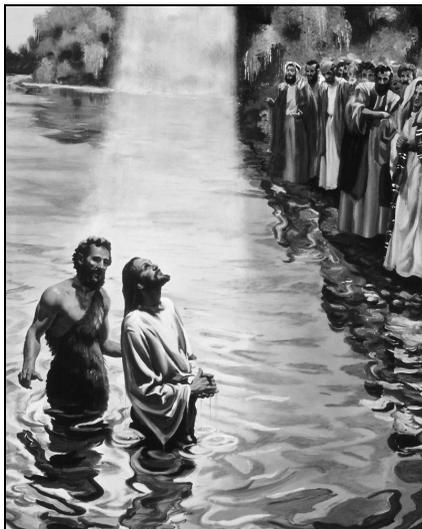
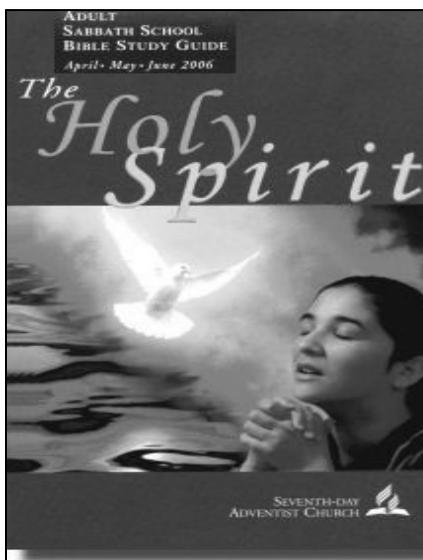


Sabbath School Bible Study Guide, Alternative Commentary



Lesson 5



This week's lesson examines some of the events surrounding Pentecost, and its fulfillment.

Sabbath Afternoon

The lesson begins by quoting Acts 2:2-4 as the fulfillment of the promise the Lord had given His disciples.

Jesus promised His disciples *“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you”* Acts 1:8

Q – What was the principle reason the gift of the Spirit was given for?

A – *“and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”* Acts 1:8 see also Matt. 28:18-20

The principal reason the Spirit is given for is to witness or testify of Christ. This is what empowered the early church as we see throughout the book of Acts. Chapter 2 records Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, where about three thousand souls were added to the church. Vs 41, 47

Acts chapter 3 records Peter's sermon in the temple on Solomon's porch, after the healing of the lame man. Again Peter lifts up Christ as the Savior, the Messiah that had been promised to Israel. Vs 13, 22-26.

Peter ends his address with the appeal, *“Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.”* Vs 26

In Acts 4 we see Peter and John arrested *“as they spake unto the people”*. The priests and Sadducees *“being grieved that they taught the people”* (Nothing has changed)

Vs-8 *“Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them....”*

Peter gives another Spirit inspired address, this time before the full council, convicting them of their guilt in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, reminding them also of His resurrection and how *“By him doth this man stand here before you whole”* Vs 10

In Vs 11 He charges *“these leaders”* with the fulfillment of their own scriptures (Ps 118:22) In rejecting Jesus of Nazareth, they rejected the cornerstone of their whole nation. They rejected the Son of God, their only hope of salvation.

In Vs 12 Peter declares the immortal words *“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”*

These words brought trembling to the hearts of the hearers. Men who prided themselves on their position in the church, who thought themselves secure of their standing with God. Men who were so deceived that they crucified the Son of God and were seeking to silence His witnesses. Seeking to silence the very ones who God in His love was sending to them first with a message of repentance and forgiveness. (Again nothing has changed)

Q – What gave the disciples such boldness? (Vs 13)

A – they had received the outpouring of the Spirit, they knew Christ was with them as He had promised.

The record declares *“And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.”* Mark 16:20

This point cannot be over emphasized; they went forth in faith knowing Christ was with them, as He had promised. May we also “recognize Christ as the One who is with us” {CM 107.4}

Sunday's lesson Faith and the Promise

Sunday's lesson quotes Acts 1:4,5 where just before His ascension Christ promised His disciples "*ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence*"

This is followed with the question 'Jesus talked about the promise that you "have heard of me" what promise is He talking about?'

As we have already noted this promise was for the coming of the comforter, the Spirit of truth.

John 14:16 – 26 and John 16: 7- 13 are given to provide the answer.

These passages we have looked at a few times already. See lesson 1 for our commentary on John 14:16 "another comforter" and John 16:13 "The Spirit of truth"

We have seen what gave the disciples the faith to boldly preach the gospel, it was the knowledge and assurance that Christ was with them. And this is exactly what Christ promised in John 14:18 "*I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you*"

In 14MR 179 sister White quotes John 14:16,17 and then declares "This refers to the omnipresence of the Spirit of Christ, called the Comforter".

