

Back to the Future, Part 1

Dr. Mark Rutland June 4, 2017

Back to the Future — the Future of Shavuot

A word about this series — the Book of Acts is often viewed historically, as a museum piece of the past — and nothing to do with the present. That teaching reduces it to a document in church archives.

*The other viewpoint is — Going Back to the Book of Acts is Going Back to the Future — There are **Three Major Church Intersections** in the book of Acts.*

Today — Back to the Future — the Future of Shavuot

History of Shavuot

- a) it is the second Jewish spring festival — Passover is the first
- b) feast of First Fruits (first harvest of the year) — joyful — wave offering
- c) Shavuot is 50 days after the second day of Passover — Feast of Weeks
- d) when Hebrew Bible translated into Greek — Shavuot translated as Pentecost
- e) later became associated with Moses and the giving of the Law (the Torah)

***Thought** — Sometimes we may imagine that the 120 followers of Jesus knew what was going to happen on that Pentecost morning. But they just got up to celebrate Shavuot.*

First Major Intersection

- **Acts 2:1-16**

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine. 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: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.

What might the disciples have been praying that morning?

- a) they were hated by the Roman Empire and those with the spirit of religiosity
- b) Jesus had told them to go into all the world and preach the gospel
- c) this was about ten days after Jesus ascended to Heaven
- d) Jesus said that unless He left, the Holy Spirit would not come
- e) they were needy, hungry, and powerless
- e) they were dedicated, sold out, obedient — **we've got to have something!**

**There is supernatural power that is going to come upon you
that will empower you to be a witness to Me in ALL the world.**

***Truth — the church can only victoriously execute the mission of Jesus
through the power of the Holy Spirit — there is no other way!***

Spirit Fills

- **Acts 2:2-4**

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

- a) the sound of God breathing in an enclosed space

***The High Pressure of God's Presence meets
the Low Pressure of Human Need***

- b) they RECEIVED the Holy Spirit
- c) this is that which was prophesied in Joel 2

The power of Pentecost is present and for the future

Question — What do we say to...

- the war-torn in S. Sudan — how will we survive?
- the grieving in London — how will we get through this?
- millions of ordinary Christians who have deep issues
 - marriage in crisis, family member dying
 - kid on drugs, business in trouble
- needy, hungry, powerless — **we've got to have something!**

The power of Pentecost is not an it — but a He — the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the only Power...

...from whom you can have Power in this Present Age.

And this Power is ready for you to receive — right now — through Him.

Discussion Questions

1. How have you traditionally viewed Acts in your personal past?
 2. Identify with the feelings of the disciples before the coming of the Holy Spirit?
 3. How do those feelings compare with yours, when you are not relying on the Holy Spirit for power to face your problems?
 4. What can you say to encourage someone in crisis?
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Before the Throne: Worship Night

Tuesday, June 13th

6:30 pm

Sanctuary