

Peter's Sermon on Pentecost

Acts 2 records the events of Pentecost, the Jewish feast day that occurred 50 days after the Passover on the 7th Sunday after the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Our risen Lord Jesus had “presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them (His disciples) during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.” Acts 1 records that our Lord ascended into heaven. He had commanded His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the Day of Pentecost, on which He would bestow the Holy Spirit upon them, enabling them to become His witnesses throughout the known world. The Lord Jesus had said to His disciples:

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

Acts 2 records the events of the day of Pentecost, after 120 disciples of Jesus had fasted and prayed for 10 days. The Holy Spirit came upon His gathered disciples. The risen Lord Jesus caused miraculous events to occur during this event, resulting in a large gathering of Jewish people before them. It was then that the Apostle Peter gave the first inspired apostolic sermon before these gathered people in which he gave forth the inspired meaning of the event of Jesus Christ's resurrection, which had occurred weeks earlier.

Let us read Peter's message, although it is lengthy. Here is **Acts 2:1-47**:

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ²And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. ⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

⁵And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. ⁶And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. ⁷Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, “Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?” ⁸And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? ⁹Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹Cretans and Arabs—we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.” ¹²So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “Whatever could this mean?”

¹³Others mocking said, “They are full of new wine.”

¹⁴But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. ¹⁵For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. ¹⁶But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

¹⁷“And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God,
That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh;
Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
Your young men shall see visions,
Your old men shall dream dreams.

¹⁸And on My menservants and on My maidservants
I will pour out My Spirit in those days;
And they shall prophesy.

¹⁹I will show wonders in heaven above

And signs in the earth beneath:
Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.
²⁰The sun shall be turned into darkness,
And the moon into blood,
Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.
²¹And it shall come to pass
That whoever calls on the name of the LORD
Shall be saved.’

²²“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know— ²³Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; ²⁴whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. ²⁵For David says concerning Him:

‘I foresaw the LORD always before my face,
For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.
²⁶Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad;
Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope.
²⁷For You will not leave my soul in Hades,
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.
²⁸You have made known to me the ways of life;
You will make me full of joy in Your presence.’

²⁹“Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, ³¹he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. ³²This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. ³³Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

³⁴“For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself:

‘The LORD said to my Lord,
“Sit at My right hand,
³⁵Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.’”

³⁶“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

³⁷Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

³⁸Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

⁴⁰And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.” ⁴¹Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. ⁴²And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ⁴³Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. ⁴⁴Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, ⁴and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

⁴⁶So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

We may assess the contents of Acts, chapter 2, in the following way:

1. The Coming of the Holy Spirit (vs. 1-4)
2. The Reaction of the Jewish People of Jerusalem (vs. 5-13)
3. Peter's Sermon (vs. 14-36)
4. The Reaction of the Jewish People to Peter's Sermon (vs. 37-39)
5. The Response of Many to Peter's Sermon (vs. 40-47)

I. The Coming of the Holy Spirit (vs. 1-4)

Pentecost was one of three main feast days that Israel observed each year.¹ This feast day was also known as the "Feast of Weeks", because it celebrated 7 weeks after Passover. It was also called the "Feast of Harvest", for it was on this occasion that the first fruits of the harvest were offered to the Lord in His temple.

This was the day which the Lord Jesus had told His disciples that the Holy Spirit would be poured out upon them. We read of this in the previous chapter:

He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; ⁵for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." (Acts 1:4f)

When the Holy Spirit came upon the gathered disciples, He was accompanied with the audible and visible signs of a great rushing wind and flames of fire resting upon the head of each disciple. Wind is often used in the Scriptures as an emblem of the Holy Spirit. The Hebrew word for "Spirit" is *ruach*, which is the same word for "wind." Similarly in Greek the word for wind is *pneuma*, which is also the same word that is translated as "spirit."

Our Lord Jesus had used the metaphor of wind when describing to Nicodemus the work of the Holy Spirit in bring about the new birth. It is a sovereign work determined by the Holy Spirit: "The wind (*to pneuma*, τὸ πνεῦμα) blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit (*to pneuma*, τὸ πνεῦμα)" (John 3:8).

The observance of tongues of "fire" was also an emblem of God's presence upon each of the disciples. The fire depicts the holiness and justice of God's presence.

