

Acts 1:12-23

Pentecost and God Dwelling with His People

? Can you think of an unexpected event in history that changed the world forever? How did it change the course of history?

Acts 2:1-13 (NIV)

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

5 Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. 6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. 7 Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans? 8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? 9 Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome 11 (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” 12 Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?” 13 Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

? When the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, how did people respond? How do you think you would have responded?

Exodus: 13:17-22 (NIV)

17 When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, “If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt.” 18 So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea. The Israelites went up out of Egypt ready for battle.

19 Moses took the bones of Joseph with him because Joseph had made the Israelites swear an oath. He had said, “God will surely come to your aid, and then you must carry my bones up with you from this place.” 20 After leaving Sukkoth they camped at Etham on the edge of the desert. 21 By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. 22 Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.

? Based on this Old Testament passage, why is it significant that the Holy Spirit comes as wind and fire?

The Temple

"The Temple in Jerusalem was the focus of the whole Jewish life and way of life...The point of the Temple..is that it was where heaven and earth met. It was the place where Israel's God, YHWH, had long ago promised to put his name, to make his glory present." - NT Wright, pg. 95-96 *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*

? In the OT, God's appearances to his people were fewer and at significant moments in the story. How did the people interact with God when he wasn't physically there with them?

? God dwelled within an inner chamber of the temple called the Holy of Holies that only specific priests could enter. Why was He set apart from the people?

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 (NIV) "16 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit

dwells in your midst? 17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple."

? Considering that God's dwelling in the temple was set apart from his people in the OT, why is it significant that Paul calls us God's temple?

? In the OT, the temple was strictly for the Israelites. In Acts, the Holy Spirit enables the disciples to speak to people of all nations. What is significant about this difference?

? How is it possible for God's spirit to dwell with us now when we used to have to be separated from Him?

? Can you think of a time when you experienced God's presence in your own life? How did you respond?

For Discussion and Accountability

? How would consciously remembering that God's spirit dwells within you change the way you live on a day-to-day basis?