

POWER OF PENTECOST: LUKE'S MISSIOLOGY IN ACTS 1—2

Craig S. Keener

I have been writing a commentary on Acts, a biblical book that provides more than enough insights by itself for this series on New Testament missiology. The line between writing a missiological commentary on Acts and developing Luke's missiology in Acts would be rather thin; Acts is about mission. I am therefore focusing the discussion on the opening two chapters of Acts, which set the tone for the rest of the book by showing how God's Spirit empowers crosscultural mission.¹ The beginning of Acts recapitulates the end of Lk 24,² hence functions as the pivot between Luke's Gospel and Acts. It is thus a critical section for showing how the message of his Gospel will apply to the church. In this introductory section of Acts, Acts 1:8 is central: "You will be witnesses ... to the ends of the earth once the

¹These two chapters go beyond the introduction proper (and certainly beyond the preface), but are nevertheless foundational for the rest of Acts (with e.g., Steve Walton, "Where Does the Beginning of Acts End?" 447-67 in *The Unity of Luke-Acts* [ed. Joseph Verheyden; BETL 142; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1999], esp. 466).

²As generally noted, e.g., Rudolf Pesch, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (2 vols.; Evangelisch-KathKomNT 5; Zürich: Benziger Verlag, 1986), 1:61, 72; J. Bradley Chance, *Acts* (SHBC; Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2007), 34; Deniz R. Miller, *Empowered for Global Mission: A Missionary Look at the Book of Acts* (foreword by John York; N.p.: Life Publishers, 2005), 56-60; M. D. Goulder, *Type and History in Acts* (London: S. P. C. K., 1964), 16-17; Mikeal C. Parsons, *The Departure of Jesus in Luke-Acts: The Ascension Narratives in Context* (JSNTSup 21; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 189-90. For such recapitulation elsewhere, see e.g., Josephus *Ag. Ap.* 2.1; Chariton *Chaer.* 5.1.1-2; David Edward Aune, *The New Testament in Its Literary Environment* (LEC 8; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987), 90, 117; Daniel Marguerat, *Les Actes des Apôtres (1-12)* (Commentaire du Nouveau Testament, 2nd series, 5 A; Genève: Labor et Fides, 2007), 36.

Spirit comes on you.” We will examine this verse in more detail in a few moments.

In this essay we will briefly survey the following points:

1. The *Promise* of Pentecost (1:4-8)
2. *Preparation* for Pentecost (prayer and leadership; 1:12-26)
3. The *Proofs* of Pentecost (2:1-4)
4. The *Peoples* of Pentecost (2:5-13)
5. The *Prophecy* of Pentecost (2:17-21)
6. The *Preaching* of Pentecost (2:22-40)
7. The *Purpose* of Pentecost (2:41-47)

Thus, I will try to survey some elements of various paragraphs in this opening section of Acts, though some of these paragraphs (especially the first one) will require much fuller comment for our purposes than others.

1. The *Promise* of Pentecost (1:4-8)

Jesus calls his disciples’ attention to a source of power that is so central that they must remain in Jerusalem, awaiting the Father’s promise, rather than attempting to fulfill the mission in their own strength (1:4). Luke here emphasizes that we cannot succeed in Christ’s mission without Christ’s power. Jesus already set the example for this dependence in Luke’s Gospel (as Acts will reiterate, 10:38).³ As introductions in ancient literature often traced the primary themes that a book would address,⁴ this introductory paragraph is one of the paragraphs in Acts’ opening section that we must explore in greater detail.

Jesus talks with his disciples about the “kingdom” (1:3) and the Spirit (1:4-5). Biblical prophets had already associated the outpouring

³For parallels between the model of Jesus in Luke’s Gospel and the church’s experience of the Spirit, see e.g., Charles H. Talbert, *Literary Patterns, Theological Themes, and the Genre of Luke-Acts* (SBLMS 20; Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1974), 16; Roger Stronstad, *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1984), 51; Robert L. Brawley, *Luke-Acts and the Jews: Conflict, Apology, and Conciliation* (SBLMS 33; Atlanta: Scholars, 1987), 24-25.

⁴See e.g., Polybius 3.1.3—3.5.9, esp. 3.1.7; 11.1.4-5; *Rhet. Alex.* 29, 1436a.33-39; Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Thuc.* 19; *Lysias* 24; Cicero *Or. Brut.* 40.137; Virgil *Aen.* 1.1-6; Aulus Gellius pref. 25; Soranus *Gynec.* 1.intro.2; 1.1.3; 2.5.9 [25.78]; Philostratus *Vit. Apoll.* 7.1; 8.1.

of the Spirit with the end-time restoration of Israel (e.g., Is 44:3; 59:21; Ezek 36:26-27; 37:14; 39:29; Joel 2:28-29).⁵ The disciples, then, ask the obvious question: is Jesus about to restore the kingdom? (1:6).

