



# The Outpouring and Filling of The Holy Spirit: The Litera-Narrative Perspective of Pentecost in Acts 2:1-13

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## Abstract

The outpouring and infilling of the Holy Spirit was followed by carrying out God's missionary duties in Acts 2. This event was also adopted and became a tradition by some Christians in their religious life. The problem is that adoption only emphasizes how outpouring and fulfillment occurs. The purpose of this article is to discover the meaning of the outpouring and infilling of the Holy Spirit in the Love of Apostles in Acts 2: 1-13 and its implications for the church today. The Holy Spirit came upon the apostles and the others on the Day of Pentecost. Those who heard them speaking in tongues were perplexed and asked, "What does this mean?" (Acts 2:12). The question perseveres today. Pentecost teaches us that we should strive to have the same blessed experience as the disciples. God's sanctions His church with the power of His Spirit so that He will be glorified among the nations. We need to remember that our purpose as the Lord's church is not to focus on ourselves and our own happiness. Our purpose as Christians is to spread the knowledge of God to all the nations of the earth. If we lose our external focus, with the overall purpose of God's glory, we may lose our reason for being. The result of this article is that the outpouring and fullness of the Holy Spirit is an important part in successfully carrying out God's mission. The method used in this brief study was a narrative theological analysis.

**Keywords:** Outpouring, fullness, gifts, Holy Spirit, God's mission

## Introduction

The Holy Spirit is with us, and comes to us through the Holy Word of the Lord which is divinely-inspired and builds our faith and brings us closer to the Lord. According to the Book of Acts 1, the disciples were instructed by Jesus to await the fulfillment of the Father's promise. During the time interval between His resurrection and Pentecost, the individuals in question dedicated their days to unwavering adoration (as expounded in Luke 24:53) and devout supplication. The time indicated as "1:14" can be expressed in an academic manner as "The temporal value denoted as 1:14." The narrative of Acts 2 is tripartite in structure. The chronological sequence of events depicted in Luke's account begins with an exposition of Pentecost (1-13), which is subsequently followed by a description of its associated rituals and traditions (14-41) (Brown, 2020).

One of the the most important passages in the New Testament regarding the homecoming of the Holy Spirit is found in the Pentecost event which is described in Acts 2: 1-21. Three background motifs have been proposed for the Spirit's arrival at Pentecost. These include (1) a reversal of the curse of Babel. (2) a comparison to the giving of the Law at Sinai. and (3) the original 102 meaning



of Pentecost as a first-fruits festival (Bedard, 2001). "Pentecost" is from Greek meaning "fiftieth." The name Pentecost was initially given to the Jewish Feast of Weeks which was celebrated on the fiftieth day after Passover. On this day, the first fruits of the grain harvest were presented to the Lord (Leviticus 23:15-21 and Deuteronomy 16:9-11). On the day of Pentecost, Jesus' followers were given the power to do what they needed to do (Keener, 2016). In Acts 2:1-41 the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles. This happened ten days after Jesus' Ascension to Heaven. This means that even though it's not exactly the Church being made as God's chosen people, it's a time where the Holy Spirit will have a bigger and more important job to do (Putrawan, 2019). Pentecost is thus when the Holy Spirit came and empowered the early believers, more specifically the apostles that were left such as Peter.

The Pentecost happening commences with the believers being in one place together. This likely this refers to the 120 believers who are described in Acts 1: 15. They are said to be together (οπου). This could perhaps refer to their spiritual harmony as opposed to their mere physical closeness. While together they experienced three signs including a rushing wind, tongues of fire and speaking in other tongues. The last aspect, related to *glossolalia* which is mentioned in Acts 10:46 and elsewhere. This was likely different to what is mentioned elsewhere in what are termed Spirit-inspired exclamations examples which appear to represent ecstatic speech. The Pentecost narrative undoubtedly pronounces on speaking in human languages, so that each person at this gathering coming from a range of nations heard the believers speaking in his/her own language (Bedard, 2001). When the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles, they preached the Good News of Jesus Christ. Astonishingly, then people of many different languages and nations could comprehend the Apostles in their own languages. This miracle reflected God's wish for the Gospel to be spoken to all, and for all the peoples of the earth to be unified in faith. These parts of Pentecost may be hard for God's people to understand. Some people are amazed by the amazing things that happened in Acts 2:1-13 and want to know why we don't see those kind of things now. There are many stories about magic, but the things that happened in the Holy Bible are much more amazing. Some people do strange things like making the ocean separate, walking without seeing, or wearing tiny fire statues on their heads. Some Christians and churches do this to show how they have the Holy Spirit inside them, not understanding that focusing too much on such can lead to them ultimately failing.