These two ideas of wind and fire were spoken of when John the Baptist described the coming Lord Jesus who would baptize His people with the Holy Spirit:

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matt. 3:11)

The third evidence of God working was the speaking in *tongues* of the disciples on whom the Holy Spirit had filled with His presence and power. **Verse 4** reads, "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." These "tongues" spoken by the

¹ The other two were the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles.

² Actually the second word (*to pneumatos*, τοῦ πνεύματος) is in a different grammatical form because of its usage in the sentence, but it is the same word.

disciples were foreign languages that the Holy Spirit enabled to be spoken, languages that they had not previously known.

It is unfortunate that the term “tongues” has been adopted by Pentecostals with which they equate with their practice of “speaking in tongues.” To them this gift of tongues is a prayer language or a “heavenly language” that they believe the Holy Spirit miraculously enables them to speak. Many Pentecostals claim that this speaking in tongues is the evidence of true salvation. But the “tongues” spoken of in the New Testament are foreign languages, in every biblical reference, I would argue. There is no clear example in the New Testament of the disciples of Jesus Christ speaking in the “tongues” that Pentecostals claim to speak in private and in their church services.

We next read of...

II. The reaction of the Jewish people of Jerusalem (vs. 5-13)

The Jews who were in Jerusalem for the Passover had come from all over the Roman world. They had been initially drawn to the upper room where the disciples were gathered due initially to the “sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind.” These “foreign” Jews heard the message of these disciples in their own languages. This confused them. They could not explain the reason for what they had witnessed. Verse 12 reads, “So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, ‘Whatever could this mean?’” But the Jewish people who were from Jerusalem, who apparently failed to recognize these foreign languages, rather cynically mocked them, “They are full of new wine.”³ It is the reaction of the unbelieving Jewish people present that resulted in the apostle Peter stepping forward and proclaiming this first apostolic sermon that interprets the meaning and implications of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and how it explained the events that these people had witnessed.

III. Peter’s sermon (vs. 14-36)

As we look over this Pentecost sermon we may discern three divisions. (1) First, Peter revealed the cause of the miracle of the disciples speaking foreign languages (vs. 14-21). (2) And second, Peter proclaimed that God had inaugurated the risen Jesus Christ to be King over the Kingdom that God had promised long before through King David (vs. 22-35). (3) Then third, Peter gives a command to his hearers to respond to what God has done through Jesus Christ (vs. 36-39). Let us consider these inspired words of the Apostle Peter.

A. Peter gave the meaning of the miracle of the disciples speaking foreign languages (vs. 14-21).

Peter first denied that these disciples were drunk. He reasoned, “These are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.” It was only about 9:00 AM. It was too early in the day for all of these people to be drunken in this manner. Peter then declared that what they were witnessing was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, in which the promised Messianic Kingdom was foretold. Peter quoted **Joel 2:28-32**. Here is how it reads in the book of Joel:

“And it shall come to pass afterward
That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh;
Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
Your old men shall dream dreams,
Your young men shall see visions.

³ There are some American fundamentalist Christians who argue that the Bible forbids all alcoholic drinking. They claim that the Bible often refers to grape juice rather than fermented wine. They say that when the Bible uses the expression, “new wine” that it is depicting unfermented grape juice. But this is wrong. Here in Acts 2:13 thought that these disciples were drunk on “new wine.” Obviously “new wine” was also an alcoholic drink.

²⁹And also on My menservants and on My maidservants
I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

³⁰“And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth:
Blood and fire and pillars of smoke.

³¹The sun shall be turned into darkness,
And the moon into blood,
Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.

³²And it shall come to pass
That whoever calls on the name of the LORD
Shall be saved.
For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance,
As the LORD has said,
Among the remnant whom the LORD calls.

Joel had foretold that when God would inaugurate the kingdom of the Messiah, *all of the citizens* of that kingdom would experience the life-giving blessing of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. In Old Testament times only some of God’s people experienced the power of the Holy Spirit and that was only on occasion. As a result the blessings of the presence and power of God would be the shared experience of all within this kingdom.