Jesus answers that the consummation of the kingdom will eventually come (1:7), but the Spirit is given now so that the disciples can prepare for the kingdom's coming by evangelizing the nations (1:8). Because the disciples expected the Spirit eschatologically, they would understand Jesus' promise of the Spirit as involving the coming of the future. Once the disciples understood that the Spirit would precede the consummation of the kingdom, they should understand that the Spirit was giving them power to live out some of the life of the future kingdom in the present, an idea found in many first-century Christian texts (Rom 8:11, 23; 14:17; 1 Cor 2:9-10; 2 Cor 5:5; Gal 5:5; 6:8; Eph 1:13-14; 2 Thess 2:13; Heb 6:4-5).⁶

In 1:8, Jesus promises that they will receive "power" when the Spirit comes. What does Luke mean by power? Although not all references involve healing and exorcism, these constitute the most common expressions of that power in Luke's narrative. Thus Jesus casts out demons with power in Lk 4:36; power was present for healing

⁵The eschatological association of the Spirit is stronger in the prophets than in early Judaism, but cf. Sir 36:14-16; Max-Alain Chevallier, *Souffle de Dieu: le Saint-Esprit dans le Nouveau Testament* (vol. 1: *Ancien Testament, Hellénisme et Judaïsme, La tradition synoptique, L'oeuvre de Luc*; Le Point Théologique 26; Paris: Éditions Beauchesne, 1978), 31-32; Wonsuk Ma, *Until the Spirit Comes: The Spirit of God in the Book of Isaiah* (JSOTSup 271; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 175-78, 210-11; W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology* (4th ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 208-17; Robert P. Menzies, *The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology with special reference to Luke-Acts* (JSNTSup 54; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 104-8; idem, *Empowered for Witness: The Spirit in Luke-Acts* (London, New York: T & T Clark International, 2004), 94-98, 232-43.

⁶E.g., the "downpayment" of the Spirit (2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; Eph 1:14); on this meaning, see e.g., Gen 38:17-18, 20 LXX; Oscar Cullmann, *The Early Church* (ed. A. J. B. Higgins; London: SCM, 1956), 117; George Eldon Ladd, *The New Testament and Criticism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), 91; *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity: A Review of the Greek Inscriptions and Papyri published in 1976* (vol. 1; ed. G. H. R. Horsley; North Ryde, N.S.W.: The Ancient History Documentary Research Centre, Macquarie University, 1981), 1, §33, p. 83; for first fruits (Rom 8:23), see Neill Q. Hamilton, *The Holy Spirit and Eschatology in Paul* (Scottish Journal of Theology Occasional Papers 6; Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1957), 19; George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 370.

in Lk 5:17; power was coming from Jesus to heal in Lk 6:19; power came from Jesus to heal in Lk 8:46; and Jesus gave the Twelve power over demons in Lk 9:1. Likewise, in Acts 3:12, Peter insists that it is not by their own “power” or holiness that the man was healed, but by Jesus’ name. The authorities demand in Acts 4:7, “By what *power*, or in what name,” the man was healed, inviting the same emphasis. In Acts 6:8, Stephen, “full of grace and power,” was doing wonders and signs.⁷ In Acts 10:38, Peter declares that Jesus healed all who were oppressed by the devil because he was anointed with the Spirit and power. When John Wimber and others have spoken of “power evangelism,” they have echoed a frequent Lukan motif.⁸

We should note how closely Luke’s account connects this empowerment with the Spirit. The Hebrew Scriptures often associated the Spirit with prophetic empowerment, among other activities. By the era of the early church, early Jewish sources are apt to focus on this activity even more specifically, as a number of scholars, most extensively Robert Menzies, have shown.⁹ Because the Spirit was so

⁷A dominant Greek term for “miracles” in the Gospels and Acts is literally “powers”; we should perhaps not read too much into the etymological connection, but Luke might at least play on it (cf. e.g., Lk 10:13; 19:37; Acts 2:22; 8:13; 19:11; see *BDAG*). Paul can also associate “power” with miracles in Paul (Rom 15:19), though he more often associates it with the “weak” miracle-working message itself (Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 1:18, 24; 2:4-5; Phil 3:10; 1 Thess 1:5; cf. 2 Tim 1:8). On power’s association with the Spirit in Paul, see Gordon D. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 35-36; Peter J. Gräbe, “Du/namiq (in the Sense of Power) as a Pneumatological Concept in the Main Pauline Letters,” *BZ* 36 (2, 1992): 226-35.

⁸See John Wimber with Kevin Springer, *Power Evangelism* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1986).

⁹See e.g., Menzies, *Empowered*, 49-101; idem, *Development*, 53-112; idem, “Spirit and Power in Luke-Acts: A Response to Max Turner,” *JSNT* 49 (1993): 11-20; Max Turner, *Power from on High: The Spirit in Israel’s Restoration and Witness in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 86-104; Youngmo Cho, *Spirit and Kingdom in the Writings of Luke and Paul: An Attempt to Reconcile these Concepts* (foreword by R. P. Menzies; Paternoster Biblical Monographs; Waynesboro, GA; Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2005), 10-51; Craig S. Keener, “The Function of Johannine Pneumatology in the Context of Late First Century Judaism” (Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1991), 69-77; idem, *The Spirit in the Gospels and Acts: Divine Purity and Power* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), 10-13, 31-33; in the OT, Christopher J. H. Wright, *Knowing the Holy Spirit through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006), 63-86.

closely associated with prophecy and the kinds of activities undertaken by prophets, Jesus was promising the disciples that the same Spirit who spoke through the prophets would speak through them. If we are too accustomed to that notion to catch its full force, we might imagine Jesus speaking to us and saying, “You will be like Isaiah,” or, “You will be like Jeremiah,” or, “You will be like Deborah.”