The rest of Sunday's lesson talks about how the disciples were to wait in faith for the fulfillment of the promise.

Q – What inspired the disciples to believe and tarry in faith for the fulfillment of the promise?

A – It was the scriptures. Notice how the gospel of Luke records the same promise.

“And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.”
Luke 24:49 -53

Jesus departed from His disciples and was carried up into heaven. Yet scripture records they had “*great joy*” and were continually “*praising and blessing God.*”

Why? Because they knew “*in not many days hence*” they would be “*baptized with the Holy Ghost*” “and the souls of the believers thrilled with the conscious presence of their ascended Lord” {GC 350.1}

Their ascended Lord had promised “*lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen*” Matt 28: 20

It was through the scriptures that Christ strengthened their faith. Notice again in Luke 24:44- 48

“And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures. And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things.”

Christ proved to His disciples from the Scriptures everything that was spoken of Him had been fulfilled. Then He calls them to be His “*witnesses of these things*” and promises them “*power from on high*”

(Notice how in Acts 2, 3, 4 Peter uses the scriptures to “*witness of these things*”)

They no longer had any doubts. Notice this statement from DA 667 “They saw that the prophecies had been literally fulfilled. They searched the Scriptures, and accepted their teaching with a faith and assurance unknown before. They knew that the divine Teacher was all that He had claimed to be.” {DA 667.1}

In seeing clearly the fulfillment of the prophecies regarding Christ, the disciples accepted the scriptures with a greater faith and confidence. They had no doubt Christ would fulfill His word. This gave them “*great joy*” as they returned to Jerusalem and waited for the fulfillment of the promise.

Monday

Monday's lesson highlights the accord that existed among all the disciples, which enabled them as a church to receive the outpouring of the Spirit. See Acts 1:14; 2:1, 46

What brought them unity was their faith in God's word as Jesus had prayed (John 17:17), their love for their Master, and true repentance for their past unbelief.

“As the disciples waited for the fulfillment of the promise, they humbled their hearts in true repentance and confessed their unbelief.... The disciples prayed with intense earnestness for a fitness to meet men and in their daily intercourse to speak words that would lead sinners to Christ. Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship.” {AA 36, 37}

Monday's lesson ends with the question “What can you do to be a unifying force in your church?”

What better example do we have than that given us by Christ's disciples?

They studied the scriptures

They meditated upon the Savior's pure and Holy life. AA 36

They determined “no sacrifice too great, if only they could bear witness in their lives to the loveliness of Christ's character.” AA. 36

And “bravely confessing Him before the world” AA. 36

Neither did they count anything they had their own, and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. Acts 4:32, 35

This revival of primitive godliness is beginning to be repeated today. But please remember they were only a minority compared to the established church.

These servants of Christ were despised and labeled a sect by those who claimed to be God's church. The Jews rejected and despised the Son of God, and definitely crucified Him afresh in the person of His saints.

But the one truth above all else that united the disciples was their affirmation of faith, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Christ Himself declared He would build His church upon this truth, and it would never be prevailed against.

And the apostle Paul looking down through the stream of time to the church's glorious co-summation declares, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God" Eph 4:13

It is this knowledge that Jesus prayed for in John 17:3.

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

The disciples received the early rain because they believed in the Son of God.

As they "exalted the love of God, men's hearts were melted and subdued, and multitudes believed on Jesus." {DA 667.1}

This is the gospel that began the work. The same gospel Paul preached (not another), neither did he receive it of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Gal 1:11 And this same gospel will finish the work.

Our Lord declared, in fact He cried out "*He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*" John 7:38

This was fulfilled at Pentecost, and the Lord is preparing to pour out His Spirit, even more abundantly today, upon those who believe on Him. May we also search the scriptures and like the disciples, accept their teachings with faith and assurance, and believe “the Divine teacher was all that He claimed to be” DA 667, the Son of God.

Mark 14:62; John 19:7; Matt. 26:63, 64

“And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.” 1 John 3:24

Tuesday

Pentecost was counted 50 days from the waving of the first fruits on the second day of Unleavened Bread.

The waving of the first fruits (3rd day of Passover) commemorated the beginning of the harvest. Pentecost the end of the harvest.

As the wave sheaf symbolized “Christ the first fruits” so Pentecost the final harvest

Pentecost was the early rain. It prefigures the final bountiful harvest in the time of the latter rain.