Now the Holy Spirit had been manifest to the people of God during Old Testament times. The Holy Spirit had come upon the judges to enable them to deliver God’s people. The Holy Spirit came upon the prophets to enable them to speak forth the Word of God. God empowered His servants with the Holy Spirit when the need arose for them to perform mighty physical feats in battle. But the Scriptures reveal that when the kingdom of the Messiah arrived, all citizens of the kingdom would be given the gift of the Holy Spirit. God would thereby transform them into a holy, loving, people who are zealous to order their lives according to God’s Word. When Peter quoted the prophecy of Joel, He was declaring that the promised age of the Messiah had arrived, the long-awaited kingdom that would be ruled over by the Son of David had been inaugurated.

There is difference of opinion on how Acts 2:19 through 20 should be understood. Again, it reads,

¹⁹I will show wonders in heaven above
And signs in the earth beneath:
Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.

²⁰The sun shall be turned into darkness,
And the moon into blood,
Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.

Some have thought that this is a reference to the entire age of the Messiah, from the first coming of Christ through this church age unto the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. This was Calvin’s view. This may be right. There are others who believe that this is an exclusive reference to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, when He will return to the earth in glory and power, destroying all of God’s enemies and inaugurating the eternal state. But Peter declared that this prophecy was fulfilled with the first coming of Jesus Christ brought into realization through the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus Christ. Peter had declared in verse 16, “But *this* is what was spoken by the prophet Joel.”

But in addition, we read in verse 21 that what results from these events, events which include verses 19 and 20, is that “It shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.” This is clearly a prophecy of the gospel going forth into the world, the good news for all people everywhere, that came about due to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It seems best, therefore, to understand verses 19 and 20, with its description of “signs” and “blood and fire” in one of two ways. First, they are descriptions of events on the day that our Lord was crucified. Or second, they are descriptions of the fall and destruction of Jerusalem that the Lord Jesus had pronounced upon the city that was later realized through the

destruction by the Roman armies that occurred in AD 70. This was the view of the Puritan commentator, **Matthew Henry**.

That one great thing which they should prophesy of should be the judgment that was coming upon the Jewish nation, for this was the chief thing that Christ himself had foretold (Matt. 24) at his entrance into Jerusalem (Luke 19:41); and when he was going to die (Luke 23:29); and these judgments were to be brought upon them to punish for their contempt of the gospel, and their opposition to it, though it came to them thus proved. Those that would not submit to the power of God's grace, in this wonderful effusion of his Spirit, should fall and lie under the pourings out of the vials of his wrath. Those shall break that will not bend. *First*, The destruction of Jerusalem, which was about forty years after Christ's death, is here called *that great and notable day of the Lord*, because it put a final period to the Mosaic economy; the Levitical priesthood and the ceremonial law were thereby for ever abolished and done away. The desolation itself was such as was never brought upon any place or nation, either before or since. It was *the day of the Lord*, for it was the day of his vengeance upon that people for crucifying Christ, and persecuting his ministers; it was *the year of recompenses for that controversy*; yea, and for all the blood of the saints and martyrs, *from the blood of righteous Abel* (Matt. 23:35). It was a little day of judgment; it was a *notable day*: in Joel it is called a *terrible day*, for so it was to men on earth; but here *epiphane* (after the Septuagint), *a glorious, illustrious day*, for so it was to Christ in heaven; it was the epiphany, his appearing, so he himself spoke of it (Matt. 24:30). The destruction of the Jews was the deliverance of the Christians, who were hated and persecuted by them; and therefore that day was often spoken of by the prophets of that time, for the encouragement of suffering Christians, *that the Lord was at hand, the coming of the Lord drew nigh, the Judge stood before the door* (James 5:8, 9). *Secondly*, the terrible presages of that destruction are here foretold: *There shall be wonders in heaven above, the sun turned into darkness and the moon into blood; and signs too in the earth beneath, blood and fire*. Josephus, in his preface to his history of the wars of the Jews, speaks of the signs and prodigies that preceded them, terrible thunders, lightnings, and earthquakes; there was a fiery comet that hung over the city for a year, and a flaming sword was seen pointing down upon it; a light shone upon the temple and the altar at midnight, as if it had been noon-day.