Because Luke has already noted that Jesus’ commission is grounded in Scripture (Lk 24:44-46), he invites us to hear echoes of Scripture in Jesus’ words here. The promise that the Spirit would empower them¹⁰ as “witnesses to ... the ends of the earth” reflects the language of Isaiah.¹¹ Isaiah spoke of Israel or its remnant being “witnesses” for YHWH (Is 43:10; 44:8), a role here applied to witnesses for Jesus. Isaiah spoke of God empowering his people through his Spirit in that time (e.g., Is 32:15; 44:3), including to speak for him (Is 42:1; 48:16; 59:21; 61:1). The “ends of the earth” also echoes Isaiah, especially Is 49:6, later quoted in Acts 13:47.¹² In that

¹⁰In the narrative itself Luke refers especially to the Eleven (1:2), but they become paradigmatic, rather than exclusive, witnesses (see 2:33; 22:14-15, 18; 23:11; 26:16). Luke writes history, but ancient historiography usually deliberately provided role models (refs). For the Twelve as the witnesses, cf. Max Turner, “Every Believer as a Witness in Acts?—in Dialogue with John Michael Penney,” *AshTJ* 30 (1998): 57-71; Andreas J. Köstenberger and Peter T. O’Brien, *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth: A Biblical Theology of Mission* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2001), 126-27; but even the immediate context indicated witnesses present for the events beyond the Twelve (Lk 24:33, “those with them”); see Richard J. Dillon, *From Eye-Witnesses to Ministers of the Word* [AnBib 82; Rome: Biblical Institute, 1978], 291). For their paradigmatic role, cf. Roland Gebauer, “Mission und Zeugnis. Zum Verhältnis von missionarischer Wirksamkeit und Zeugenschaft in der Apostelgeschichte,” *NovT* 40 (1, 1998): 54-72; Peter G. Bolt, “Mission and Witness,” 191-214 in *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts* (ed. I. Howard Marshall and David Peterson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

¹¹On Isaiah in Acts, including Acts 1:8, see especially and most usefully David W. Pao, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002).

¹²The exact phrase is quite rare in pre-Lukan Greek literature; see Robert C. Tannehill, *The Acts of the Apostles* (vol. 2 of *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*; 2 vols.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 17; followed also by Pao, *Isaianic Exodus*, 94. Most recognize the Is 49:6 allusion based on Acts 13:47; see e.g., Tannehill, *Acts*, 17; Jacques Dupont, *The Salvation of the Gentiles: Essays on the Acts of the Apostles* (trans. John R. Keating; New York: Paulist, 1979), 18; French L. Arrington, *The Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction and Commentary* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1988), 9; Thomas S. Moore, “‘To the End of the Earth’: The Geographical and Ethnic Universalism

passage, it applies to Paul's mission,¹³ indicating that this mission in Acts applies not only to the Twelve, but to Jesus' movement of whom they were the most visible representatives and leaders. That is clear also because Luke is explicit that the empowerment of the Spirit necessary for the task is not only for the Twelve but also for all believers (2:38-39), whatever our various roles.

Ancient writers sometimes stated a thesis or offered a preview toward the beginning of their work,¹⁴ and scholars often observe that Acts 1:8 provides one very rough outline for Acts, which moves from Jerusalem (Acts 1—7) to Judea and Samaria (8; 9:31-43) and toward the ends of the earth (10—28).¹⁵ Whereas Luke's Gospel begins and ends with the Temple in Jerusalem, Acts moves from Jerusalem to Rome. The overall narrative movement in Acts, then, is from heritage to mission.¹⁶

Where does Luke envision the "ends of the earth"? His contemporaries in the Mediterranean world spoke of the far west as Spain or (beyond it) the "river" Ocean.¹⁷ To the east, they thought of such regions as Parthia, and beyond it, India¹⁸ and China.¹⁹ They knew

of Acts 1:8 in Light of Isaianic Influence on Luke," *JETS* 40 (3, 1997): 389-99; Pao, *Isaianic Exodus*, 92.

¹³Paul's own letters suggest that he read his own mission in light of them; cf. J. Ross Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul "In Concert" in the Letter to the Romans* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 32-33 (more fully, see 29-33).

¹⁴Cf. e.g., Thucydides 1.23.6; Pliny *N.H.* 8.1.1; 18.1.1; 33.1.1; 34.1.1; 36.1.1; 37.1.1; Philostratus *Vit. Apoll.* 7.1; 8.1.

¹⁵E.g., Tannehill, *Acts*, 9; Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 106; Martin Hengel, "The Geography of Palestine in Acts," 27-78 in *The Book of Acts in Its Palestinian Setting* (ed. Richard Bauckham; vol. 4 in *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting*; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Carlisle: Paternoster, 1995), 35; Marguerat, *Actes*, 20.