Pentecost is a celebration that happened long ago, and it helped people understand the story of how they got saved. Pentecost is the final thing Jesus did to save us before he returns. The Holy Spirit (*Paraclete- παράκλητος*), calls and gathers us, as it has done for millenia. The Holy Spirit brings us gifts, to use for the common good. "Now there are varieties of gifts," Paul reminds us, "but the same Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:4). Jesus told us before the Pentecost miracle that "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). The *pleroma* (the fullness of the church) is the bearer of the doctrines as it is also clearly inspired by the Holy Spirit through church councils. The Holy Spirit manifests in eucharistic feasts, and in all aspects of life and Christ's gift for humanity (Nicolaidis, 2010; 2008). The Holy Spirit bears the title of Lord with God the Father and Christ the Son. He is the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ. He is eternal, and uncreated, always divine and existing with the Father and the Son. Just like with the Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, there was no time when there was no Holy Spirit (*Paraclete*). The Spirit is before creation. He comes from God, as does Jesus, in a timeless, eternal manner "He proceeds from the Father," in perpetuity (see John 15.26) (Nicolaidis, 2010; 2008).

This is what Christ achieved when He saved us, and it helps His followers carry out the tasks that He wants His Church to do (Iorjaah, 2015: 61-76). Pentecost is an important transitional time, when Jesus Christ, who is present in the flesh, is now present, working through the power of His



Holy Spirit. This is a unique transition and should be thought of by anyone who wants to make what happened at Pentecost a normative experience for the church. Pentecost marks the transition from the atonement of the Son to the atoning of the Spirit. People began to get confused when some emphasized the phenomena that accompanied this transition. This article speaks to the signs and wonders of the events of Pentecost in Acts 2:1-13, not forgetting the great portrayal of the message from the text. So, this also shows that the primary purpose of Pentecost is to demonstrate how the outpouring on and fulfillment of the disciples is empowered by the Holy Spirit to carry out the mission of God (Keener, 2009: 47-73; Frestadius, 2020: 104-119; Nicolaides, 2010; Iorjaah, 2015: 61-76).<sup>1</sup> Bedard (2001: 112) advises us that "For Luke, the best gift that God could give his people is the Holy Spirit. In Luke 12:12. Jesus promises his followers that the Spirit will teach them what to say in the time of persecution. In both of these passages Luke is looking forward to the event that he records in Acts 2".

## Methods

Analyzing stories for their theological meaning is one part of a bigger way of studying referred to as a literary-narrative criticism. This analysis is done by authors who examine certain parts of a text and ascertain important connections between what the writer wrote and other texts, both literally and in terms of story (Baumeister & Leary, 1997: 311-320). This study explains in detail what is being said in the conversation from a religious point of view. When we use a way of looking at the Bible called "literal-narrative theological analysis" while reading Acts 2, we can notice a few different things in the writing: (a) how the sentences are formed, (b) how the different parts of the story are put together, and (c) how the story can help us think about God and religion. Crites (1971) informs us that narrative theology argues that not only is the Church's faith essentially narrative in structure, but that human understanding itself reflects a "storied" character. It thus follows that full involvement in the ecclesial community and the development of Christian identity accepts access to and knowledge of the Church's own "story" of salvation through Holy Scriptures.

