

Pentecost: A Day of Great Things

Acts 2 has been accurately called, “The hub of the Bible,” for in this magnificent chapter, one can observe the dramatic unfolding of God’s plan of salvation through Jesus Christ. Consider why the day of Pentecost was a day of great things:

Great Day – In the mind of Jews, Pentecost likely had both an agricultural and a historical significance. Always taking place on a Sunday (50 days after the Passover Sabbath), Pentecost was to be a reverent celebration of thanksgiving to God for the first fruits of the grain harvest (Ex. 34:22; Lev. 23:15). Historically speaking, Pentecost was also often associated with the general time when God gave the Law to Moses at Mt. Sinai: about 50 days after their departure from Egypt (cf. Ex. 19:1). In Acts 2, the day once again became known for both a giving of God’s Law and a great harvest by which He would be glorified.

Great Audience – Acts 2:5-11 describes a multitude of, “devout men from every nation under heaven” present in Jerusalem for Pentecost. Historians believe there were between 200,000 and 2 million people in Jerusalem for this particular Pentecost. At the Tower of Babel God divided mankind by confusing their languages (Gen. 11). On the Day of Pentecost, God began to re-unite mankind into one body by giving the apostles the miraculous ability to preach in languages they had neither spoken nor studied before (Acts 2:4, 6, 11; cf. Eph. 2:11-16).

Great Preachers – The twelve apostles preached (Acts 2:14, 42), Matthias having taken the place of Judas just before Pentecost (Acts 1:26). What made these men great preachers is primarily the fact that they, “had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13, cf. Acts 1:21-22). They submitted their lives and wills to Him, and as a result, the power of God was seen in their preaching. What a lesson for would-be preachers today!

Great Sermon – Peter’s sermon in Acts 2 had four main points: the credentials of Jesus (v.22), the crucifixion of Jesus (v.23), the resurrection of Jesus (v.24-32), and the exaltation of Jesus (v.33-36). Notice that the lesson was Christ-centered, Scripture-saturated (cf. v.25-28, 34-35), and that it applied to the audience (cf. v.22-23, 36, 38).

Great Question – In response to such convicting preaching, the audience interrupted Peter and cried out, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (v.37). Observe that these people were aware of their sin (the PREACHING had done that!), cut to the heart, and sincere in their question.

Great Answer – Pentecost is the first time in human history that the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus proclaimed in conjunction with its implications for men’s lives. Given the nature of this occasion, it is crucial to observe that **both** repentance and baptism were commanded in order to obtain remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Those who would downplay the significance of baptism today do so at great peril to their souls (cf. Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27).

Great Response – Following the command to repent and be baptized, Peter and the apostles continued preaching (Acts 2:40). Some (but certainly not all) of the crowd gladly received the word of God, and those who did so were baptized (Acts 2:41). These believers continued **steadfastly** learning, living, worshipping and loving together. Scripture says that whenever another person believed and was baptized, that person was added by God to their number, which was simply known as, “the church” (Acts 2:47).

Thank God for making Pentecost possible – it was truly a Day of Great Things! --**JB**