



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume VII
Issue 167

The Day of Pentecost?

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Over the past century a great deal of emphasis has been placed upon the Hebrew holy *Day of Pentecost*. Many have established their doctrinal systems around their understanding of this Jewish event. Some believe it to be the “birthday of the church,”¹ while others even hold it to be the “standard” for church practice and experience.

Without ever fully examining² the meaning and placement of the *Feast of Pentecost* from the Scriptures themselves, they proceed to firmly arrange their doctrine and practice upon this event. To them the *Day of Pentecost* is the pattern of God’s will and plan for our day.

Yet have they ever considered what actually took place on that specific *Day of Pentecost*, some two millennia ago? We will briefly consider two important points concerning the *Day of Pentecost*.

THE DAY OF PENTECOST WAS A PART OF THE LAW OF MOSES

The Day of Pentecost was a Jewish Feast Day required under the Mosaic Law.

1. For a further study of this subject see the author’s work *Did the Body of Christ Begin at Pentecost?*, Bible Student’s Notebook #1
2. “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (I Thessalonians 5:21).

This feast is also known as the “*feast of weeks*” (Deuteronomy 16:10) and “*feast of harvest*” (Exodus 23:16). The word *Pentecost* actually means “fiftieth”³ because it was observed *fifty days* after the *Feast of First Fruits*. This was one of the seven great annual feasts of the Lord, and the second of three feasts that required all males to be present “*before the Lord*” (Exodus 23:14-17).

Pentecost brought to a close the grain season. The cereal harvest began with barley at *Passover* and ended with wheat at *Day of Pentecost* (Exodus 34:22). (At *Passover* they waved the sheaf. At *Tabernacles* they mark the end of the fruit season.)

In the dispensation of the Grace of God there is no observance of holy days.

During God’s current dealings with mankind there are no special days. The Jewish days (feasts included) are spoken of as “*weak and beggarly elements*” and “*bondage*” by our apostle (Galatians 4:9-11).

3. *Strong’s Greek Lexicon* #4005; “fifty days” (Leviticus 23:16).

(see *PENTECOST*, page 1663)

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At Calvary

William R. Newell (1868-1956)

Years I spent in vanity and pride,
Caring not my Lord was crucified,
Knowing not it was for me He died
On Calvary.

By God's Word at last my sin I
learned;
Then I trembled at the law I'd
spurned,
'Til my guilty soul imploring turned
To Calvary.

Now I've giv'n to Jesus everything,
Now I gladly own Him as my King,
Now my raptured soul can only sing
Of Calvary!

Oh, the love that drew salvation's
plan!
Oh, the grace that brought it
down to man!
Oh, the mighty gulf that God did
span
At Calvary!

Mercy there was great, and grace
was free;
Pardon there was multiplied to me;
There my burdened soul found
liberty
At Calvary

1895

Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

ISSN: 1936-9360

Volume VII, No. 167 – December 16, 2008

This weekly publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7)
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11)
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25)
- true freedom and liberty apart from the law (Galatians 5:1)
- the organic nature of the church, the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12)
- the distinct ministry of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13)
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15)
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13).
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with ...
 - total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14)
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6)
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4)

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Electronic Version (e-mailed to you)

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THE DAY OF PENTECOST WAS A PART OF PROPHECY

The Day of Pentecost was a part of the prophetic program dealing with Israel.

The events surrounding Israel's holy Day of Pentecost reveal that it was a day of prophetic significance.

Peter spoke to his Jewish audience on the **Day of Pentecost** telling them of its prophetic nature:

*“But **this is that** which was spoken by the prophet Joel” (Acts 2:16).*

Peter goes on to quote the prophecy of Joel:

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on My servants and on My handmaidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit; and they shall prophesy” (Acts 2:16-18).

Paul, the apostle, quoting Isaiah 28:11-12 also clearly reveals to us that the tongues (languages) present on the Day of Pentecost were a part of Israel's prophetic program:

“In the law⁴ it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people;⁵ and yet for all that will they not hear Me, saith the Lord” (I Corinthians 14:21).