This article is divided into two parts. The first part discusses what happened during Pentecost, and the second looks at how people reacted to this event.

## Discussion

### Pentecost events (1-4)

The people were told that it was the day of Pentecost at the beginning of the story as related in Acts. Pentecost is the time when we first start to see the Holy Spirit's power, but there will be even more amazement when Jesus returns. In Acts 2:41-47 in the New International Version (NIV) we read "Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."

Luke describes three things that we can see and hear. The first one sounds like a really strong gust of wind. The Hebrew word "*ruach*" and the Greek word "*pneuma*" mean the same thing: "spirit", "wind", and "breath". Like in the Old Testament: Think about the big storm that brought Moses to Mount Sinai to get the law (Exodus 19:16), or the strong wind that went by Elijah (1

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<sup>1</sup> Theologians who discussed Paul's thinking often matched Luke's use of this language with Paul, but the majority of Acts interpreters admit that the Samaritans had already repented when they "received the Spirit" in Acts 8.



Kings 19:16). At the start of creation in Genesis 1:2, we can see that the Spirit was present and moving above the water. We can see someone breathing life into old, lifeless bones. We can always see God around us, but it also seems like something new is happening. The wind means something new is being created. The strong wind made 3,000 Jews change their beliefs. The church is excited to share the amazing things God has done. It feels like the church can breathe spiritually again. Thomas is saying that something new and different is happening in the present time. It's like a whole new way of living. You can feel God's breath (Waters, 2014).

Secondly, every person who believes in something has 'flames above their head'. Moses was asked by God to do something important after talking to him through a burning bush in the Old Testament. Think of the pillar of fire that showed the way to the wandering Israelites in the Sinai after their Exodus from Egypt. Once, Moses got the *Decalogue* (Ten Commandments) from God on top of Mount Sinai, we are told that the mountain had smoke because God came down on it with fire. The most important thing is where the pillar of cloud or fire appears in relation to the holy tabernacle. Before the manifestation of Jesus, people believed that God was only present in the temple and spoke through important religious leaders who were loyal to God. In the new dispensation, at Pentecost, the tongues of fire that used to be on the tabernacle are now on everyone's heads. This symbol shows that God is there and it means that soon every believer will be in a special place where they can feel the Holy Spirit, the Comforter sent to guide us. The Holy Spirit, who the Father sent in Jesus' name, will teach us all things and will remind us of everything Jesus has told us (Nicolaidis, 2010). The Holy Spirit is considered to be the main agent of humanity's restoration to its original natural state through Communion in Jesus Christ's body.

Furthermore, fire is a symbol of judgment. John said Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. He asked Jesus where the fire was, but he couldn't find it. (Luke 7:18-23) Jesus brought a fire when he first came that represented God's punishment. He took this punishment on himself when he died on the cross. The disciples were not harmed by the fire because Jesus took the punishment for them on the cross (Waters, 2014). Now instead of bad things, it makes good things happen for them.

By contrast, those who don't have the Holy Spirit will be chastised in the future. Pentecost is when Jesus is still doing his important work. We need to remember that Pentecost is an important part of God's plan to save us, and we shouldn't forget about it when looking at the bigger picture of our redemption. Derek Thomas (2011) said that many people are criticizing those who focus only on the Holy Spirit instead of recognizing that the Spirit's main purpose is to draw attention to Jesus Christ. People thus have some wrong ideas about Pentecostalism. What happened a long time ago is not the same as what happens now in the Pentecostal religion. If tongues are supposed to be a normal thing, does that mean we should also expect to hear strong wind and fire sounds?

