

## The Day of Pentecost

With a grunt, Niesha wedged a container of shoes into her overloaded car and slammed the passenger door. That was the last of it. She had emptied the small apartment of all her personal items.

Things had started out well enough for Niesha in the small town. The 22-year-old had moved to get away from her family and establish her own rules. Niesha found good work as an administrative assistant at the local community college. She met Keri soon after, and the two became roommates.

Niesha had never been a “party girl,” though she always enjoyed hanging out with her friends. However, Keri quickly indoctrinated her. It got to a place where the two friends’ “night life” was so awful that Niesha thought she would be lost forever.

Niesha wondered if her family had been praying for her because she called her parents and asked if she could move back home.

“Yes, baby,” said her mother. “Your father and I have been praying for you.”

On the drive home, Niesha thought about her upbringing. Her parents raised her in church, but Niesha hadn’t been interested. It had always seemed like her parents’ faith was enough.

“Lord, I never thought I’d be in this awful place,” said Niesha, reaching for the tissue box on the passenger’s seat. “Please help me, Lord. I really need you. I know I’m a mess. Please save me.”

**1.** *How would you describe sin? How does the Bible describe sin?*

**2.** *How does sin keep us from knowing God?*

**3.** *Why is Jesus the only name by which we can be saved?*

## The Holy Spirit Arrives

*Acts 2:1-8, KJV*

1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place

2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting

3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance

5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven

6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?

8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

*Acts 2:1-8, NIV*

<sup>1</sup>When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.

<sup>2</sup>Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup>They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. <sup>4</sup>All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

<sup>5</sup>Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. <sup>6</sup>When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. <sup>7</sup>Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans?" <sup>8</sup>Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?"

The day Jesus had predicted before His ascension had arrived. The Holy Spirit came into the house where the disciples were with a roar of wind. As the wind blew, flames hovered over the heads of each believer, then the believers

started speaking “in other tongues” (vs. 4) unfamiliar to them. Because of Pentecost, Jews from many nations were there, bewildered because they were hearing something about the good news of God in their native tongues. This miracle grabbed the attention of the crowd and lent credibility to the heavenly message they were hearing.

**4.** *What happened to the believers in the upper room on the day of Pentecost?*

**5.** *What did the pilgrims of Jerusalem hear when this event happened?*

## The Spirit Poured Out

*Acts 2:14-24, KJV*

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

18 And on my servants

*Acts 2:14-24, NIV*

<sup>14</sup>Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say.

<sup>15</sup>These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! <sup>16</sup>No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

<sup>17</sup>“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy,  
your young men will see visions,  
your old men will dream dreams.

<sup>18</sup>Even on my servants, both men and women,

I will pour out my Spirit in those days,  
and they will prophesy.

and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:

20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord come:

21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

<sup>19</sup>I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke.

<sup>20</sup>The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

<sup>21</sup>And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

<sup>22</sup>"Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. <sup>23</sup>This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. <sup>24</sup>But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him."

Peter told the crowd they were not drunk this early. They were hearing the Gospel in multiple languages and the fulfilling of Joel's prophecy about the outpouring of God's Spirit during the "last days" when the Messiah would appear (Joel 2:28-32). But rather than seeing this as

God's work in Jesus, they "put him to death" (vs. 23). Still, this was a "deliberate" part of God's plan. Salvation comes from what Jesus did for us on the Cross.

**6.** *What Old Testament prophet did Peter quote to explain what had just happened?*

**7.** *How did Peter explain and apply this prediction of the Old Testament prophet?*

## The Gift of the Holy Spirit

*Acts 2:37-39, KJV*

37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

*Acts 2:37-39, NIV*

<sup>37</sup>When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

<sup>38</sup>Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup>The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

When some listeners were "cut to the heart" (vs. 37) and asked Peter what the next step was, he said they needed to repent, be forgiven of their sins in Jesus' name, be baptized, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Peter made it clear that all who call upon the Lord will be saved.

**8.** *What was the convicting response of those who heard Peter preach?*

**9.** *What do all new believers receive (that they did not have previously)?*

## Only Jesus Can Save Us

Derrick and Jerome were serving five years in prison for assault charges. Prison brought many challenges. Neither Derrick or Jerome thought they would make it through the five years.

Then, one day a group of Black men visited their prison. The men started to share how they had once been in the same prison and understood their fears and hopelessness. At the end of each man's short talk, they shared how calling on the name of the Lord to be saved and having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ made a difference in their prison time and helped them re-enter society. The men also challenged them to read the Gospel of John and gave them a copy in a small pamphlet.

Both Derrick and Jerome heard the same talks and received the same pamphlets. Jerome left the meeting with no interest in learning more about Jesus. But, Derrick pondered what he had heard and chose to start reading the Gospel of John each night. When he read John 3, his eyes were opened to what it meant to know Jesus.

The next time the men came to visit the prison, Derrick requested to meet with one of them privately. The man simply and truthfully answered Derrick's remaining questions. He explained that calling on the name of the Lord and being saved wouldn't shorten his time in prison or make the challenges go away. He explained that belief in Jesus would change Derrick inwardly and give him hope.

During the men's next visit, Derrick stood up and shared how he had called on the name of the Lord and been saved. Jerome heard Derrick's story but showed no interest in knowing Jesus.

**10.** *What role does God's Word have in someone choosing to be saved?*

**11.** *Why is it important to understand that Jesus is the only name by which one can be saved?*

**12.** *Have you ever called on the name of the Lord for your personal salvation? Explain your answer.*

## The Most Important Decision in Your Life

Decisions, decisions, and more decisions are required of us daily—from deciding what we will eat, to what clothes we will wear, to where we will live, to who we will marry. Yet, the most important decision any human being will make is, “Where will I spend eternity?” Jesus said in John 5:24, “Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.” The decision to call on the name of the Lord and be saved is a decision that everyone must make—now, not later.

► *Have you made this decision to be saved through calling on the name of the Lord? If not, why not? If yes, how can you share this truth with others?*

### KEY VERSE

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

—Acts 2:39, KJV

“The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” —Acts 2:39, NIV

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS BEFORE NEXT WEEK'S LESSON

#### Week of May 8 through May 14

(See *The Quiet Hour* and *Cross* devotionals on these passages.)

- Mon.** Luke 10:1-9— Sent to Preach and Heal.
- Tues.** Luke 10:10-24— Rejoice in Salvation, Not Power.
- Wed.** Psalm 41— God Protects and Preserves.
- Thurs.** Psalm 42— My Soul Longs for God.
- Fri.** Isaiah 35:1-10— Sorrow Will Flee.
- Sat.** Acts 3:1-11— Walking, Leaping, and Praising.
- Sun.** Acts 3:12-26— Prophets Foretold, God Fulfilled.