Tuesday’s lesson correctly illustrates the spiritual lesson of Pentecost the Feast of Harvest (Ex23:16) and the gathering of God’s people (John 4:35)

It is also interesting to note after Passover Christ spent 40 days teaching and preparing His disciples. Then He ascended and His disciples spent the next ten days in prayer and supplication (Acts 1:14), looking forward in faith for the promised gift.

They had placed everything upon the altar, and in faith prayed for the promised blessing. So it will be for those seeking the latter rain.

“Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples. . . .” {Mar 240.4}

“All who receive the seal must be without spot before God--candidates for heaven.” {Mar 240.6}

Wednesday Heaven and the Outpouring

Wednesday's lesson focuses on Peter's address in Acts 2, particularly Vs 22- 35

As we saw in the Sabbath afternoon lesson, Christ showed through the scriptures the fulfillment of the prophecies regarding Himself. Luke 24:44-47. He then called His disciples to witness to these things Vs 48

They were to witness or testify to the people through the scriptures that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, the Son of God. But they were to wait till they were "*endued with power from on high*" Vs 49

This is exactly what we see in Acts 2. After being filled with the Holy Spirit (Vs 4) Peter begins by declaring that their speech was a fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel (2:28 – 32)

After acknowledging the miracles and wonders God did through Jesus "*in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know.*" Vs 22

He charges the people "*ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:*" Vs 23

Notice how the Spirit was bringing conviction to the hearers. First Peter acknowledges that they were witnesses to the many miracles, signs and wonders God did through Jesus. And then charges them with His crucifixion. See AA 42, 43

But with the guilt there is hope, notice in the same verse how Peter reveals the love of God.

"*Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,*" Vs 23

It was the love of the Father in counsel with His Son that determined Christ's betrayal and death. Zech 6:13

Men's wicked hands could not have done anything the Father and Son had not already predetermined, and for their sake! As Paul writes "*He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all*" Rom 8:32

Peter proceeds to confirm Christ's resurrection Acts 2:24 and in the next four verses 25 – 28 Peter remembers the instruction of His Master and again uses the scriptures to prove the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth.

He quotes directly from the sixteenth Psalms Vs 8 – 11. But notice how he begins in Vs 25 "*For David speaketh concerning him....*" The Holy Spirit through the apostle Peter was directing the hearers to whom this Psalms really referred!

After speaking of the promise that "*thou will not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption*" Peter says in Vs 29 that David "*is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day*"

In Vs 30 he repeats the promise God swore to David (2 Sam 7:12–16) that of his seed He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne.

Vs 31 Peter again confirms through the prophet David "*He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.*"

I believe when our Lord hung upon the cross, and satan's temptations so wrung the heart of Christ, that He could not see through the portals of the tomb, He would have remembered these promises:

- "*he is on my right hand that I should not be moved*"
- "*my flesh shall rest in hope*"
- "*Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell*"
- "*thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance*"

And what is most precious is these victories Christ procured for us, and is seeking to impart them to us through His Spirit. *“For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.”* Heb. 2:18

Back to Acts 2. After confirming the prophecy was fulfilled in the resurrection of Christ (remember Luke 24:44 -48) Peter declares *“we all are witnesses”* Vs 32.

And where is Christ now?

Vs 33 *“Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this”*, (remember Christ said of the Spirit “Whom I will send unto you from the Father John 15:26) Peter concludes this is the promise *“which ye now see and hear.”*

In Vs 34 He again confirms *“For David is not ascended into the heavens”* for the fulfillment of the scriptures points to Christ .
Ps 110:1

Now notice the last thing Peter says

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Vs 36

All the house of Israel is called to acknowledge *“that same Jesus”*. The same Jesus of Nazareth *“whom ye have crucified is both Lord and Christ”*

In Vs 21 Peter quoted from Joel 2:32 (please read the text in full) and declared *“whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved”*

It is the same Lord who is exalted and by the right hand of God interceding for His people.

This same Lord he just charged them with crucifying, is God’s “Holy One” the Christ the Son of God.

How could they call on the name of the Lord and be saved when they “had taken an active part in the condemnation and death of Christ.” AA 42. When instead of calling on His precious name, “they had shouted, “Not this man but Barabbas!” AA 43

No wonder they were cut to the heart, what hope did they have? At the end of Vs 36 Peter has stopped speaking. He has declared the truth, not in condemnation, for all of us including Peter have denied our Savior. He spoke the truth in a heartfelt desire and love for the souls, trembling under the conviction of the Spirit of truth.

