

The Advent of the Spirit

April 7, 2024 @ Concord Church

(New Series—Part Four)

Today again we will continue our study of the book of Acts and the topic “The Advent of the Holy Spirit”. Today’s sermon is Part-Four under the title of “**The Outward Marks of the Spirit’s Advent**”. It is the last part to conclude the subject.

The outward marks of the Spirit's advent were three in number:

the "sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind,"

the "cloven tongues as of fire,"

and the speaking "with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance."

Concerning the precise signification of these phenomena, and the practical bearing of them on us today, there has been wide difference of opinion, especially during the past 50+ years. Considering that as God Himself has not seen fit to furnish us with a full and detailed explanation of them, it is duty and responsibility of all interpreters to speak with reserve and reverence. According, I shall try hard/seek/aim/do my best to briefly to point out some of those things which appear to be most obvious.

First, the "rushing mighty wind" which filled all the house was the **collective sign**, in which, apparently, all the 120 of [Acts 1:15](#) shared. This was an emblem of the invincible energy with which the Third Person of the Trinity works upon the hearts of men, bearing down all opposition before Him, in a manner which cannot be explained ([John 3:8](#)), but which is at once apparent by the effects produced.

Second, "there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them" ([Acts 2:3](#)), that is, **upon the Twelve, and upon them alone**. The proof of this is conclusive.

First, it was to the **Apostles only** that the Lord spoke in [Luke 24:49](#).

Second, to them only did He, by the Spirit, give commandments after His resurrection ([Acts 1:2](#)).

Third, to them only did He give the promise of [Acts 1:8](#).

Fourth, at the end of [Acts 1](#) we read, "he (Matthias) was numbered with **the eleven** Apostles." [Acts 2](#) opens with "And" connecting it with [1:26](#) and says, "they (**the Twelve**) were all with one accord in one place" and on **them** the Spirit now "sat" ([Acts 2:3](#)).

Fifth, when the astonished multitude came together they exclaimed, "Are not **all** these which speak **Galileans**?" ([Acts 2:7](#)), namely, the "men (Greek, "males") of **Galilee**" of [1:11](#)!

Sixth, in [Acts 2:14, 15](#), we read, "But Peter standing up **with the eleven** lifted up his voice and said unto them, "Ye men of Galilee and all ye that dwell in Judea, be this known unto you and hearken unto my words: For **these** are not drunk"—the word "**these**" can only refer to the "eleven" standing up with Peter!

These "cloven tongues like as of fire" which descended upon the Apostles was the **individual sign**, the Divine credential that they were the authorized ambassadors of the enthroned Lamb.

Third, the Apostles, "speaking with other tongues" were the **public sign**. [1 Corinthians 14:22](#) declares "tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not," and as the previous verse (where [Isaiah 28:11](#) is quoted) so plainly shows, they were a sign unto **unbelieving Israel**. A striking illustration and proof of this is found in [Acts 11](#), where Peter sought to convince his skeptical brethren in Jerusalem that God's grace was now flowing forth unto the Gentiles: it was his description of the Holy Spirit's falling upon Cornelius and his household ([Acts 11:15-18](#) and cf. [10:45, 46](#)) which convinced them. It is highly significant that the Pentecostal type of [Leviticus 23:22](#) divided the harvest into three degrees and stages: the "reaping" or *main* part, corresponding to [Acts 2](#) at Jerusalem; the "corners of the field" corresponding to [Acts 10](#) at "Caesarea Philippi," which was in the corner of Palestine; and the "gleaning" for "the stranger" corresponding to [Acts 19](#) at Gentile Ephesus! These were the only three occasions of "tongues" recorded in Acts.

Those who have joined the Pentecostal movement—some of them godly souls, we believe—insist that not only is the gift genuine, but it is the duty of all Christians to seek the same. But surely such seem to overlook the fact that it

was not any "*unknown* tongue" which was spoken by the Apostles: foreigners who heard them had no difficulty in understanding what was said ([Acts 2:8](#)).

Let it also be duly observed that there is not a single exhortation in all the Epistles of the New Testament that the saints should seek "a fresh Pentecost," no, not even to the carnal Corinthians or the legal Galatians.

In [Acts 2:16](#) we find Peter was moved by God to give a general explanation of the great wonders which had just taken place. Jerusalem was, at this time of the feast, filled with a great concourse of people. The sudden sound from Heaven "as of a rushing mighty wind," filling the house where the Apostles were gathered together, soon drew there a multitude of people; and as they, in wonderment, heard the Apostles speak in their own varied languages, they asked, "What meaneth *this*?"([Acts 2:12](#)). Peter then declared, "*This* is that which was spoken of by the Prophet Joel." The prophecy given by Joel ([2:28-32](#)) now began to receive its fulfilment, the latter part of which we believe is to be understood symbolically.

And what is the bearing of all this upon us today? We will reply in a single sentence: the advent of the Spirit followed the exaltation of Christ: *if then we desire to employ more of the Spirit's power and blessing, we must give Christ the throne of our hearts and crown Him the Lord of our lives.*

Material taken and notes made from the book THE HOLY SPIRIT by Arthur Walkington Pink, from the Word Search Library.