

## Chapter 2 - Pentecost: The Birthday Of The Church

### Parts 1

#### Introduction.

1. I would like to begin a series of lessons on Acts 2.
2. This is one of the most important chapters of the Bible, some have called it “The Hub of the Bible.”
  - a. The Old Testament, the teachings of Christ, all point to this grand chapter.
  - b. This chapter records the beginning of the kingdom (the church.).
  - c. It tells us of the coming of the Holy Spirit, that is, the apostles being baptized with the Holy Spirit.
  - d. It records the first gospel sermon, and tells us of the first converts, the Jews, to the kingdom (the church).
  - e. It marks the beginning of the binding of the New and Better Covenant prophesied by Jeremiah. (Jere. 31:31-34).

**JER 31:31 "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,**

**JER 31:32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them, "declares the Lord.**

**JER 31:33 "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the Lord, "I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.**

**JER 31:34 "And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the Lord, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."**

- 1) Jeremiah spoke of the New Covenant that God would make with the Jews and later with the Gentiles.
  - 2) This covenant would be on the hearts of God's people.
  - 3) All those becoming a part of the kingdom would know God and would have their sins forgiven.
- f. The Hebrew writer quotes this passage in Hebrews 8. (Heb. 8:7-12).
- g. Jesus had prepared them for this grand and historical day some 10 days prior to Pentecost.
- 1) Jesus was on the earth 40 days after His resurrection. (Acts 1:3).
  - 2) He promised the apostles would be baptized with the Holy Spirit “not many days from now,” and He instructed them to remain in Jerusalem until they received that power. (Acts 1:5).
  - 3) He made this promise before His ascension into heaven. (Acts 1:7,8).

4) He then ascended into heaven for His coronation and to be exalted at the right hand of God. (Acts 1:9; Lk. 22:69).

Acts 1:9 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

Luke 22:69 "But from now on THE SON OF MAN WILL BE SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND of the power OF GOD."

## Date

1. The church [the kingdom of God] was established on the first Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ.
2. The exact year is not known, but it was probably between 27 to 29 A.D..
3. It is thought Jesus' ministry was 2 ½ to 3 ½ years in length and He died at the age of 32 or 33.
  - a. Jesus began His ministry when He was "about thirty years of age." (Lk. 3:23).

Luke 3:23 When He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age, being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph, the son of Eli,

- b. The length of Jesus' ministry is determined by counting the Passovers found in the gospel of John.
    - 1) **Year 1** John 2:13; 2:23; 5:1?
    - 2) **Year 2** John 5:1?; 6:4
    - 3) **Year 3** John 6:4; 11:55; 12:1; 13:1
  - c. His ministry was a little more than 3 years assuming John 5:1 refers to a Passover. If not, His ministry was about 2 ½ years.
    - 1) There is no evidence John 5:1 refers to a Passover.
    - 2) Salvation does not depend on knowing the age of Jesus at His death.
4. It is generally believed He was born about 4 B.C., and may have been born between 6-5 B.C..
    - a. He was "a young child" at the death of Herod the Great. (Matt. 2:11).

Matt 2:11 After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

- 1) The Greek "paidion" [pi dee ahn] means "child, infant, young child."
  - 2) Jesus was in "the house" and He could still be a new born or a young child.
  - 3) An undefined amount of time had elapsed since His birth.
- b. Herod had all the male children two and under killed. (Matt. 2:16).

Matt 2:16 Then when Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he became very enraged, and sent and slew all the male children who were in Bethlehem and all its vicinity, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the magi.

- c. This may suggest Jesus may have been nearly two years old at the time.
  - d. Herod, based on the time line the wise man gave him, wanted to be sure to kill Jesus.
5. If you add 33 to 4 B.C., the church began about 29 A.D..
- a. It could have been two years earlier if Jesus was born in 6 B.C..
  - b. There is no way of knowing for sure the exact year of Christ's birth or the exact year the kingdom was established.
6. The day of Pentecost, following Christ's resurrection, marks the beginning of the church. (Acts 11:15; Lk. 24:47).

Acts 11:15 "And as I began to speak [on the day of Pentecost], the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as {He did} upon us at the beginning.

Luke 24:47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

## **Prophecies Pointing Toward This Great Chapter**

### **Old Testament Prophecies**

GEN 22:18 "And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

GAL 3:16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.

1. Since "seed" normally has a plural meaning, most would understand Genesis 22:18 to refer to the descendants of Abraham.
2. Paul, by inspiration, tells us that the word "seed" was used with a singular meaning.
3. It had reference to Christ.
4. This was also gradually made known in the Old Testament that salvation would come through one of the descendants of Abraham - tribe of Judah, descendant of David, the virgin child, the child who was called Mighty God, the suffering Messiah.
5. God would bless mankind through the coming and death of Jesus.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Century Prophecy**

**ISA 2:1 The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.**

**ISA 2:2 Now it will come about that In the last days, The mountain of the house of the Lord Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it.**

**ISA 2:3** And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways, And that we may walk in His paths." For the law will go forth from Zion, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

**ISA 2:4** And He will judge between the nations, And will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war.

1. This prophecy was made more than 700 years before Pentecost. (Acts 2:1).
2. The words "mountain of the Lord's house" and "the house of the God of Jacob" is what Paul called "the house of God." (1 Tim. 3:15).
3. The "gospel" and "the law of the Lord" are one and the same. (Gal. 6:2; Heb. 8:10; 1 Cor. 9:20,21).
4. "For the law will go forth from Zion," that is, "from Jerusalem."
5. The language of Isaiah 2:4 is not literal, but is talking about the ending of the conflict, the enmity between Jews and Gentiles. (Eph. 2:14, 15).