Nothing more needed to be said. While the apostle paused, men’s hearts trembled with guilt and sorrow, but they sense some hope. The Spirit brings to their remembrance the love of God, how the Father delivered His Son into their hands. How the Son whose hands were always stretched out to bless, comfort, and heal, gave His life as a ransom for the lost. Matt 18:11

They remember the appeal “This Jehoshua (salvation) hath God raised up” Vs 32

Pricked in their heart they cry out “Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

Before they even asked the question, Peter had their answer. *“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.” Acts 2:38*

Not only were they forgiven, but the gift of the Holy Spirit is promised to them “and to your children” *“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” Acts 2:41*

“The seed had been sown, and after His ascension the great ingathering took place. More were converted by one sermon on the day of Pentecost than were converted during all the years of Christ's ministry. So mightily will God work when men give themselves to the control of the Spirit” {6BC 1055.8}

Wednesday's lesson quotes from AA P 38, 39 referring to”

“The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven's communication that the Redeemer's inauguration was accomplished. According to His promise He had sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to His followers as a token that He had, as priest and king, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and was the Anointed One over His people.” {AA 38.3}

Compare Heb. 1:9 “...*therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*”

Remember Acts 2:28 “*thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.*”

Thursday The Gift of Language

The gift of language assures us that in the spreading of the gospel, God will provide for any lack of ability or talent we may not possess.

Our Lord has brought gifts unto men that we may overcome, and for the spreading of the gospel, and the edification of the church.
Eph 4:8, 12

Our part is to furnish Him with instruments to be used in His service, as a vessel meet for the master's use.

The gift of languages also helps us to understand why the Lord told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem. As the lesson points out "Devout Jews from all over the then know world were assembled for the great festival."

And the gift of language was needed that all these people could hear the gospel in their own tongue, and more importantly could bring this good news back to their own homeland.

Also the gift of tongues was not only to fluently speak in another language. "This miraculous gift was a strong evidence to the world that their commission bore the signet of Heaven." AA 40
The gift bore witness to the power of God.

As Peter proclaimed "*and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.*" Acts 2:33

Notice what else this miraculous gift achieved.

"From this time forth the language of the disciples was pure, simple, and accurate, whether they spoke in their native tongue or in a foreign language." {AA 39.2}

Yes the gift was not just the different languages but the ability to simply articulate and share the truth, as we witnessed in Peter's sermon at Pentecost.

Friday

Friday's lesson provides some sources for further study.

And quotes a passage from AA p 39 regarding the true gift "which enabled them to speak with fluency languages with which they had heretofore been unacquainted"

Also a quote from 1T p 412 regarding fanaticism, false excitement, and false talking in tongues, which is a deception of satan.

Dear reader, as you reflect on this weeks lesson, consider this. In that upper room the first disciples (about 120) gathered together. Inspiration records they were of one accord.

Dear friends, the pure apostolic faith came out of that room, and it set the world on fire.

Do you honestly believe there 120 (approximately) souls worshiped God in a trinity? That every one of them was of one accord in believing God is a trinity?

Friends, the disciples knew their God; there most important Scripture was the Shema of Israel Deut 6:4

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:"

And they witnessed their Lord confirm this was the "*first commandment of all*". And how the Lord commended the scribe when he said "*Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul....*"

Mark 12:32, 33

They witnessed how Jesus saw that he answered "*discreetly*" and "*said thou art not far form the kingdom of God.*" Vs 34

They heard Jesus pray *“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”*
John 17:3

Friends, the *“household of God”* is *“built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone”* Eph 2:19, 20

Christ testified He would build His church upon the Rock foundation that He is the Son of God.

There is not one text in all the Scriptures that declares God to be a trinity. And we saw from inspiration of the disciples that, “They searched the Scriptures, and accepted their teaching with a faith and assurance unknown before. They knew that the divine Teacher was all that He had claimed to be.” {DA 667}

No friends, those disciples who were privileged to receive the early rain knew their God, and they knew His Son. And *“As they told their experience, and exalted the love of God, men's hearts were melted and subdued, and multitudes believed on Jesus.”* {DA 667.1}

And those who receive the latter rain will also know their God; they too will be of one accord *“in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God”*. And they will be privileged to give the loud cry to the world for they know their God and only they can *“say unto the cities”* *“Behold your God.”* Isa 40:9

Therefore *“But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”* 1 Cor. 3:10, 11

Our appeal to you is

‘Will you build upon the Rock?’

May God richly bless as you study His word.