

# BIBLE 903

## THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

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## SECTION OBJECTIVES

**Read these objectives.** When you have completed this section, you should be able:

5. To tell about the meaning, message, and fulfillment of Pentecost.
6. To give details concerning the ministry of Peter, Stephen, and Philip in the area of home missions, and the ministry of Paul in foreign missions:
  - 6.1 To tell about the ministry of the early church as it began with home missions and soon spread to involve foreign missions.
  - 6.2 To give information about Peter as a preacher, Stephen as the first Christian martyr, and Philip's ministry as an evangelist.
  - 6.3 To give details concerning Paul as an apostle, missionary, and prisoner.

## VOCABULARY

**Study these words** to enhance your learning success in this section.

**animosity** (an' u mos' u tē). Strong hatred; active hostility.

**apprehend** (ap' ri hend'). To seize; to take hold of.

**cite** (sit). To quote; to name or refer to.

**commemorate** (ku mem' u rāt). To call to remembrance by a ceremony.

**contemporaries** (kun tem' pu rer ēz). Persons living in the same period of history as others.

**credentials** (kri den' shulz). Qualifying titles, qualities, or accomplishments.

**evangelist** (i van' ju list). One who preaches the Gospel, especially to the lost.

**impetus** (im' pu tus). Driving force or motive.

**profane** (pru fān'). To treat with contempt, as not being sacred.

**proselyte** (pros' u lit). A person who has been converted from one religion to another.

**scourge** (skerj). To whip or lash severely.

**validity** (vu lid' u tē). The quality of being official and binding.



## PENTECOST

Many people recognize the great importance of what took place at Pentecost, but fail to realize it was a feast which had its roots far back in Old Testament times. In this section we shall examine carefully the meaning, message, and fulfillment of Pentecost.



**Read Exodus 23:14-17; 34:21-23;  
Leviticus 23:9-21;  
Numbers 28:26;  
Deuteronomy 16:9-12;  
II Chronicles 8:12, 13.**



**Meaning.** The children of Israel were commanded to keep three feasts each year unto the Lord their God during Old Testament days—the Feast of

Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles. The first of these feasts was also known as the Feast of Passover, since it **commemorated** the time the Lord passed over the Israelites while destroying the firstborn sons in Egypt. The second feast in the year, the Feast of Weeks, was known also as the Feast of Harvest because at this time the firstfruits of the grain harvest were brought to the Lord as an offering. This Feast of Weeks later came to be known as the Feast of Pentecost. The third yearly feast, the Feast of Tabernacles, was celebrated at the end of the year when all the crops had been harvested. It was also called the Feast of Ingathering. In our study now, we will be focusing on the second of these yearly feasts.

The term *Pentecost* means “fiftieth” day, and this Feast of Weeks derived its name from the fact that seven weeks of seven days were to be numbered from the time the Israelites began to put the sickle to the standing grain (Deuteronomy 16:9). Leviticus 23:15, 16 explains that they were to count from the day after the Sabbath on which they brought the sheaf of the wave offering, seven complete Sabbaths, until the day after the seventh Sabbath, a total of fifty days. Thus, this Feast of Harvest, also known

as the Feast of Weeks, became the Feast of Pentecost. On this occasion of great joy (Deuteronomy 16:11) in Jerusalem, the ascended Lord Jesus sent the Holy Spirit upon the 120 believers gathered in the upper room. On this occasion also people from all parts of the Roman Empire were present in Jerusalem who would become participants in the baptism with the Holy Spirit and who would take the message of His indwelling presence and power to hungry hearts all over the known world.



**Complete these statements.**

- 3.1 The children of Israel were commanded to keep a. \_\_\_\_\_ feasts every b. \_\_\_\_\_ in the place which the Lord had chosen to put His name.
- 3.2 The first of these feasts was the Feast of a. \_\_\_\_\_, also known as b. \_\_\_\_\_, commemorating the time their firstborn sons were spared in the land of c. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3.3 The second feast was called the Feast of a. \_\_\_\_\_, or b. \_\_\_\_\_, which became known as c. \_\_\_\_\_, meaning d. \_\_\_\_\_ day.
- 3.4 The third feast was known as the Feast of a. \_\_\_\_\_, or b. \_\_\_\_\_; it was celebrated at the c. \_\_\_\_\_ of the year when all the crops had been harvested.
- 3.5 The second feast derived its name from the fact that a. \_\_\_\_\_ weeks of b. \_\_\_\_\_ days were counted from the time they began to harvest the c. \_\_\_\_\_ until the day after the d. \_\_\_\_\_ Sabbath, making a total of e. \_\_\_\_\_ days.
- 3.6 On the day of a. \_\_\_\_\_ when b. \_\_\_\_\_ disciples were gathered in the upper room in c. \_\_\_\_\_, the Lord Jesus Christ poured out the Holy Spirit upon them.
- 3.7 People from all over the \_\_\_\_\_ Empire were in the city who would witness this event and would spread the message all over the world.