### **Response To Pentecost (5-13)**

On the day of Pentecost, people were suddenly able to speak in languages that were not their own. They are not speaking meaningless words, but a language that is not their own. The Old Testament has a story about the Tower of Babel which caused chaos. As a result, the table of nations was created. In the Acts of the Apostles, people from all around the world are shown, who are related to Sem, Ham, and Yafet. God could not tolerate the desire of man to usurp His role and this resulted in a confounding of tongues, but at Pentecost, people were again spiritually empowered through the Holy Spirit and tongues were no longer dividing people, but rather showed that nations were being empowered. Pentecost was thus a reversal of Babel's curse (Nicolaidis, 2011). The Holy Spirit makes people work together. Pentecost helped reverse the bad thing that happened in Babel, but only for a little while. Genesis 11: 1-9 pronounces how God dispersed



humanity because of their disobedient ways by causing them to speak languages which were not understood by each other. Acts 2: 1-11 could then possibly be seen as God assembling his people because of their obedience and permitting them to comprehend one another supernaturally (Bedard, 2001). In Babel, people tried to reach heaven by building a tall tower. On Pentecost, God's presence comes down to earth. This means that people can change and become better when they feel disconnected from others. Luke may have understood Babel to be the root of humanity's difficulties and in Genesis 11: 1-9 it records Babel as being the origin of nations (Bedard, 2001: 102).

Stott says that the Kingdom of Christ includes people from different races, nationalities, and languages (Stott, 2020). Waters believes that people were interested in the speaker who was not well-educated but spoke a language that was known by many people in the Roman world. The items that wasn't true or didn't make sense didn't grab their attention (Waters, 2014). Speaking in tongues in Acts allows for a statement of what God has done through Jesus in the native language of each listener. This makes us wonder: Does the Holy Spirit speak the same way in Pentecost and Corinth? In the Bible, the Spirit speaks to people in public in one place, and in Corinth, people speak to God. The book of Acts calls speech a language, but in Corinthians it is seen as hard to understand. In the book of Acts, people speaking in tongues show that the Spirit is with them. In Corinth, people speaking in tongues to help the community grow. It is strange that even though the words are the same in both parts, they only explain their meaning in the Acts of the Apostles. We can understand things better in Corinth if we look at what the Acts of the Apostles say.

Thomas (2011) says that Pentecost is about being able to speak in a different language, not about speaking like angels. Did God give us the ability to speak different languages to show that we have the Holy Spirit? Spiritual speech can be a sign of cheating, according to 2 Corinthians. Confession is a important act to form a community in the New Covenant. It can only be done once. By Acts 2:20, the amazing things the apostles did prove that their mission was special and from God. The special abilities that the apostles had were only meant for their time and cannot be repeated today (Thomas, 2011).

The second phenomenon is a 'tongue of fire' that comes to every believer. In the Old Testament, God spoke to Moses through a burning bush. Please provide the text that needs to be simplified. The Israelites had a big fire to guide them in the desert. Once, Moses got a book from God on a mountain called Sinai. God came down on the mountain and it had smoke and fire all around it. This was told to the people. But what's really important is how the columns of cloud and fire specifically point towards the tabernacle. Kel 40:38 could be rephrased as "a verse from the Book of Kings, chapter 40, verse 38" (Frestadius, 2020: 104-119). In the past, people believed that God was only present in the temple, and sometimes he would talk to holy people like prophets, judges, and kings. In the New Testament, everyone has the fire that used to be on the Tabernacle on their heads. This shows that God is with us and means a new time where all believers will have the Holy Spirit inside them. Additionally, fire is a symbol of punishment. John the Baptist said Jesus would give people the Holy Spirit and fire through baptism. He asked Jesus where the fire was when he couldn't see it. (Luke 7:18-23) When Jesus first came, people learned that the fire He had was God's anger. Jesus took that anger when He died on the cross. The fire didn't hurt the disciples because Jesus was taking their punishment on the cross. What used to be a bad thing for them is now actually good.

What did people think about the Pentecost miracle? Some were amazed and impressed. They may not have known a lot, but they showed respect and were impressed. Another group reacted to Pentecost by saying bad things about God and accusing the disciples of being 'drunk' (verse 13). We can say that language doesn't prove itself. People were confused and wanted Peter to





explain. The people's response showed that they believed in the miracle, and Peter explained it soon. People have things that keep their personal agendas safe. Are we okay with living in a society that doesn't believe in God and demands unfair things from us? Are we willing to share the good news of the Holy Bible with people who have done wrong and hurt others? To fulfill the mission given to us, we need to have a strong connection with God and want to spread His teachings to others. In a society where insulting others is really bad and even small hurts can cause big problems, speaking the truth is seen as really courageous. We need the Holy Spirit to guide us.

