

Acts 2:1-21

Pentecost: Coincides with an Old Testament festival that fell on the fiftieth day after the presentation of the first sheaf to be reaped of the barley harvest which was presented on the first Sunday after the Passover. It is also called the Feast of Weeks and is found in Exodus 34 and Deuteronomy 16:10. It was also celebrated as the anniversary of the day when God gave Moses the Law on Mount Sinai.

In the Medieval Church it took on the title of “Wit Sunday” because it was a day of baptism in the northern parts of Europe (finally warm enough to not worry about catching cold). It was called “wit” because of the number of people wearing white robes in preparation for their baptisms.

Read Acts 2:1-4

1. We should not be surprised by the description of the disciples; it was what they were instructed to do at the Ascension- go to Jerusalem and wait.
2. Fire is associated with the divine presence. In the burning bush, God speaks. In the tongues of fire, the church speaks.

Read Acts 2:5-13

3. The people gathered in Jerusalem that day represent the fullness of God’s people- Jews and Proselytes, people from all over the Roman world, gathered for the celebration of the festival.
4. The nature of the tongues is now revealed- where the disciples speaking babble or something else? Why does this matter?
5. Now we have the role call of nations. What is Luke trying to teach us with this list?
 - a. Parthia, Media, Elam, and Mesopotamia lay east of the Euphrates and spoke Aramaic. This was where the exiles from the ten northern tribes were sent by the Assyrians
 - b. Judea is the area from the edge of Egypt to the Euphrates and represents the full extent of King David and Solomon’s boundaries- it would have included Syria
 - c. Cappadocia, Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia are the areas of Asia minor. This would have included the areas around the Black Sea and into the Crimean Peninsula
 - d. Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene- It is estimated that in 331, as much as 2/5 of the Alexandrian population was Jewish and Philo estimates at about one million Jews were living in Egypt in 38 AD
 - e. Visitors from Rome, both Jews and Proselytes- This is the final destination of the Book of Acts and reveals how the congregation in Rome was started.
 - f. Cretan and Arabians are the final group and would include the area around the Red Sea including parts of modern day Jordan
6. In the end, they are all Lutheran! Except those who engaged in mocking, of course!

Read 2:14-21

7. How does Peter defend against the accusation of drinking?
8. How does this use of Joel inform the understanding of the crucifixion?
9. How does it teach us to use the Old Testament?