

## Thoughts on Acts Two

There have been many lessons and sermons about the Holy Spirit descending on the Apostles as though it had never happened before. But a search of scripture shows that when God needed to demonstrate His concern for situations or deliver authority to people, He sent the Holy Spirit. A primary case in point was the descent of the Spirit when Jesus was baptized. "I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel." And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God" (John 1:31-34).

For some reason, many try to separate the Spirit appearing in Old Testament events from the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. But The Spirit of God is the same from Genesis 1:2 to Revelation 22:17. Paul referred to the "unity" of the Spirit in his letter to the church at Ephesus. "There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling..." (Ephesians 4:4). We read of the help given to Moses when he talked to God about the heavy burden of leading and supporting Israel. Moses complained 'I alone am not able to carry all this people, because it is too burdensome for me' (Numbers 11:14-15).

God commanded Moses to gather the people together so they could see what would happen. "Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him; and He took of the Spirit who was upon him and placed Him upon the seventy elders. And when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did not do it again" (Numbers 11:25). The demonstration showed that God was giving help to Moses by giving a portion of the Spirit to the elders who would provide judgments among the people. The people could then trust the elders as they trusted Moses.

What the elders prophesied at the time is not important to us. Still, it was from God, as Peter reminds us, "But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (2 Peter 1:20-21). The purpose of the Spirit coming upon them was so that they could bear the burden of the people with Moses. Moses was still the LORD's chosen leader of Israel, but now he did not have to bear it alone. God did not seem to mind Moses expressing his frustration and went straight to the solution. Moses remained the Law Giver but had help in Israel's daily affairs.

Peter, in (Acts 1:16), mentioned the Holy Spirit speaking through King David. David said the Holy Spirit spoke to him (2 Samuel 23:2). The Spirit prophesied about the betrayal of Messiah by His friend (Psalm 41:9). And also, "For it is not an enemy who reproaches me, Then I could bear it; Nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me, Then I could hide myself from him. But it is you, a man my equal, My companion and my familiar friend; We who had sweet fellowship together Walked in the house of God in the throng" (Psalms 55:12-14).

Just as God sends the Holy Spirit for specific, immediate tasks, He is also an important part of God's plan throughout time. In Genesis 1, the Spirit waited over the formless earth for the creatures and man to be formed, then gave them life. When the creator had formed Adam from the dust of the earth, the Spirit "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature"

(Genesis 2:7 ESV). In Acts 2, we see the Holy Spirit taking action to help the apostles as they preached the first sermon offering eternal life through the blood of God's Son. When the time was right, "Divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:3-4 ESV). When speaking to Israel, only one language was needed. But now the Word is going out to the entire world. All tongues and dialects were heard (Acts 2:4) as the apostles began speaking whatever languages the Spirit let them speak. Each person heard the gospel in their own native learned language. The Greek words indicate not only the national language but the very dialect of each region.

The Hebrew writer makes it clear that The Son of God has spoken in these last days (Hebrews 1:1-2). The Son, Jesus, said that He would send a helper (John 16:7). The helper, the Spirit of Truth, spoke all Jesus' words and all of God's truth to the apostles (John 16:13). Our Bibles contain all the words the Son would say to us.