We need to get rid of anything that stops us from achieving our personal goals. We don't only choose what we want or don't want to do. Our bad choices have more control over us than our desires to do the right thing. We need to replace the love we have in the wrong place with a stronger love for the Gospel. Pentecost helps us give more importance to praising and showing God's great power and glory. We can know that the Holy Spirit is with us when we want it more than anything else. Acts 2 tells us about three things that happened at Pentecost. At first, there was a loud noise like a big gust of wind. In Hebrew and Greek, the word "ruach" or "pneuma" means "spirit", "wind", and "breath". Like the Old Testament: Some people remember the storm that Moses witnessed when he received the law from God on Mount Sinai, or the loud wind that went by Elijah. Change the number from 19 to 11. In the beginning of time, before anything was made, people saw the Spirit of God hovering over the water. People saw the air that was blown into the bones. and thirty-seven (Keener, 2016; Putrawan, 2019: 1-7).

People always notice that God is there, and there's also the feeling that something new is happening. The wind means that something new is being made. A strong wind caused 3,000 Jews to change their religion. The church is excited to share how God has done amazing things. Thomas said that something new from the end has entered the present world. We could say: "People felt God's breath" (Brown, 2009).

On Pentecost, Christ's work and teachings continued. We must not forget that the events of Pentecost are important in the history of how we were saved. This means that people who only focus on the Holy Spirit instead of Jesus Christ are being criticized. Some parts of the Pentecostal religion were not correct (Iorjaah, 2015:61-76; Keener, 2020: 47-73). Pentecostalism made the mistake of separating the Holy Spirit from what God intended him to do. The events of Pentecost were not the same as what happens in some modern-day Pentecostal groups (Holm & Tampier, 2018: 38-59). If we say that language should have rules, shouldn't we also expect the wind and fire to have rules too?

In verses 5 to 13, it talks about other languages which is the third thing. At Pentecost, speaking in the language of the spirit means being able to speak a language that is not your own. The people were speaking a different language, not nonsense. Just like the Old Testament, there's a list of nations created after people started speaking different languages at the Tower of Babel. The Acts of the Apostles tells a story about people from all over the world. They are from the families of Sem, Ham, and Yafet (Thomas, 2004: 38-59).

People noticed the uneducated man from Galilee who spoke in a way that everyone could understand. In the book of Acts, it shows that God spoke to everyone in their own language about what Jesus did. This makes us wonder: Are the languages spoken on Pentecost and in Corinth the same? In the Bible, the public heard the language of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, but in Corinth it was spoken only to God. The Bible book called Acts talks about speaking in a spiritual language, but in Corinth, people didn't understand it. In the book of Acts, speaking in tongues shows that the Holy Spirit is present. But in Corinth, speaking different languages helps people



work together (Oyetade, 2020: 477-498). The Holy Spirit makes people come together. Pentecost was like a brief undoing of the problems caused by Babel (Nicolaidis, 2011). Pentecost is when heaven comes to earth. This means a person becomes different after feeling disconnected or separated. John Stott says that the kingdom of Christ is made up of people from different races, nationalities, and languages (Stott, 2014). The writer thinks that all of this can be fixed. Both things are the same and one doesn't leave out the other. It's neat that even though they use the same language, Acts of the Apostles is the only book that explains it. It makes sense to understand things that we can't explain in Corinth by looking at the Acts of the Apostles (Diboro, 2019: 100-111; Oyetade, 2020: 477-498).