¹⁶A central argument in my forthcoming Acts commentary, but often emphasized, though stated differently, especially as "from Jerusalem to Rome" (e.g., Homer A. Kent, *Jerusalem to Rome: Studies in the Book of Acts* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1972]).

¹⁷For Spain, see e.g., Strabo 1.1.5, 8; 3.2; Seneca *Nat. Q.* 1.pref.13; Silius Italicus 1.270; 15.638; Pliny *Ep.* 2.3.8; *Greek Anthology* 4.3.84-85; for Oceanus, see e.g., Pliny *N.H.* 2.67.167; Philostratus *Hrk.* 8.13.

¹⁸Contrasting Spain and India as opposite ends of the earth, see Strabo 1.1.8; Seneca *Nat. Q.* 1.pref.13; Juvenal *Sat.* 10.1-2.

¹⁹China was well known, and the Roman empire had trade ties there; e.g., Pliny *N.H.* 12.1.2; 12.41.84; Lionel Casson, *The Ancient Mariners: Seafarers and Sea Fighters of the Mediterranean in Ancient Times* (2nd ed.; Princeton, NJ:

of peoples to the north such as Scythians, Germans, Britons, and a place called Thule, possibly Iceland.²⁰ They thought of the southern ends of the earth as what they called “Ethiopia,” meaning Africa south of Egypt.²¹ In addition to important trade ties with China over the Silk Road (and Roman merchants traveling as far as Vietnam),²² they had trade ties as far south in Africa as Tanzania.²³ The most common sense of “Ethiopia” involved the Nubian kingdom of Meroë, so that Philip is proleptically reaching the southern “ends of the earth” already when he shares good news with an official from that kingdom later in Acts (8:26-40).²⁴

The “ends of the earth” thus does not simply involve Rome, where Luke’s narrative ends.²⁵ Yet Rome is strategic for his narrative,

Princeton University Press, 1991), 198, 206. China also knew of Rome (Lin Ying, “Ruler of the Treasure Country: the Image of the Roman Empire in Chinese Society from the First to the Fourth Century AD,” *Latomus* 63 [2, 2004]: 327-39), and the “Silk Road” already functioned by this period (Kevin Herbert, “The Silk Road: The Link between the Classical World and Ancient China,” *Classical Bulletin* 73 [2, 1997]: 119-24).

²⁰On Thule at the ends of the earth, see e.g., Seneca *Med.* 379; Pliny *N.H.* 4.16.104; Eric Herbert Warmington and Martin J. Millett, “Thule,” 1521-22 in *OCD*.

²¹E.g., Strabo 1.1.6; Paus. 1.33.3-6; Josephus *Ant.* 11.33, 186, 216, 272; see further Clarice J. Martin, “A Chamberlain’s Journey and the Challenge of Interpretation for Liberation,” *Semeia* 47 (1989): 105-35, here 118-19; T. C. G. Thornton, “To the end of the earth: Acts 1:8,” *ExpT* 89 (12, 1978): 374-75; James M. Scott, “Luke’s Geographical Horizon.” 483-544 in *The Book of Acts in Its Graeco-Roman Setting* (ed. David W. J. Gill and Conrad Gempf; vol. 2 in *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting*; 6 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Carlisle: Paternoster, 1994), 536; Martin Hengel, *Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity* (trans. John Bowden; London: SCM, 1979; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 80; Witherington, *Acts*, 290.

²²Casson, *Mariners*, 205 (also noting trade “with Malaya and Java”).

²³J. Nelson Kraybill, *Imperial Cult and Commerce in John’s Apocalypse* (JSNTSup 132; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 104.

²⁴It proleptically foreshadows the future mission to the south (Martin, “Chamberlain’s Journey”; Craig Keener, “The Aftermath of the Ethiopian Eunuch,” *A.M.E. Church Review* 118 [385, Jan. 2003]: 112-24). Favoring the historical plausibility of that narrative, see Craig Keener, “Novels’ ‘Exotic’ Places and Luke’s African Official (Acts 8:27),” *AUSS* 46 (1, 2008): 5-20.

²⁵Cf. also Tannehill, *Acts*, 17; Jacob Jervell, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (KEKNT 17; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 116; Beverly Roberts Gaventa, *The Acts of the Apostles* (ANTC; Nashville: Abingdon, 2003), 65-66; Bertram Melbourne, “Acts 1:8: Where on Earth Is the End of the Earth?” 1-14

because Luke writes to people in the Roman Empire for whom the evangelization of Rome would impact the entire empire, the sphere where most of his original audience lived. Paul reaching Rome in Acts 28 is thus a proleptic fulfillment of the mission, like Philip preaching to the African official or Peter preaching to the Diaspora crowds present at the feast of Pentecost. Acts does not conclude with the completion of the mission but offers a model for its continuance and completion: the good news to the ends of the earth, including parts of the world that Luke's audience could not have known about.²⁶ We may add that if any starting point was privileged, it was Jerusalem (cf. also Rom 15:19), but otherwise God's people have just started where they were.²⁷ When the west sent most missionaries, the west may have been their own practical starting point, but missions has never been a distinctly western idea. Indeed, in ancient Mediterranean conceptualizations of the world, the movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome specifically involved an Asian movement missionizing southern Europe.²⁸

Another biblical allusion appears in Acts 1:9-11, in addition to the allusion in Acts 1:8. This allusion, like the allusion to Isaiah we have

in *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa* (ed. Emory J. Tolbert; n.p.: Sabbath in Africa Study Group, 2005), esp. 11-14.