John Gill was of the same opinion. Here are his comments on Acts 2:19 and 20:

Ver. 19. *And I will show wonders in heaven above*, etc.] The word above is not in Joel, nor in the Syriac version here, as neither the word “beneath”, in the next clause. This may refer either to the appearance of angels, and of an extraordinary star at the birth of Christ; or rather to comets and blazing stars, and particularly to that comet which, in the form of a flaming sword, hung over Jerusalem, and the forms of armies in the heavens engaged together, which were seen before, and portended the destruction of that city:

and signs in the earth beneath; meaning either the miracles done by Christ, and his apostles, on earth; or those surprising events in Judea and in Jerusalem, a flame was seen in the temple, the doors of it opened of themselves, and a voice was heard in it, saying, let us go hence; and an idiot went about several years together, saying, woe to the people, woe to the city, etc.

blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: by blood is meant not the blood of Christ, either his bloody sweat in the garden, or what he shed on the cross, but the blood of the Jews, shed in war, and in internal seditions and murders: and by “fire” is designed not the Holy Ghost, who now appeared in cloven tongues, as of fire, but the conflagration of the city and temple of Jerusalem, and of many other towns and villages. And by “vapours of smoke”; or, as in the Hebrew text, “pillars of smoke”, ascending in upright columns, like palm trees, are intended literally, the vast quantities of smoke that would arise from such burnings; so that the very heavens would be clouded and darkened with them, and sun and moon appear in the following form.

Ver. 20. *The sun shall be turned into darkness, etc.* As at the death of Christ, by a total eclipse of it: *and the moon into blood*; as at the opening of the sixth seal, (Revelation 6:12) *before that great and notable day of the Lord come*; when he shall come in power and great glory, as he did in a few years after this, to take vengeance on the Jews, and destroy their nation, city, and temple; in which there was a display of his greatness, and power, and which was awful and “terrible” to them, as in Joel it is called.

Ver. 21. *And it shall come to pass, etc.* Even at that time, when these signs shall appear, and the destruction is hastening on, that *whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord*;

(2) Peter proclaimed that God had inaugurated the risen Jesus Christ to be King over the Kingdom that God had promised long before through King David (vs. 22-35).

Peter first described the Lord Jesus and His earthly ministry. **Verse 22** reads,

²²“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—

Peter could appeal to the common knowledge of what our Lord did while ministering among the Jewish people. God had confirmed before the people that Jesus was the Messiah. God had performed through Him miracles, wonders and signs. He had done so many that Peter could appeal to His hearers, “as you yourselves also know.”

Peter then described God’s foreordained purpose and knowledge to have Jesus Christ crucified by them, though they did so unjustly, contrary to the law. **Verse 23** reads, *“Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death.”*

But God determined that Jesus would not abide in death, for He was without guilt, without just cause to be put to death. So we read in **verse 24**: *“whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.”*

It was then that Peter cited the Hebrew Scriptures to substantiate his claims. God had foretold through King David that His descendant would be raised from the dead and then enthroned upon David’s throne. Jesus Christ is the promised Son of David who was made to reign over the Kingdom of God, the kingdom that God had promised to David that his descendant would reign forever. Peter quotes David’s prophecy from **Psalms 16:8-11**. In this psalm King David praised God for His kindness toward Him and His continual provision for David’s well-being. Let us read beginning with Psalm 16:5-11.

⁵O LORD, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup;
You maintain my lot.

⁶The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places;
Yes, I have a good inheritance.

⁷I will bless the LORD who has given me counsel;
My heart also instructs me in the night seasons.

⁸I have set the LORD always before me;
Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.

⁹Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices;
My flesh also will rest in hope.

¹⁰For You will not leave my soul in Sheol,
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

¹¹You will show me the path of life;
In Your presence is fullness of joy;
At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

The apostle Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, takes David's words from Psalm 16 and applies them to the Lord Jesus. He reasoned that David could not have been speaking about his own resurrection after he had died, for David had died and his tomb was still present in Jerusalem. Peter declared that King David was speaking prophetically of his Son whom God would raise from the dead in order that He would rule forever on King David's throne. Peter is declaring that when Jesus rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and was seated on His throne in heaven over the kingdom of God, it was the realization of God's promise to King David that his Son would one day be seated on His throne. The throne in heaven from which the Lord Jesus currently reigns, is the promised throne of King David.