What was the purpose of the prophesied tongues on the Day of Pentecost?

The Tongues on the Day of Pentecost were for a sign to Israel.

*“Wherefore **tongues are for a sign** ...” (I Corinthians 14:22)*

4. “the Law” is a reference to the Hebrew Scriptures given to Israel: “Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth ... the giving of the law” (Romans 9:4); “because that unto them [the Jews] were committed the oracles of God” (Romans 3:2).
5. “this people” throughout the Scriptures is a reference to Israel.

Signs were a divine requirement under God's relationship with Israel.

*“For the Jews **require a sign**” (I Corinthians 1:22).*

By God's design, Israel was His sign nation; signs were their birthright when He brought them out of Egypt.

*“And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the **first sign**, that they will believe the voice of the **latter sign**” (Exodus 4:8).*

Thus, signs belonged to Israel.

*“We see not **our signs**” (Psalm 74:9).*

Thus, signs belonged in Israel.

*“Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given Me are for **signs and for wonders in Israel** from the LORD of hosts” (Isaiah 8:18).*

Tongues were a sign to unbelieving Israel.

*“Wherefore **tongues are for a sign**, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not” (I Corinthians 14:22).*

Tongues were also the sign of Israel's fall. In I Corinthians 14:20-22 Paul explains the purpose of tongues, quoting Isaiah 28:11-13:

*“For with ... another tongue will He speak to this people ... **that** they might go, and **fall backward**, and be broken, and snared, and taken.”*

The Scripture teaches us that the Day of Pentecost was a part of the Jewish economy: anchored in the Law of Moses, and fulfilled according to God's prophetic plan with the nation Israel. It belonged to a Hebrew dispensation, and with the Circumcision's Twelve Apostles.

The pattern of God's will and plan for our day is the “dispensation of the grace of God” (Ephesians 3:2). We do not look back to Israel's law or prophecy, but to God's current administration of grace and the mystery revealed to us by Paul, the apostle of the uncircumcision. ■



Bible Student's Commentary™

A Survey of Paul's Epistles

#5

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

ROMANS 1:2

“(Which He had promised afore by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures,)”
(KJV)

“(Which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures)”
(BSV)

1:2 – Which

WORD MEANING

Strong's Greek Lexicon #3739 (hos), the “pronoun, who, which, what, that.”

TRANSLATION

“Hos” is translated in the King James Version as: one, other, some, that, what, which, who, whom, whose.

COMMENTARY

The word “which” is a reference back to “the gospel” from the previous verse (:1), i.e., “**The good news** He had promised beforehand through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures.”

1:2 – He had promised afore

WORD MEANING

The phrase “He had promised afore” is translated from one single Greek word – *proepaggellomai*. It appears only this once in Scripture.

Strong Greek Lexicon #4279 (*proepaggellomai*), meaning “to promise of old.” It is a compound word taken from #4253 (*pro* – meaning “in front of, prior to”) and #1861 (*epaggello* – meaning “to announce upon”).

TRANSLATION

“He had before promised” – J.N. Darby Translation

“He promised long ago” – Holman Christian Standard Bible

COMMENTARY

This verse is parenthetical and is referring back, by way of definition, to the “gospel of God” from :1.

Whatever be the promises, in Him is the Yea and in Him is the Amen. – William Kelly, *Notes on the Epistle to the Romans* (1873), page 4.

“For all the promises of God in Him are yea [affirmed], and in Him amen [sure], unto the glory of God by us.” (II Corinthians 1:20).

The good news itself was not a secret, it was indeed prophetic, but there was a *secret element held* within it. There was a fullness of the good news that had been “*kept secret* [hidden] *since the world began*” (Romans 16:25). This divine secret was revealed to Paul. He calls it “*the mystery* [secret] *of the gospel* [good news]” (Ephesians 6:19).