²⁶On the open-endedness of Acts, see e.g., James D. G. Dunn, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), 278; Daniel Marguerat, *La Première Histoire du Christianisme (Les Actes des apôtres)* (LD 180; Paris, Genève: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1999), 333; idem, *The First Christian Historian: Writing the 'Acts of the Apostles'* (SNTSMS 121; trans. Ken McKinney, Gregory J. Laughery and Richard Bauckham; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 152-54, 230; Brian Rosner, "The Progress of the Word," 215-34 in *Witness to the Gospel*, 232-33. Open or incomplete endings were frequent in ancient literature (e.g., Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Demosth.* 58; Valerius Maximus 9.15. ext. 2; Plutarch *Fame Ath.* 8, *Mor.* 351B; *Fort. Alex.* 2.13, *Mor.* 345B; *Fort. Rom.* 13, *Mor.* 326C; *Uned. R.* 7, *Mor.* 782F; Isocrates *Demon.* 52, *Or.* 1; Demetrius *Style* 5.304; *Hdn* 8.8.8; *L.A.B.*; *Mk* 16:8; especially J. Lee Magness, *Sense and Absence: Structure and Suspension in the Ending of Mark's Gospel* [SBLSemS; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1986]).

²⁷For such local applications, see e.g., Musimbi Kanyoro, "Thinking Mission in Africa," 61-70 in *The Feminist Companion to the Acts of the Apostles* (ed. Amy-Jill Levine with Marianne Blickenstaff; Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim; Edinburgh: T & T Clark International, 2004), 62. On Jerusalem's theological, salvation-historical priority, see e.g., Dunn, *Acts*, 3-4.

²⁸See Craig Keener, "Between Asia and Europe: Postcolonial Mission in Acts 16:8-10," *AJPS* 11 (2008): forthcoming.

noted above, also implies Spirit-empowered witness, because it evokes the model of prophetic empowerment. In this passage, Jesus ascends to heaven after promising the Spirit. The most obvious allusion to an ascension that Luke could expect all of his biblically informed audience to catch is an allusion to Elijah.²⁹ When he ascended to heaven, he left for Elisha, his successor, a double portion of the Spirit who had rested on him (2 Kgs 2:9-14).³⁰ As that OT account provided for the transition between narratives about Elijah's ministry and those about Elisha's, so the present account functions as a transition between Jesus' ministry in Luke's Gospel and that of his appointed agents in Acts.³¹ Again, we see an allusion to the same Spirit who empowered the prophets.

2. Preparation for Pentecost (Acts 1:12-26)

Although we will address preparation for Pentecost much more briefly than the promise of Pentecost, this account is also crucial to Luke's point. Part of the narrative involves reestablishing the leadership structure of the Twelve, assigned by Jesus, presumably (as in some other ancient models) as an expression of expectation in Israel's restoration.³² For them to restore the leadership structure was

²⁹On Gentile ascension narratives more generally, see e.g., Charles H. Talbert, "The Myth of a Descending-Ascending Redeemer in Mediterranean Antiquity," *NTS* 22 (4, July 1976): 418-40; Rick Strelan, *Strange Acts: Studies in the Cultural World of the Acts of the Apostles* (BZBW 126; Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 42-47; Wilfried Eckey, *Die Apostelgeschichte: Der Weg des Evangeliums von Jerusalem nach Rom* (2 vols.; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2000), 57-60; for the closer Jewish ascension narratives, see e.g., Arie W. Zwiep, *The Ascension of the Messiah in Lukan Christology* (NovTSup 87; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 41-75; Paul Palatty, "The Ascension of Christ in Lk-Acts (An exegetical critical study of Lk 24,50-53 and Acts 1,2-3, 9-11)," *Bible Bhashyam* 12 (2, 1986): 100-17.

³⁰For this biblical account as the closest model, see also e.g., Zwiep, *Ascension*, 59-63, 194; Kenneth Duncan Litwak, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke-Acts: Telling the History of God's People Intertextually* (JSNTSup 282; London, New York: T&T Clark International, 2005), 149-50.

³¹On succession narratives and Acts, see Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Luke-Acts in its Mediterranean Milieu* (NovTSup 107; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 19-55 (though most scholars do not find as much biographic character in Acts as Talbert does).

³²See discussion in Turner, *Power*, 301; Pao, *Isaianic Exodus*, 123-29. Most scholars recognize the choice of the Twelve as symbolizing a restoration

to prepare for Jesus' promise in faith. Some things happen only when God is ready, but he allows those who trust him to prepare for them in advance (e.g., 1 Chron 22:14-16; 28:11-19).