**EPH 2:14** For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups [Jews and Gentiles] into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall,

**EPH 2:15** by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace,

- a. Jews and Gentiles became a part of "one body" [the body of Christ, the church, the kingdom].
- b. This peace and unity was something most believed impossible.
- c. Such unity is possible through Christ. (Rom. 10:12).

Rom 10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same {Lord} is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him;

5. Isaiah 11:6-9 is also a figurative description of this peace between Jews and Gentiles in the kingdom (church).

**ISA 11:6** And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, And the leopard will lie down with the kid, And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little boy will lead them.

**ISA 11:7** Also the cow and the bear will graze; Their young will lie down together; And the lion will eat straw like the ox.

**ISA 11:8** And the nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, And the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den.

**ISA 11:9** They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord As the waters cover the sea.

6. Daniel made this amazing prophecy. (Dan. 2:44).

**DAN 2:44** "And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.

- a. Daniel, in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C., spoke of four world empires -Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Greek, Roman

- b. The fourth kingdom of Daniel’s prophecy was the Roman Empire, 63 B.C. to A.D. 476.
- c. The crushing of the kingdoms was a spiritual crushing rather than a physical one.
  - 1) Christianity is not a militant force, but a spiritual army. (Jn. 18:36).
  - 2) Nations are shaken [converted] by the preaching of the gospel. (Rom. 1:16; Col. 1:13).
  - 3) Christians do not persuade or convert by force, but through God’s word. (Jas. 1:18, 21).

### **New Testament Prophecies**

- 1. Both John the Baptist and Christ proclaimed the “kingdom of heaven” was “at hand.” (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Mk. 9:1).

MAT 3:2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

MAT 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Mark 9:1 And Jesus was saying to them, "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power."

- 2. Jesus promised He would build His church [the kingdom]. (Matt. 16:18, 19).

MAT 16:18 "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it.

MAT 16:19 "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

- a. Jesus would build His church.
  - b. Without changing the subject He spoke of the church as the kingdom.
- 3. Christ would build or establish His church (kingdom), and it was “at hand.”
  - 4. The words “church” and “kingdom” are interchangeable in the New Testament age and refer to the saved who are under the “**Head** of the body” or the **King** of the kingdom.
  - 5. Peter would be given “the keys of the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. 16:19).
    - a. He used these keys to open the door of salvation and the kingdom to the Jews on Pentecost.
    - b. He later used these keys to open the door of salvation and the kingdom to the Gentiles at the home of Cornelius. (Acts 10).
  - 6. All the apostles would be given the power to bind what had already been bound in heaven. (Matt. 18:18).

**MAT 18:18 "Truly I say to you, whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.**

- a. The “you” in this verse is plural referring to the apostles.

- b. All the apostles had the same power and authority.

## Time

1. The time of the kingdom [the church] was very near.

**MAR 9:1 And He was saying to them, "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power."**

- a. Judas is one who died. (Matt. 27:5).
- b. It is not certain that these words were addressed only to the apostles. Others may have been included.

**MAR 1:15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."**

2. It is significant to constantly emphasize the kingdom was not in the distant future.

## Place

1. The place of its beginning was Jerusalem. (Lk. 24:47-53; Acts 1:4).

LUK 24:47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from **Jerusalem**.

LUK 24:48 "You are witnesses of these things.

LUK 24:49 "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

LUK 24:50 And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them.

LUK 24:52 And they returned to **Jerusalem** with great joy,

LUK 24:53 and were continually in the temple, praising God.

Acts 1:4 Gathering them together, He commanded them **not to leave Jerusalem**, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," {He said,} "you heard of from Me;

2. The kingdom was so near that Jesus instructed them "not to leave Jerusalem."

## Apostles Were Christ's Witnesses

**ACT 1:8 but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth. "**

1. The "you" in context refers to the apostles. (Acts 1:2).

Acts 1:2 until the day when He was taken up {to heaven,} after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen.

2. Jesus had assured the apostles they would "be baptized with the Holy Spirit" in a few days. (Acts 1:5).

Acts 1:5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

3. They were the only ones promised the baptism of the Holy Spirit and were the ones who received it. (Acts 2:1-4).
4. The context shows the pronoun “they” in verse 4 referred to the 12 apostles.
  - a. The “they” referred back to Acts 1:26.
  - b. Acts 2 clearly sets forth the apostles were the only ones on Pentecost who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:14; 2:7; 1:11; 2:37, 43).

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