It [Romans] begins with the mention of a Gospel which has always been known (:2) and ends with a “*mystery*” which has never been known

(16:25). It begins with the “*Gospel of God*” promised by the prophets and ends with “*my Gospel*” which none of the prophets ever knew (Romans 16:25; Ephesians 3:3-4). It begins with a Gospel committed by prophecy to the Jew and ends with a Revelation to Gentiles ...

The opening verses (1:1-5) and the closing verses (16:25-26) of the Roman Epistle are most marvelous and wonderful and should demand an exhaustive treatment ... Carefully, compare the following with an open Bible:

ROMANS 1:1-5	ROMANS 16:25- 26
The “ <i>gospel of God</i> ” (:1)	According to “ <i>my Gospel</i> ” (:25)
Promised “ <i>by the Prophets</i> ” (:2)	According to “ <i>revelation</i> ” (:25)
Promised beforehand (no secret) (:2)	A mystery “ <i>kept secret</i> ” (:25)
Always manifest (:2)	“ <i>Now made manifest</i> ” (:26)
Concerning His Son (:3)	Concerning His body, the church (Ephesians 3:3-9)
By prophecy committed to one nation (:3)	By preaching declared to all the nations (:26)
His resurrection out from among the dead (:4)	The resurrection and translation of the Church out from among the dead (I Thessalonians 4:14-17; Philippians 3:11).

This closing passage of Romans is but the foundation statement, or rather the “firstfruits” concerning the “*mystery*.” It is taken up with fullness and detail in Ephesians. Read with care and prayer Ephesians 3:1-11. Note the words enclosed in parenthesis in verses 3-4 (“*as I wrote afore in few words,*” etc.). This refers, we think, to what he had before written to them in Romans 16:25-26. Beginning at this point, the student will find the above comparison will lead him to the very heart of the Epistles, that when “*you read you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ*” (Ephesians 3:4) ... The Roman Epistle opens the way to the secrets of the following Epistles! – Leon Tucker, *Studies in Romans*, pages 28-29.

It is true indeed that for the Gospel and its resulting blessing to be prophetically announced is a very different thing from its being so ministered as to be explained and applied ... The Gospel, although prophetically stated in the Old Testament, was necessarily “*kept silent*” until the Law had run its course; for how could grace be *preached* under a dispensation of Law. But as soon as the time came for the full ministration of grace to begin, then it was *kept in silence* no longer, but was “*manifested*” and by means of [or support of] the prophetic Scriptures, “*made known.*” – Benjamin Wills Newton, *The First and Second Chapters of the Epistle to the Romans* (1897) pages 27-28.

The Epistle [of Romans] does not rise to the height of the Epistle to the Ephesians, where the eternal counsels of God in regard to Christ and the Ecclesia are set before us, and our union with Christ ... dead, risen, and glorified. – A.P. (Adelbert Percy) Cecil, *A Short Summary of the Epistle to the Romans* (1871), page 4.

The gospel of God is “*good news,*” but it is not “*new news.*” The good news was foretold throughout the Hebrew Scriptures in promises, prophecy and type. The first reference is found in Genesis 3:15 – often referred to as “the protevangel” (“*prot*” meaning “*first,*” and “*evangel*” meaning “*gospel*” – “*first gospel*”).

“*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed; It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel*” (**Genesis 3:15**).

1:2 – By

WORD MEANING

Strong’s Greek Lexicon #1223 (dia), “a primary preposition denoting the channel of an act; through.”

1:2 – His

WORD MEANING



Strong's Greek Lexicon #846 (autos), "the reflexive pronoun self."

COMMENTARY

The prophets were "His" – they were representing and speaking for God. They were not giving their own words, ideas, or interpretations – They were speaking the very Word of God.

Peter calls the words of the prophets a "sure word of prophecy" because "no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1:19-21).

1:2 – Prophets

WORD MEANING

Strong's Greek Lexicon #4396 (prophetes), meaning "a foreteller." It is a compound word taken from #4253 (pro – meaning "in front of, prior to") and #5346 (phemi – meaning "to show or make known ...").

