Research on “The Pentecost”

Acts 1:1,2

Acts 2:1,2,4,43,46,47

Acts 8:5-8

**Acts 1:1, 2**

1 The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

The name *Theophilus* is from two Greek words: *theos* and *philos* – which translated is “friend of God” (*Strong* #2321). We might think of the name to mean “God-loving.” There is no reason to think he was not a real person, possibly Luke’s patron, who helped finance publication of the gospel.

The first account or “former treatise” that Luke wrote was his gospel, which was a record of Jesus’ healings and teachings. Both works – Acts and Luke – are to be read as a whole unit.

2 Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:

The first phrase is a description of Jesus’ ascension which actually inaugurates the apostles’ mission. “Luke stresses the Spirit-guided apostolic character of the Christian gospel. This is the first of 57 occurrences of ‘the Spirit’ [or Holy Ghost] in the book of Acts” (*AB Acts* 196).

The word “ghost” in Greek is *pneuma*. It is “breath, Spirit, wind, air” (*Strong* #4151) and is associated with the concept of movement. The Scriptures open with: “The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters” (Gen. 1:2).

“whom he had chosen” alludes to Luke 6:13: “he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles.” “Apostle” in Greek is *apostolos*, which means, “a messenger, one sent on a mission” (*Strong* #652).

**Acts 2:1, 2, 4, 6, 16, 17**

1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

Pentecost is fifty days after Passover. “This is evidently the particular day for which the community had been instructed to ‘wait.’ The word for ‘Pentecost’ was used by Diaspora Jews for a day-long harvest festival more commonly known as the ‘Feast of Weeks’” (NIB 64). This event occurs approximately one week after Jesus’ ascension.

Luke introduces the phrase, “with one accord,” which might be considered as a definition of the early church. On this day church is fulfilling its destiny – “all with one accord in one place.”

2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

“Luke makes the reception of the Spirit perceptible, at first as something heard, then as something seen.

The noun echos, ‘noise,’ [or ‘sound’] may allude to the verb echei of Exod 19:16, part of the description of the theophany at Sinai. The ‘wind’ symbolizes the Spirit’s force now at work in the world. The Spirit’s presence was all-pervasive, filling the house. The wind symbolizing that presence gives unity to the group in it” (AB Acts 238).

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

“The Spirit also gives extraordinary insight to those it fills. The prophet who is filled with the Spirit of prophecy is able to set aside the processes of human intellect, such as conjecture and guesswork, and replace them with ‘true’ knowledge of a divinely inspired intellect. The practical result, according to Philo, is that the Spirit-filled prophet is given an enriched capacity to exegete Scripture – to interpret the biblical word after the mind of God. Surely Luke understands the baptism or ‘filling’ by the Spirit . . . . Thus, the Spirit is the power by which the Scriptures are written through the inspired prophets of old; and these same biblical words inspired by the Spirit are rendered accurately and with keen insight into the human (and especially Israel’s) condition by the power of this same Spirit” (NIB Acts 55).

“Speaking in tongues” is a gift of the Spirit in I Cor. 12:10, 28, 30; 14:2, 4-6, 9.

43And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

“Fear came, etc. This seems to be spoken of the awe which fell upon the whole people, and restrained them from interfering with the disciples. Just as at the first settlement of Israel in the land of Canaan God laid the fear of them and the dread of them upon all the hind ([Deuteronomy 11:25](http://biblehub.com/deuteronomy/11-25.htm)), so now the fear engendered by the events on the day of Pentecost, by the signs and wonders which followed and by the wonderful unity and holiness of the newborn Church, so wrought upon every soul at Jerusalem that all enmity was paralyzed, and the disciples had time to multiply and to consolidate and establish themselves before the storm of persecution fell upon them” ([www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), Pulpit Commentary).

46And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

“*And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple*] The Greek is more emphatic. Render, **And day by day attending continually** with one accord.

“At the Temple they were likely to meet with the greatest number of devout listeners; and we shall find that the first Christians did not cease to be religious Jews, but held to all the observances of their ancient faith, its feasts, its ritual, and its hours of prayer, as far as they could do so consistently with their allegiance to Jesus. We find ([Acts 21:20-24](http://biblehub.com/context/acts/21-20.htm)) the elders of the Church in Jerusalem urgent on St Paul that he should shew his zeal for the Law by taking upon him the vow of a Nazarite, and should so quiet the scruples of Jews, and of such Christian brethren as were more zealous for the Law than St Paul himself.

*“and breaking bread from house to house*] Perhaps better, *breaking bread* **at home**; though the A. V., if rightly understood, gives the sense very well. What is meant is, that the specially Christian institution of the breaking of bread was not a part of the service in the Temple, but was observed at their own homes, the congregations meeting now at one house now at another. The connection of the Lord’s Supper with the Passover meal at its institution, made the Christian Sacrament essentially a service which could be celebrated, as at the first institution it was, in such a room as that where the Passover meal was eaten.