A key element that frames the section about preparing for the Spirit's coming is the emphasis on prayer together and unity (1:14; 2:1). Prayer is a frequent theme in Luke-Acts,³³ and often precedes the coming of the Spirit there.³⁴ Thus of the four Gospels only Luke mentions that the Spirit descended on Jesus when he was "praying" (Lk 3:21-22). When the assembly of believers prayed together in Acts

movement, analogous to 1QS 8.1-2; 4Q259 2.9 (Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971], 234-35; F. F. Bruce, "Jesus and the Gospels in the Light of the Scrolls," 70-82 in *The Scrolls and Christianity: Historical and Theological Significance* [ed. Matthew Black; London: S.P.C.K., 1969], 75-76; James H. Charlesworth, *Jesus within Judaism: New Light from Exciting Archaeological Discoveries* [ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1988], 138; E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985], 104).

³³See e.g., François Bovon, *Luke the Theologian: Thirty-Three Years of Research (1950-1983)* (trans. Ken McKinney; Allison Park, PA: Pickwick Publications, 1987), 400-3; Allison A. Trites, "The Prayer Motif in Luke-Acts," 168-86 in *Perspectives on Luke-Acts* (ed. Charles H. Talbert; Danville, VA: Association of Baptist Professors of Religion; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1978); Robert J. Karris, *What Are They Saying about Luke and Acts? A Theology of the Faithful God* (New York: Paulist, 1979), 74-83; Steven F. Plymale, *The Prayer Texts of Luke-Acts* (AUST 7, Theology and Religion 118; New York: Peter Lang, 1991); Kyu Sam Han, "Theology of Prayer in the Gospel of Luke," *JETS* 43 (4, 2000): 675-93; Ignatius Jesudasan, "Prayer in the Acts of the Apostles," *Journal of Dharma* 28 (4, 2003): 543-48; Michael Green, *Thirty Years that Changed the World: The Book of Acts for Today* (Grand Rapids, Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2002), 268-73; Frank Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 142-46; David Crump, *Jesus the Intercessor: Prayer and Christology in Luke-Acts* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999; originally WUNT 2.49; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1992); S. John Roth, "Jesus the Pray-er," *CurTM* 33 (6, Dec. 2006): 488-500; Peter T. O'Brien, "Prayer in Luke-Acts," *TynBul* 24 (1973): 111-27.

³⁴For the connection, cf. e.g., J. H. E. Hull, *The Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles* (London: Lutterworth, 1967; Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1968), 48; Earl Richard, "Pentecost as a Recurrent Theme in Luke-Acts," 133-49 in *New Views on Luke and Acts* (ed. Earl Richard; Colledgeville, MN: Glazier, Liturgical Press, 1990), 135; Ju Hur, *A Dynamic Reading of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts* (JSNTSup 211; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 270. The point need not be prayer for the Spirit so much as the Spirit coming to prayerful people (Graham H. Twelftree, "Prayer and the Coming of the Spirit in Acts," *ExpT* 117 (7, 2006): 271-76).

4:31, they were filled with the Spirit. Peter and John prayed for the Samaritans to receive the Spirit (8:15). Saul was filled with the Spirit (9:17) after he had been praying (9:11). The Spirit likewise fell on Cornelius and his guests (10:44), and Cornelius had been praying (10:30). Although Luke does not always associate the Spirit with prayer, the connection is frequent enough, and sometimes clear enough (especially in 4:31), to reinforce the importance of prayer in preparing for the Spirit's coming. Luke's first volume is most explicit on this point: the discussion of prayer in Lk 11:1-13 climaxes in prayer's chief object, the gift of God's own person and presence, namely, the Holy Spirit (Lk 11:13). In that passage, Jesus promises that God will not withhold this blessing from any who ask and seek insistently for it.³⁵

3. The *Proofs* of Pentecost (2:2-4)

Three signs publicly demonstrate the Spirit's coming on the day of Pentecost: wind (2:2), fire (2:3), and worship in languages unknown to the speakers (2:4).³⁶ Of the three, the third will call for the greatest comment.

The wind and fire here both evoke earlier biblical theophanies (e.g., Ex 3:2; 2 Sam 5:24; 1 Kgs 19:11-12; Job 38:1; Ps 29:3-10; 97:2-5; 104:3; Is 6:4; 29:6; 30:27-28; 66:15; Ezek 1:4),³⁷ and scholars often compare them with phenomena accompanying God's revelation at Sinai (Ex 19:16-20; Deut 4:11, 24).³⁸ Moreover, these theophanic

³⁵The context may involve persistence, but it probably also involves the issue of honor and shame, perhaps the honor of God bound up with his promise or with the need of his people (see Kenneth Ewing Bailey, *Poet and Peasant: A Literary Cultural Approach to the Parables in Luke* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976], 126-28; Alan F. Johnson, "Assurance for Man: The Fallacy of Translating *Anaideia* by 'Persistence' in Luke 11:5-8," *JETS* 22 [2, June 1979]: 125-31; E. W. Huffard, "The Parable of the Friend at Midnight: God's Honor or Man's Persistence?" *Restoration Quarterly* 21 [3, 1978]: 154-60).

³⁶I treated Acts 2 at greater length in Keener, *Spirit*, 190-213; and especially in my forthcoming Acts commentary.

³⁷Cf. also *Jub.* 1:3; *L.A.E.* 25:3; *4 Ezra* 3:19; for Greek analogies to theophanies, cf. Pieter W. Van der Horst, "Hellenistic Parallels to the Acts of the Apostles," *JSNT* 25 (Oct. 1985): 49-60, here 49-50. In the context of Elijah's succession, see 2 Kgs 2:11.