TRANSLATION

The word "prophets" is not a translation of the Greek word "prophetes," but rather a transliteration.

COMMENTARY

Both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament *prophets* are primarily persons who speak on the behalf of God (Moses, David, and Solomon, along with others, are called prophets), and not merely persons who foretell the future. – Barclay M. Newman, Eugene A. Nida, *Help for Translators: A Translator's Handbook on Paul's Letter to the Romans*, page 8.

A prophet is first and foremost a man who "fore" tells, but he is "forth" telling as well ... God used them as His special servants to foretell events yet to come, to proclaim this revelation concerning the great and mighty thing which

was yet going to happen. – D. Martin Lloyd-Jones, *Romans, Chapter 1*, Zondervan (1986), page 76.

Paul refers to the prophets 84 times to support his teaching. Prophets are God's spokesmen and the Scriptures contain the promises spoken by God's prophets. – James G. Poole, *Notes on Romans, Grace & Truth*, page 5.

1:2 – In

WORD MEANING

Strong's Greek Lexicon #1722 (en), "a primary preposition denoting (fixed) position (in place, time or state), and (by implication) instrumentality (medially or constructively)."

1:2 – The holy

WORD MEANING

Strong Greek Lexicon #40 (hagios), meaning "sacred."

Vine's Expository Dictionary, "fundamentally signifies separated."

Spiros Zodhiates (*The Complete Word Study Dictionary*), "practically means perfect."

TRANSLATION

"Hagios" is translated in the *King James Version* as: holy, saint.

COMMENTARY

The Scriptures are *holy* because were they *separated* from all other writings. The Bible stands apart from all other books. It is God's book, and He has no other. In all of literature it has never had an equal. Although its beginnings were some 3,500 years ago, it has miraculously endured with great and immeasurable power. Through the years many have found it to be their source of life and refuge.

They are not ordinary writings; they are not

just human writings, they are not merely men setting down ideas ... these are holy writings ... They belong to God, and they are holy because they belong to God. – D. Martin Lloyd-Jones, *Romans, Chapter 1*, Zondervan (1986), page 80.

Even when contrasting the two dispensations, and exhibiting the superior glory and value of the second, on account of its greater definiteness and distinctness, its exhibition of the spirit and actual substance of the truth, he [Paul, the apostle] nevertheless admits that the old dispensation was glorious, and that the books containing its revelation were sacred. – Lucius R. Paige, *A Commentary on the New Testament*, 1857, page 9.

1:2 – Scripture

WORD MEANING

Strong's Greek Lexicon #1124 (*graphe*), meaning “a document.”

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, “A writing.”

Noah Webster (*American Dictionary of the English Language*, 1828) tells us that our English word “Scripture” comes from the Latin, “*scriptura*” which comes from “*scribo*” meaning “to write.” He defines it in its primary sense as “a writing; any thing written.” Then he tells us that it is “appropriately, and by way of distinction, the books of the Old and New Testament; the Bible.”

TRANSLATION

It is translated in the *King James Version* only as “Scripture.” It is translated “writing” in some other versions (*Darby Translation, Young's Literal Translation, Bible in Basic English, Bible in World English, Montgomery's Century Version*).

COMMENTARY

In this verse Paul shows forth the doctrine of Scripture:

- A. The Scriptures are God's Word
 (“Which He had promised ...”)
- B. God used men to record His Word
 (“... by His prophets ...”)
- C. The Scriptures are Holy
 (“... in the Holy Scriptures.”)

We can tell by the context of our verse that the “writings,” or “*graphe*,” under discussion are “holy” and that they are the source of the promised good news concerning the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 1:1-3).

“Scriptures” (*graphe*) are not just any “writings.” They are *THE* Writings – *THE* Scriptures. They stand *unique* and *alone* from the very breath of God. “*Graphe*” is used with the definite article *THE* as we would use the word “book” with the definite article *THE* to describe the Word of God – it is *THE* Book.

