

JESUS IS THE SON OF MAN

"WHO IS JESUS?" FAMILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE - Week 38, April 29

JESUS IS THE SENDER OF THE SPIRIT

"But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate [Spirit] will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you."

JOHN 16:7

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he disciples were waiting. Jesus had told them to stay in Jerusalem until the promised gift of the Spirit came, and you can bet they were excited. Jesus had promised them power with the Holy Spirit, and that they would be his witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and all the way to the ends of the earth. How would it happen? What would it look like? Feel like? And when would it come? You can imagine their anticipation.

The city was bustling with Jewish pilgrims from all

over the world. They had come for the Feast of Weeks, also known as the Feast of Harvest or the Feast of Dedication. It was a time of celebration and thanking the Lord for the gift of the harvest, the gift of food in abundance!

The Jews had added more to the celebration, also making it a time to thank God for the gift of the Law.¹⁰ The feast started fifty days after Passover, which was about the time they were first given the law at Mount Sinai, so the timing made sense. Do you remember the story? It's a dramatic one—the mountain was wrapped

in smoke and the Lord came down in fire. The whole mountain shook and the sound of trumpets and thunder grew louder and louder. Then Moses went up and received the Ten Commandments. God was making the Israelites his treasured possession and into a kingdom of priests, who by obeying him were to be different from the other nations. Through them the world would see what it looks like when God is in charge. But when Moses came down the mountain after his special meeting with God, he found the people worshipping that awful golden calf, and that day about 3,000 men died as punishment. Moses went back up the mountain and received new tablets, and the Lord renewed the covenant. Then Moses came down with his face shining because he had been in the presence of the Lord, which was an incredibly special thing.

Now we fast-forward to the celebration of the law and the harvest, the Feast of Weeks. Today we call it by its Greek name, Pentecost, which means fiftieth. It was on this day that the disciples were all gathered together in one room, waiting for the gift Jesus had promised them. Suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And if that wasn't dramatic enough, tongues of fire appeared, dividing and resting on each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different languages—languages they had not known before!

God was making them a kingdom of priests again, only this time they had God's Spirit inside them. The fire of God's presence on Mount Sinai was now a tongue of fire on their heads and coming into their hearts. They each had God's Spirit and could carry this power with them wherever they went. God's presence was not limited to the mountain or the temple any longer.¹¹

Hearing the commotion, a crowd gathered, and each one heard the disciples speaking of the wonders of God in their own language. They were amazed! "What does this mean?" they asked (Acts 2:12).

Peter stood and addressed the crowd. He explained that what was happening was spoken by the prophet Joel many years before. God's Spirit would now be poured out on all believers. And he told them pretty bluntly that the same Jesus whom they had crucified was now sitting at the right hand of God. The people felt awful and wondered what they should do. Peter told them, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

And so on that day 3,000 people believed and were baptized. And these people, from many different languages and nations, were filled with the Spirit, and would begin to carry the good news of Jesus to the world.

Pentecost, which began as a celebration of God's abundant harvest, would now be a celebration of the abundance of the Spirit. And God's Spirit would travel in the

hearts of his people, his priests, to the nations of the world until the day of God's final harvest.



REFLECT

1. Why do you think God chose this particular time to send the Spirit? Who was in Jerusalem at the time?
2. Name all the Bible stories you can think of where God reveals himself in the form of fire.
3. How many parallels can you find between the giving of the law at Sinai and the giving of the Spirit at Pentecost?
4. The law of God is called the Torah in Hebrew, meaning *teaching*. What did Jesus say the Holy Spirit would do in John 14:26?

BIBLE REFERENCE ACTS 2:1-13

KEY VERSE JOHN 16:7