

BIBLE STUDY – ACTS Chapter 2 – Leader Notes

1. Evidently the disciples understood and obeyed Jesus' command to remain in Jerusalem (Acts 1:4–5). Perhaps, without the Holy Spirit, that's all they felt like doing, and were not bold enough to do anything else. Perhaps, without the Spirit's guidance, they had no idea yet of what they were to do. In any event, without the Spirit, they had no power to do otherwise (1:8). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 3, Part 2)

Continuing their practice of fellowship and worship. Setting unclear. Possibly the building containing the Upper Room (1:13), though how the apostles' message could reach the crowd (vv. 5–11) is unclear and never explained. This has led some interpreters to suggest the temple courts as a likely location. (TLSB)

2. Throughout Scripture, wind and fire are tangible marks—signs more than symbols—of the Spirit's presence and activity (cf. Ezek 1:4; 3:12; 37:1–14; Mt 3:11; John 3:8).

3. There was a sound similar to that of the wind, but it was very loud, could be heard throughout the city, and it was directional—leading the crowd to the place where the Christian congregation was worshiping. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 24, Part 2)

4. These fire-like tongues are plainly a fulfillment of the prophecy that John the Baptist had made – that the Messiah would baptize His followers with the Holy Spirit and with fire (Matthew 3:11) – and are a clear symbol of the divine presence of the Holy Spirit. (LL)

Luke describes the scene with a comparison. The emphasis in the wording in on the mouth (“tongue,” “speak,” “utterance”), which may indicate where the “fire” appeared. The fire appropriately appears as tongues of flame, since the Holy Spirit works through the apostles' speech. In the OT, angelic spirits were described as fire (Ps. 104:3-4). Fire also represented the presence of God's Spirit (Ex. 3:2-4). (TLSB)

5. The Spirit enabled them to speak in languages they had not previously learned. These were known languages.

6. Because of wars and persecutions, also because of their business activities, Jews had been scattered throughout the Roman Empire and beyond it. They were known as Jews of the Diaspora, the “dispersion.”

2:9 Parthians. Inhabitants of the territory from the Tigris to India. (CSB)

Medes. Media lay east of Mesopotamia, northwest of Persia and south-southwest of the Caspian Sea. (CSB)

Elamites. Elam was north of the Persian Gulf, bounded on the west by the Tigris. (CSB)

Mesopotamia. Between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. (CSB)

Judea. The homeland of the Jews, perhaps used here in the OT sense “from the river of Egypt to ... the Euphrates” (Ge 15:18), including Galilee. (CSB)

Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia. Districts in Asia Minor. (CSB)

2:10 Phrygia and Pamphylia. Districts in Asia Minor. (CSB)

Egypt. Contained a great number of Jews. Two out of the five districts of Alexandria were Jewish. (CSB)

Libya. A region west of Egypt. (CSB)

Cyrene. The capital of a district of Libya called Cyrenaica. (CSB)

Rome. Thousands of Jews lived in Rome. (CSB)

2:11 converts to Judaism. Gentiles who undertook the full observance of the Mosaic law were received into full fellowship with the Jews. (CSB)

Cretans. Represented an island lying south-southeast of Greece. (CSB)

Arabs. From a region to the east. The kingdom of the Nabatean Arabs lay between the Red Sea and the Euphrates, with Petra as its capital. (CSB)

7. The Holy Spirit came to us in our Baptism. He is still our teacher as we hear and learn the Word of God.

8. In Matthew 16:21-23 Jesus told Peter “to get behind me Satan.” In Matthew 26:69-75 Peter denies Jesus three times. In John 18:10-11 Peter cuts off the ear of high priest’s servant in Garden of Gethsemane.