A study of the usage of this Greek word “*graphe*” in the Greek Scriptures will prove quite revealing as to its meaning. Thus we are reminded that the Scriptures define themselves.

Throughout the Greek Scriptures the word “Scripture” (*graphe*) is an unmistakable reference to quotations from both the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures. In its usage we can clearly determine the following regarding the “Scriptures”:

- ◆ They can be read (Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10), as they are directly related to *words* (Romans 4:3; 9:17; Romans 10:11).
- ◆ They are directly tied to the knowledge of God (Matthew 22:29; Mark 12:24).
- ◆ They are our absolute standard, without which we would be in error (Matthew 22:29; Mark 12:24).
- ◆ They are prophetic, foretelling future events (Matthew 6:54, 56; Mark 14:49; 15:28; Luke 4:21; John 13:18; 17:12).

- ◆ They were written by God's Prophets (Matthew 26:56; Luke 24:27; Romans 16:26).
- ◆ They are the actual words of God – *the Word of God* (II Timothy 3:16-17; Romans 9:17; c.f. Exodus 9:16).
- ◆ They are given by the special inspiration of God (II Timothy 3:16-17; c.f. Luke 4:4; Genesis 2:7; John 6:63).
- ◆ They speak about the Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Acts 8:35; 17:2-3; 18:28; I Corinthians 15:3-4).
- ◆ They include all three divisions of the Hebrew Scriptures – the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms (Luke 24:44).
- ◆ They include the Greek Scriptures – examples: the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John (I Corinthians 15:3-4; I Timothy 5:18), and Paul's writings (II Peter 3:15-16).
- ◆ They are preserved, permanent, unbreakable, and unchangeable (John 10:35).
- ◆ They are sometimes hard to understand (II Peter 3:15-16).
- ◆ They can be wrested (twisted) by those who are unlearned to their own destruction (II Peter 3:15-16).
- ◆ They need to be studied – searched, tracked, investigated and explored (John 5:39; Acts 17:11).
- ◆ They are not for private, or personal (*i.e.*, one's own individual) interpretation (or explanation) (II Peter 1:20). We must therefore study to find out God's meaning. The Scriptures are their own explanation. Thus we are to learn the meaning of the words in the local and remote contexts.
- ◆ They require that our spiritual eyes be opened for understanding (Luke 24:31-32, 45; c.f. Ephesians 1:18).
- ◆ They are to be the basis of our reasoning, as they alone are the standard of truth – we test everything by them (Acts 17:2-3; c.f. John 5:39).
- ◆ They are the source of our spiritual power and ability (Acts 18:24). We are to be well *versed* in them.
- ◆ They are to be searched daily. Such a searching is a noble work before God (Acts 17:11) – as opposed to merely Sunday listening, we are to be involved in daily searching.
- ◆ They are profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction (II Timothy 3:16-17).
- ◆ They are for our perfecting (maturing), to completely furnish us to do all of God's good works (II Timothy 3:16-17).

Andrew Jukes (1815-1901)

Andrew John Jukes was born in Bombay in 1815, the eldest child of a doctor. In 1827, he was sent to school at Harrow. He left in 1832 and received a commission in the army of the East India Company and was posted to Poona. He returned to England to enter Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1838, and in 1840 won the important Hulsean Prize. In 1842, he was made Deacon to serve in St. John's Church, Hull. At that time he began to have scruples about Infant Baptism, and after discussion with his Vicar and Bishop left the Church of England.

He then gave himself to independent study of the Scriptures, and in 1847 the first of some thirty titles

listed in the British library catalogue was published. At the time he was ministering to a house church in Hull that eventually built him a chapel, opened in 1866. The next year, he published *The Second Death and the Restitution of All Things*. It caused bitter controversy in his congregation and led to a breakdown in the author's health. He left Hull in 1868 and eventually settled near his son in Highgate in 1869. His teaching and writing ministry continued until his death in 1901.

Source: *A Hope in Hell*, John Lefroy, 1998