People need to get rid of things that keep others from taking care of their own needs. People cannot control what others do or not do. Sin is stronger than people's ability to resist it. A person who teaches what is right and wrong cannot stop loving the world by just focusing on its problems. We need to replace the wrong way of loving with the bigger and better love that the Gospel teaches (Noll, 1997: 762-777; Brown, 2009; Saur, 2009). On Pentecost, people were able to show how much they love and honour God even more. When people are really passionate about it, this shows that the Holy Spirit is active in their lives and in the church (Burreson, 2015). If people understand that the Holy Spirit is necessary, how will it change the church? Will they know more about the problems in the church and how to help obedient people? Will they be brave and show the truth even if others make fun of them for believing?

This event celebrates when people become a part of the church. It shows that God is present in the community and brings everyone together. One more thing to keep in mind is that the Spirit helps people to talk. The Spirit gives strength to people who feel alone, confused, and hurt to speak up like the disciples did. The Spirit gives power to people to speak up for those who are quiet and being treated unfairly. Also, the Spirit supports differences (Venad, 2011; Mather, 2021: 179-193). The Holy Spirit helps churches and individuals see that everyone is unique in their beliefs and practices, but this shouldn't create disagreements or separations. Despite different backgrounds and beliefs, the Church and its members can still work together and stay connected. People who understand God's teachings better in their own language believe that the Gospel should be translated into languages that individuals can understand, taking into account their social and cultural context.

Furthermore, Pentecost inspires churches and individuals to speak out about what is right, by learning about different cultures in order to achieve fairness and harmony. It helps people to imagine and see a world where God is in charge. The miracle of Pentecost is not about confusing words from heaven, but about people using language to come together and work for a fair and peaceful life. It's about different churches and people joining together and being willing to face challenges for what is right (Yong, 2017; 147-151; Diboro, 2019: 100-111).

Pentecost is a very important part of the New Testament time period. The Church and the people can feel God's presence, which shows how amazing and powerful He is. This part shows the greatness of God through what we hear, see, and say. Not only do people know it, but they also feel it. The followers of God could really feel God's breath in the wind. The pillar of fire means that God is always with us, all the time and everywhere. Learning a new language shows how much God cares for people all over the world. It also shows how well His followers can do the work He wants them to do (Menzie's, 2008: 200-218). Luke told a story about Pentecost and how people reacted, but he didn't think people reading it would think they could experience the same thing. He didn't try to get the church and the people excited about building another Pentecost. He knew about Pentecost very well. Luke tells people to trust in God's power, which can change people a



lot or make them resist. This is what's considered normal (Nel, 2017: 60; Lyons, 2016: 109-127; Yong, 2017: 147-151).

### Implication

Pentecost is a critically important part of the Bible. We can see and feel God's amazing strength and beauty. God's greatness can be heard, seen, and talked about in this story. Everyone knows about it and has personally felt it. When the wind blew, the disciples felt like God was breathing on them. The fire means that God is with us all the time, not just in one place or for a short time. Languages show how God wants everyone to know about him, and show how his followers are able to share his message with the world. Luke told the story of Pentecost and what people did there. But he didn't want people to think they could do the same thing. He didn't want to change the church to a different type of religion. He knew everything about Pentecost. Luke wants people to believe in God's power that helps his followers. This might make them change or disagree strongly. We should trust that the Spirit will give us whatever we need to follow His plan. We should not give up when there are people or things that are against us. Sometimes, we are afraid to tell the truth because we think we might get into trouble, even though we usually don't. Pentecost shows us that the Spirit is brave and helps people become good and committed followers of God.

### Conclusion

In Acts 2, Luke shows us how to do missions. God gives the church and people the Spirit to share the good news of Jesus Christ, even across different cultures. God gives the church and people the Spirit so they can worship Him and create a group of people from different cultures who love and follow Christ and each other. The Church and the people should trust that the Spirit will provide every nation with what they require to carry out His wishes. Sometimes the church and its followers feel scared, even though they haven't faced any actual harm. This fear stops the church from speaking the truth. Pentecost teaches us that the Holy Spirit is brave and does not make believers feel ashamed. The Church and people should pray to God to make their faith stronger. This will help them do God's work and bring glory to Him.

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