*‘did eat their meat*] i.e. took their food, their ordinary meals.

*“with gladness*, &c.] because those who were able to contribute to the support of the poorer members of the Church were delighted to do so, and thus all over-anxious care for the morrow was removed from the whole community.

*“singleness of heart*] Having but one end in view, that the faith of Christ should be spread abroad as widely as possible” ([www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), Cambridge Bible).

47Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

“*praising God*] because their hearts were full of thankfulness for the knowledge of Jesus as His Christ.

*“having favour with all the people*] As it was said of Christ, “the common people heard Him gladly” ([Mark 12:37](http://biblehub.com/mark/12-37.htm)), so it seems to have been with His Apostles. The first attack made on them is ([Acts 4:1](http://biblehub.com/acts/4-1.htm)) by the priests, the captain of the Temple and the Sadducees” ([www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), Cambridge Bible).

“And the Lord added - It was the Lord who did this. There was no power in man to do it; and the Christian loves to trace all increase of the church to the grace of God.

“Added - Caused, or inclined them to be joined to the church.

‘The church - To the assembly of the followers of Christ - τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ tē ekklēsia. The word rendered "church" properly means "those who are called out," and is applied to Christians as being called out, or separated from the world. It is used only three

Acts 8:5-8

“Philip the Evangelist. Philip, a close associate of the martyred Stephen and one of the seven officials appointed to oversee the funds of Jerusalem’s Hellenist Christians, had fled Jerusalem after Stephen’s stoning. He preached in a number of towns and made quite a few converts among the Samaritans. These were Jews who did not acknowledge the Jerusalem Temple because they considered their own sanctuary on Mount Gerizim to be more sacred. During his travels in Samaria, he met an Ethiopian (the only one mentioned in the whole of the New Testament) who was returning to Africa after a pilgrimage to Jerusalem” (After Jesus 46).

“Philip in Samaria. The graphic details of the ministry of Philip which follow, were doubtless obtained from Philip himself. St. Luke stayed at his house at Caesarea and made the acquaintance of his four virgin daughters, prophetesses. During St. Paul’s three years’ imprisonment at Caesarea, St. Luke doubtless had much intercourse with Philip, with whose liberal views he was in sympathy. The historical character of the following narratives stands upon a firm basis. In later years Philip migrated with his daughters to Tralles, in Asia Minor, of which he became the first bishop” (Dummelow 829).

5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.

“Philip, the second of the seven enumerated in 6:5, and one of the Hellenistic believers expelled

from Jerusalem in the persecution directed against Hellenistic Christians, traveled to the north and proclaimed ‘the Christ’ to Samaritans” (EBC 9.356).

“This account of Philip’s ministry to a high-ranking Ethiopian government official represents a further step in the advance of the gospel from its strictly Jewish confines to a full-fledged Gentile mission. Though a Gentile, the official was probably a Jewish proselyte or near-proselyte and was therefore viewed by Luke as still within a Jewish religious milieu. He had been to Jerusalem to worship, was studying the prophecy of Isaiah, and was open to further instruction from a Jew” (EBC 9.362).

6And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

“With one accord - Unitedly, or with one mined. Great multitudes of them did it.

“Gave heed - Paid attention to; embraced” ([www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), Barnes’ Notes).

“**Hearing and seeing the miracles which he did;**these miracles were as so many evidences of the truth he spake, by which he showed God’s authority for what he said” ([www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), Matthew Poole’s Commentary).

7For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed *with them:* and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.

“**Unclean spirits, crying with loud voice;**this is frequently mentioned, as **[Matthew 8:29](http://biblehub.com/matthew/8-29.htm%22%20%5Co%20%22And%2C%20behold%2C%20they%20cried%20out%2C%20saying%2C%20What%20have%20we%20to%20do%20with%20you%2C%20Jesus%2C%20you%20Son%20of%20God? are you come here to torment us before the time?)**[**Mark 1:26**](http://biblehub.com/mark/1-26.htm)**3:11 5:8**[**Luke 4:41**](http://biblehub.com/luke/4-41.htm), to show how doth these evil spirits are to be forbid and kept from tormenting and destroying of us; and they are called *unclean spirits,*because they delight in sin, and instigate men unto it, which is spiritual uncleanness, and defile the soul” ([www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), Matthew Poole’s Commentary).

8And there was great joy in that city.

“ great joy in that city—over the change wrought on it by the Gospel, as well as the cures which attested its divine character” ([www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), Jamieson-Fausset-Brown).