There are a number of places in the Holy Scriptures have set this forth. We may read Isaiah's prophecy in **Isaiah 9**:

For unto us a Child is born,
Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder:
And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of His government and peace
There will be no end,
***Upon the throne of David, and over His kingdom,
To order it and establish it with judgment and justice
From that time forward, even forever.***

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. (Isaiah 9:6, 7)

God had originally gave this promise to David as recorded in **2 Samuel 7**. Samuel had wanted to build a house of the Lord in Jerusalem, in other words, a temple through which God could dwell and be glorified among His people. But God told David that he would not build God a house; rather, God intended to build him a "house." This promised "house of David" was God's promise of a perpetual kingly dynasty over an everlasting kingdom. We read of God's promise in 2 Samuel 7:12ff.

"When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever." (2 Sam. 7:12-16).

Peter was declaring that the onset of this eternal kingdom had occurred with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The promised throne of David had become filled by Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the risen Lord Jesus, who is presently reigning in heaven.

Again, Peter quoted the prophecy of **Psalm 16**, which King David had written long before. In Acts 2:25ff we read:

²⁵For David says concerning Him:

'I foresaw the LORD always before my face,
For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.

²⁶Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad;
Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope.

²⁷For You will not leave my soul in Hades,

Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

²⁸You have made known to me the ways of life;
You will make me full of joy in Your presence.’

²⁹“Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit *on his* (David’s) *throne*, ³¹*he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ*, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. ³²This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. ³³Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

³⁴“For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself:

‘The LORD said to my Lord,

“Sit at My right hand,

³⁵Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”’

³⁶“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

This is a very important teaching of the New Testament. The realization of the inauguration of the promised Kingdom of David is at the heart of the gospel that the New Testament sets forth. To preach the gospel involves preaching “the gospel of the kingdom.” We read that this was the message that our Lord Jesus gave when He began His ministry in Galilee. “And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching *the gospel of the kingdom*, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. (Matt. 4:23). In Matthew 9:35 we read of a summary of His ministry: “Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.” Later our Lord told His disciples this gospel of the kingdom would be central to their proclamation to the world: “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come” (Matt. 24:14).

The realization of the Lord Jesus reigning as the Son of David seated on his throne is set forth in Acts 10 by James. There he was explaining that God had long before prophesied of the many Gentiles who were coming to faith through the Gospel. There we read these words,

¹²Then all the multitude kept silent and listened to Barnabas and Paul declaring how many miracles and wonders God had worked through them among the Gentiles. ¹³And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, “Men *and* brethren, listen to me: ¹⁴Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. ¹⁵And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written:

¹⁶“After this I will return

And will rebuild *the tabernacle of David*, which has fallen down;

I will rebuild its ruins,

And I will set it up;

¹⁷So that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD,
...Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name,

Says the LORD who does all these things.’

¹⁸“Known to God from eternity are all His works.

Here the “tabernacle of David” is another expression for the “house of David.” When our Lord Jesus was resurrected, He ascended into heaven, sat down on His Father’s throne from which He rules over all things.

The manifestation of His kingly authority is evidenced, James reasoned, in that Gentiles were coming to salvation through Him.

Now this is an important doctrine of Scripture. Jesus Christ is ruling as the Son of David on David's throne, which God had long before promised to His servant. Many evangelicals, however, do not have this understanding. They disagree with what we have asserted. They say that the promised kingdom of David should not be understood as the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ as He presently reigns from heaven. These folks have a tendency to see two of everything in Scripture. They believe that God has promised two everlasting *thrones*--the throne of David and the throne of the Lord Jesus. There are two everlasting *kingdoms*: the kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of God. There are two everlasting *kings*: David himself and then Jesus on his throne. They believe that God's promise of the Messiah seated on the throne of David is the promise of a future reign of the Messiah in an earthly kingdom age of the Messiah, the so-called 1,000 year millennium. After Jesus Christ returns at His Second Coming, then God would cause Him to become King over the Kingdom of Israel, even while He is seated on an earthly throne in Jerusalem, ruling over a revived nation state of Israel. But this is not the teaching of the New Testament apostles. They taught that Jesus Christ enthroned in heaven was the promised throne of King David that God had promised him long before.