³⁸E.g., Jervell, *Apostelgeschichte*, 133, 138; Matthias Wenk, *Community-Forming Power: The Socio-Ethical Role of the Spirit in Luke-Acts* (JPTSup 19; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 246-51; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*

elements recall a theme that we observed earlier: the Spirit comes as a foretaste, an initial experience, of the future world.³⁹ Wind evokes the image of end-time, resurrection life that may be inferred in Ezek 37:9, 14;⁴⁰ fire often evoked eschatological judgment,⁴¹ including when paired with the Spirit in Lk 3:16 (see Lk 3:9, 17).⁴² The eschatological era was breaking into the present, a point reinforced explicitly by Peter's opening explanation that the outpoured prophetic Spirit demonstrated the arrival of the "last days" (2:17), the eschatological time of salvation (2:20-21).

Tongues, however, is the most significant of the three signs for Luke, being repeated at initial outpourings in Acts 10:46 and 19:6. This speaking in tongues is also more strategic for Luke's narrative because what follows hinges on it: tongues provides the catalyst for the multicultural audience's recognition of God's activity (2:5-13), and the

(AB 31; New York: Doubleday, 1998), 234. Scholars differ on whether this passage in Acts contains specific allusions to Sinai, however.

³⁹Cf. also e.g., C. F. Sleeper, "Pentecost and Resurrection," *JBL* 84 (Dec. 1965): 389-99, here 390; William Barclay, "Acts ii.14-40," *ExpT* 70 (1958-59): 196-99, here 198-99; Henry J. Cadbury, "Acts and Eschatology," 300-11 in *The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology: Essays in honour of Charles Harold Dodd* (ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1964), 300; A. P. O'Hagan, "The First Christian Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13)," *SBFLA* 23 (1973): 50-66; M.-É. Boismard and A. Lamouille, *Les Actes des Deux Apôtres* (Études Bibliques, n.s. 12; 3 vols.; Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1990), 2:101.

⁴⁰For this background here, see e.g., Joseph A. Grassi, "Ezekiel xxxvii.1-14 and the New Testament," *NTS* 11 (2, Jan. 1965): 162-64, here 164; F. F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Book of the Acts: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 54; Richard N. Longenecker, *Acts* (ExpBC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 66; Eddie Gibbs, "The Launching of Mission: The Outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, Acts 2:1-41," 18-28 in *Mission in Acts: Ancient Narratives in Contemporary Context* (ed. Robert L. Gallagher and Paul Hertig; AmSocMissS 34; Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2004), 21.

⁴¹E.g., Is 26:11; 66:15-16, 24; CD 2.4-6; *1 En.* 103:8; *Sib. Or.* 4.43, 161, 176-78; 2 Thess 1:6-7.

⁴²See discussion in Menzies, *Development*, 137-44; Keener, *Spirit*, 127. Cf. also Lk 12:49-50 (as understood in John A. T. Robinson, *Twelve New Testament Studies* [SBT 34; London: SCM, 1962], 161; James D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit: A Re-examination of the New Testament Teaching on the Gift of the Spirit in relation to Pentecostalism Today* [SBT, 2d ser., 15; London: SCM, 1970], 42).

starting point for Peter's message: "This is what Joel meant ..." (2:16-17).

Further, tongues does not appear here arbitrarily, as one possible sign among many. Instead, it relates to Acts' theme articulated in Acts 1:8: Spirit-inspired, cross-cultural witness. Luke recounts that they were "speaking in other languages even as the Spirit was giving them inspired utterance" (2:4). Peter goes on to explain the phenomenon biblically as a form of inspired, prophetic speech, noting that it fulfills Joel's prediction that God's people would prophesy (2:17-18). But Luke's emphasis in 1:8 is prophetic witness for Christ, bringing the "word of the Lord" (e.g., 8:25; 12:24; 13:48-49). Why then does he choose to point to tongues as an important example of this, mentioning it at three distinct outpourings of the Spirit? Undoubtedly, Luke emphasizes the connection between tongues and the Spirit because it so well symbolizes his theme of Spirit-empowered *cross-cultural* witness. If God's people can worship God in other people's languages, how much more can they share the good news through languages that they share in common? That is, worshiping God in other people's languages shows that God has empowered the church to cross all cultural and linguistic barriers with his gospel.⁴³

Here is where early Pentecostals picked up on a connection that most (though not all) traditional scholars historically missed.⁴⁴ Late

⁴³See Craig S. Keener, "Why Does Luke Use Tongues as a Sign of the Spirit's Empowerment?" *JPT* 15 (2, 2007): 177-84; idem, *3 Crucial Questions about the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 69; idem, *Gift & Giver: The Holy Spirit for Today* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 180; John V. York, *Missions in the Age of the Spirit* (foreword by Byron D. Klaus; Springfield, MO: Logion, 2000), 80, 185-86; Francis Watson, *Paul, Judaism, and the Gentiles: Beyond the New Perspective* (rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 68-69; cf. earlier e.g., William Wrede, *The Messianic Secret* (trans. J. C. G. Greig; reprint, Cambridge: James Clarke & Company, 1971), 232; Alfred Wikenhauser, *Die Apostelgeschichte übersetzt und erklärt* (RNT 5; Regensburg: Pustet, 1938; 4th ed., 1961), 38; R. P. C. Hanson, *The Acts in the Revised Standard Version, With Introduction and Commentary* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1967), 63-64; and especially George Eldon Ladd, *The Young Church* (New York: Abingdon, 1964), 56; Dupont, *Salvation*, 52, 59; Krister Stendahl, *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles and Other Essays* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), 118-19; John J. Kilgallen, *A Brief Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (New York, Mahwah: Paulist, 1988), 16.

