and it's time for the new Kingdom to roll out. The other prophets spoke about this too. In a moment Peter's going to tell us what Joel had to say.

DRUNK AS SKUNKS?

It's a weird thing to happen! People are shaking their heads in disbelief. Some of them only hear the babble, and decide the apostles have been too long at the pub. In those difficult conditions, it's time for Peter to preach his first-ever sermon.

Read what he says, all the way from **2:14-40**. (It might seem long, but compared to some preachers, it's all over in a flash!) As you read, note the verse references for the following points.

- * We're not drunk - it's the fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32
- * Joel says in the "last days" God will pour out his Spirit
- * Joel says there'd be signs like the sun darkened
- * Joel says all who call on the name of the Lord will be saved
- * Jesus did signs and wonders by God's power and you put him to death
- * God raised him from death
- * David said "I will live in hope, because death is not the end, and you won't let your Holy One see decay"
- * David himself died, but he foresaw the resurrection of Christ
- * Jesus has been "exalted" to God's right hand (at the throne) and has poured out the Spirit - just as David said
- * Therefore God has made Jesus both LORD and CHRIST

Verse Reference

v.14-15

How did the crowd **respond** to Peter's sermon?

What does Peter call on them to do?

What promise is made to them, and their children?

Doing Church—First Century Style

Read 2:42-47

Significantly, as people accepted the message of Jesus, repented and were baptized, they were added to the church—in other words, they met together. Make a list of the things they devoted themselves to when they met.

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a) What will be the sign that these priorities are reflected in our church?

b) What is the breaking of bread? (verse 46 may help)

c) In Ezekiel 36-24-28, the promise of the Holy Spirit is associated with a change of heart, so that people will be motivated to obey God from within. What evidence is there that these people have had a change of heart?

d) Notice who it was who performed signs and wonders. What would the effect of this have been?

e) What should our response be to the fact that the apostles performed many wonders and miraculous signs?)

As the church devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and demonstrated practical love to one another, there was an inevitable consequence—the Lord added to their number daily! Notice, this addition is the Lord’s work. His Spirit is active both within the church, and in moving outsiders towards it. God loves to grow his church!



HeadCount

Keep track of the growing size of the growing church.

In 1:15 there are ____ believers

In 2:41, there are ____ believers