9. Leader – courageous – strong – knowing and depending on Scripture

10. On a festival day such as Pentecost, the Jew would not break his fast until at least 10:00 A.M. So it was extremely unlikely that a group of men would be drunk at such an early hour. (CSB)

11. The Holy Spirit does not discriminate in whom He comes to in Baptism and Scripture. This set of passages refers to Pentecost as well as Judgment Day (especially verse 20). The real comfort is verse 21 where we are assured that if we call upon the name of the Lord we will be saved. The Holy Spirit brings us to the Lord as stated in the explanation of the Third Article, "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel..."

12. Now Peter is using Scripture rather than his own thoughts and beliefs often based Jewish tradition. God's Word will always empower us.

13. God richly supplied Jesus' credentials in His works. (TLSB) Theological critics may have trouble with the miracles of Jesus, but Peter had none. The reality of Jesus' miracles wasn't the issue, for Peter says a "as you yourselves know." In fact, the wide knowledge of His life-giving miracles (John 11:45-48) was a major factor behind the religious leaders to crucify Him.

14. Many of the Jews knew the OT well. It had a great influence in their lives. David was a very revered person in Jewish culture. That added a high degree of believability to Peter's sermon.

15. Verse 27 is an excellent example of how Peter's preaching of the Law had brought them to repentance. In verses 38 and 39 Peter assures them with the Gospel. Verse 40 is encouragement to live in the Gospel.

16. Three thousand were added in a single day! The Holy Spirit was at work in the sermon giving the risen Christ. The Holy Spirit was at work with the water giving Jesus and His gift of the forgiveness of sins.

17. Being Spirit filled, the disciples could not do otherwise. They were motivated to keep going at full speed ahead. Our lesson is that there are no "off" days from God and His Word.

18. The "apostles teaching" included all that Jesus himself taught (Mt 28:20), especially the gospel, which was centered in his death, burial and resurrection. It was a unique teaching in that it came from God and was clothed with the authority conferred on the apostles. Today it is available in the books of the NT. Therefore, when we hear the Scriptures read in church, listen to sermons,

participate in Bible study or do daily devotions we are devoting ourselves the apostles' teaching.

19. Greek *koinonia*, “sharing,” “participation in a common thing.” It is the corporate fellowship of believers in worship. Christian fellowship has both a earthly and an heavenly dimension. It has been said that when we are in worship we are close to heaven as we can be here on earth.

20. It is the oldest expression for the Lord’s Supper, used by Luke in Acts (2:46; 20:7, 11). The breaking of the bread signified the whole meal, and if it were a festive meal like Emmaus, where reclining took place, such a meal would always include wine.

21. Acts emphasizes the importance of prayer in the Christian life—private as well as public (1:14; 3:1; 6:4; 10:4, 31; 12:5; 16:13, 16). (CSB)

22. We find references to miracles done by the apostles more frequently toward the beginning of the church and less frequently later. Such miracles seem to have become quite infrequent with the end of the apostolic era. This suggests that the Lord gave these signs (and perhaps other powerful signs, such as speaking in tongues or languages) as a special way of launching the church.

Note Paul’s emphasis in 1 Corinthians 13:8 on the temporary nature of such “special” gifts as tongues and the greater importance of Christian love for edifying the church.

23. The Holy Spirit did not mandate communism - prohibition of private property and the requirement to amass community property. He did lead the early church in sharing the use and benefit of their goods in harmony with Jesus’ teaching about possessions (Luke 12:33; 18:22; Acts 4:32). Their fellowship, partaking in Word and Sacrament as the center of life (v. 42), was not without effect in their sharing the things of this life.

24. They met in to temple because it was the house of the Lord and they were the Lord’s people. It was the Father’s house and they were his children. They gathered there daily, perhaps at the hours of prayer.

“Breaking bread in their homes” in their daily life of Christians as describe here distinguishes their activity in the temple from that in their homes, where they ate their meals—not the Lord’s Supper—with gladness and generosity. (CSB)

This might be regular worship, special prayer groups and small group fellowship activity.

25 . God will give the increase and His Word will do its work. He will get it done even through weak people like us.