But it is quite clear that the Scriptures speak of one everlasting kingdom, with one eternal king, it was that promised to David and fulfilled in David's Son, our Lord Jesus. There is only one promised Kingdom. That Kingdom of God, the kingdom promised to Israel's King David, is the very kingdom in which all disciples of Jesus Christ have been citizens for these past 2,000 years. Peter was declaring to these Jewish people gathered before him in Jerusalem that God had inaugurated His promised Kingdom through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

It is "*Jesus Christ is of the Seed of David, raised from the dead*" (2 Tim. 2:8) that entered into His reign as Lord of lords and King of kings. Through His own death He paid for the sins of His people so that they might be forgiven. Through His own resurrection life and "all authority" that the Father gave Him, the Son of David is able to save to the uttermost all who come to Him. And His deliverance is not merely an outward rescue from oppression. He deals with the cause of all suffering. He removes sin from His people. He removes the curse of God that is upon people due to sin. He gives them victory over their own sin that brings upon themselves their misery. He sets them free and gives them joy and peace as they live before Him in righteousness.

We may be confident, therefore, that God's purposes would be accomplished through him. Jesus Christ is the risen, enthroned Son of David in whose kingdom you are a citizen, if you believe on Him as your Lord and Savior. Jesus Christ is your King who can do for you and through you which you cannot do for yourself. Independence from him, a failure to resort to Him in faith will result in an endless cycle of sin, defeat, and bondage. But when we come to Him in faith and call out to Him in our distress, He comes to our aid. He strengthens us. He fights alongside of us. He leads us in our battles showing us the way that we may overcome our enemies through His directives. In the end we may and will stand victorious.

We next read of...

IV. The reaction of the Jewish people to Peter's sermon (vs. 37-39)

We read of the reaction of these Jewish people who had heard Peter's message. **Verse 37** reads, "Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "*Men and brethren, what shall we do?*" They were convinced of the truthfulness of Peter's declaration to them. The Holy Spirit had brought great conviction to them of their sin for having rejected their promised Messiah. They did not know what to do. But they were now teachable and even eager to hear the course that God would have them take.

We then read of Peter's command to them. "*Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the*

promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call” (vs. 38f).

They were to acknowledge that they were sinners and they were to turn from their sin and become one of Jesus’ disciples. They were to abandon their former ways of independent sinful living. They were to confess that Jesus was Lord and submit to Him as their King.

The first act they were to take was one of baptism. In doing so they would be confessing their own sinfulness, worthiness of death. They would also be confessing openly that they turn from and repudiate their former way of living. They were to entrust themselves to live for the Lord Jesus, whom they acknowledge and confess as their Lord. Peter promised that everyone who does so, would receive the “gift of the Holy Spirit.” God would enable that one to live in righteousness before his King, who empowers him to live in accordance to the rule of the Lord Jesus. We then read in verse 40: “And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation.’”

V. The response of many to Peter’s sermon (vs. 40-47)

First, we read that they obeyed Peter’s instruction. **Verse 41** reads, *“Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.”* They became citizens within the Kingdom of God ruled over by Jesus of Nazareth, the once crucified, once buried, but now risen and reigning Son of David. Baptism is the first act of obedience for the one who believes on Jesus Christ as Lord. It is the means by which the convert to Christ confesses his faith openly to the world as well as to the church. Their baptism resulted in them being added to the church. God had called them to faith in Jesus Christ. They had turned from their sin and submitted to King Jesus as their Lord. We then read that they continued to live out this life as His disciples. We read that “they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.”

What then should we do? Let us affirm our confession, “Jesus Christ is Lord.” Let us live in accordance with our confession. We do so by believing on Him as our Lord and Savior. We do so by confessing Him publicly in our baptism. We do so by calling upon Him to direct us live as He rules over our lives. Let look to Him to empower us to do the things that He commands us. God has promised that the power of the Holy Spirit is available through Him to all who call upon Him, for as many as He has called unto Himself.

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Rom 15:13)