Having considered the meaning of Pentecost, let us look now at the *fulfillment* of prophecy which took place when the Holy Spirit was poured out on that occasion.



**Read Joel 2:23-32;  
Acts 2.**

somebody with a birthday celebration, you are probably aware of the amount of preparation that has to be made before the appointed time. The time of the party has to be fixed, announcements have to be made, certain people must be invited, the presents have to be purchased, the cake must be decorated—and finally the exciting event takes place.

**Fulfillment.** If you have ever tried to surprise

The three Persons of the Trinity had planned carefully the experience of Pentecost for those who would believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. The

announcement had been made by Joel, the prophet; Jesus Himself had invited the disciples to be present; and the gift of the Holy Spirit was given to the Son by the Father so that He might fill His people with power. The beautiful harmony in the Godhead was also in the hearts of the disciples.

From Acts 1:13–15 and 2:1 we learn that the eleven disciples; the women; Mary, the mother of Jesus, and His brethren—about 120 in all—were in one accord when a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind filled the whole house; and tongues as of fire appeared unto them and sat upon each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit; and they began to speak in languages they had never learned, as the Holy Spirit Himself gave each one this supernatural ability. This power enabled them to praise the Lord in a new way, speaking “the wonderful works of God” (Acts 2:11), and also to proclaim boldly Jesus as Lord (verse 14). Drawn together because of this unusual phenomenon, a multitude “out of every nation under heaven” (both Jews and **proselytes**), were confounded and amazed and marvelled that these who were all Galileans could speak in their tongues. Those who were amazed were also in doubt as to what this meant, but others mocked and said the disciples were full of new wine. Their response caused Peter to stand up with the eleven and explain that what was happening before them was a fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy concerning the last days. He clearly equated the two by stating, “This is that . . .,” even



though the element of tongues is not specifically stated in Joel 2:28, 29. The prophet declared that God would pour out His Spirit in the last days upon all flesh so that the sons and daughters would prophesy, the young men would see visions, and the old men would dream dreams. Joel declared also that the Holy Spirit would be poured out upon the servants and the handmaids. Anointed by the Spirit of God, Peter clearly proclaimed that this new day had begun.

**Answer true or false.**

- 3.8 \_\_\_\_\_ The Day of Pentecost was a surprise to the Godhead.
- 3.9 \_\_\_\_\_ The disciples were together in one accord when the Spirit came.
- 3.10 \_\_\_\_\_ Only the men received the baptism with the Holy Spirit.
- 3.11 \_\_\_\_\_ The 120 believers received power to praise and to proclaim.
- 3.12 \_\_\_\_\_ Only Palestinian Jews in Jerusalem witnessed the unusual phenomenon.
- 3.13 \_\_\_\_\_ All the people were amazed, but some mocked the disciples.

**Complete this activity.**

- 3.14 Describe briefly the details of the prophecy found in Joel 2:28, 29.

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Now that we have noted the meaning and fulfillment of Pentecost, let us focus on the vital *message* which the Lord announced through His apostles on this occasion.

**Message.** An empowered Peter stood before the multitude, some of whom were openly mocking, on the Day of Pentecost and preached boldly about Jesus of Nazareth. He declared in no uncertain terms that they with their wicked hands had taken the Lord of glory and had crucified Him, but that God had raised Him from the dead. In his sermon Peter quoted heavily from the Old Testament, **citing** those passages in the Psalms of David that declared beforehand the resurrection and exaltation of Christ. Further, he stated that Jesus is this same Lord and Christ who received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit and had shed forth, or poured forth, that which they were now seeing and hearing. Upon hearing this moving message, these devout Jews were pricked in their hearts and wondered what they should do about their sin. Peter was happy to tell them that if they would repent of their sin and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, they, too, would receive the same gift of the Holy Spirit that had just been poured out on the disciples. Peter was pleased to inform them (verse 39) that this promise was for them, for their children, and to all that are afar off (which probably referred to the Gentiles of that day), as many as the Lord God would call unto salvation. The glorious result of this marvelous message was that about three thousand people gladly received his word, were baptized, and

were added that day to the assembly of believers in Jerusalem. Others no doubt returned to their own countries rejoicing in the Lord and sharing the Gospel of the kingdom with those who were eager to listen. What a glorious message of hope and happiness we have to share with others when we experience the joy of a personal relationship with Jesus as Lord of our lives and the presence and power of the Holy Spirit working in and through us to help us praise and proclaim Him as our Saviour!



**Peter preached about Jesus of Nazareth.**



**Complete these statements.**

- 3.15 Peter declared that the wicked hands of his hearers had a. \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus of b. \_\_\_\_\_, but God had c. \_\_\_\_\_ Him up.
- 3.16 He quoted from the a. \_\_\_\_\_ of b. \_\_\_\_\_, which prophesied about the c. \_\_\_\_\_ and d. \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.