⁴⁴Still, some others have seen the connection between tongues and crosscultural ministry or unity, especially earlier in history; see e.g., Origen *Comm. Rom.* on Rom 1:14; Chrysostom *Hom. Cor.* 35.1; Bede *Comm. Acts* 2.3A; Leo the Great

nineteenth-century radical evangelicals stressed holiness, missions, and healing. Many sought what they called the “baptism in the Holy Spirit” and were praying for God to provide “missionary tongues,” which they believed were supernaturally endowed languages that would enable them to skip the lengthy process of language-learning in missions.⁴⁵ The early Pentecostals experienced tongues-speaking in this expectant milieu.

The earliest Pentecostals sought “missionary tongues” and sought the Spirit for empowerment for mission (1:8).⁴⁶ Many left for foreign countries to try out their “missionary tongues,” and many were cruelly disappointed. Although Pentecostals kept tongues for prayer (as in 1 Cor 14:13-14), most abandoned the “missionary tongues” idea.⁴⁷ Yet

Sermon 75.2; more recently, cf. J. W. Packer, *Acts of the Apostles* (Cambridge Bible Commentary; Cambridge: University Press, 1966), 27; and most scholars listed above.

⁴⁵See e.g., Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2004), 33-34; Gary B. McGee, “The Radical Strategy in Modern Mission: The Linkage of Paranormal Phenomena with Evangelism,” 69-95 in *The Holy Spirit and Mission Dynamics* (ed. C. Douglas McConnell; Evangelical Missiological Society Series 5; Pasadena: William Carey, 1997), 77-78, 80-83.

⁴⁶Gary B. McGee, “Early Pentecostal Hermeneutics: Tongues as Evidence in the Book of Acts,” 96-118 in *Initial Evidence: Historical and Biblical Perspectives on the Pentecostal Doctrine of Spirit Baptism* (ed. Gary B. McGee; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991), 102; idem, “The Radical Strategy,” 47-59 in *Signs & Wonders in Ministry Today* (ed. Benny C. Aker and Gary B. McGee; foreword by Thomas E. Trask; Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1996), 52-53; James R. Goff, Jr., “Initial Tongues in the Theology of Charles Fox Parham,” 57-71 in *Initial Evidence: Historical and Biblical Perspectives on the Pentecostal Doctrine of Spirit Baptism* (ed. Gary B. McGee; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991), 64-65; Douglas Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit: Theologies of the Early Pentecostal Movement* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, 2003), 25, 49-50, 74, 76, 97; Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., *The Azusa Street Mission & Revival: The Birth of the Global Pentecostal Movement* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 41-42, 236-37, 243, 252; see especially Gary B. McGee, “Shortcut to Language Preparation? Radical Evangelicals, Missions, and the Gift of Tongues,” *IBMR* 25 (July 2001): 118-23.

⁴⁷Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2001), 47-51; Gary B. McGee, *People of the Spirit: The Assemblies of God* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2004), 77-78; Neil Hudson, “Strange Words and Their Impact on Early Pentecostals: A Historical Perspective,” 52-80 in *Speaking in Tongues: Multi-Disciplinary Perspectives* (ed. Mark J. Cartledge; SPCI; Waynesboro, GA;

at the risk of sounding controversial, I believe that they were *right* about the connection between missions and tongues-speaking that they saw in Acts. Granted, neither in Acts nor in early Pentecostalism did tongues provide a substitute for language-learning (nor, I might add regretfully, does it usually perform that service for scholars preparing for their doctoral language exams). While people have sometimes recognized the languages spoken,⁴⁸ that does not seem to be the primary purpose of the gift.

Yet tongues is important precisely because it aptly illustrates Luke's emphasis on the power of the Spirit to speak for God across cultural barriers. Tongues is not an arbitrary sign, but a sign that God has empowered his servants to exalt him in others' languages. Even among charismatic scholars, there is not absolute agreement whether every *individual* who receives this empowerment prays in tongues.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, those who observe Luke's narrative closely should recognize, whatever their own experience or theology, that tongues evidences the *character* of the experience: God has empowered his witnesses to cross cultural barriers with his gospel.

Bletchley, Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2006), 61-63; Allan Anderson, "To All Points of the Compass: The Azusa Street Revival and Global Pentecostalism," *Enrichment* 11 (2, Spring 2006): 164-72, here 167; especially Gary B. McGee, "Strategies for Global Mission," 203-24 in *Called & Empowered: Global Mission in Pentecostal Perspective* (ed. Murray A. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus and Douglas Petersen; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), 204 (noting its waning already by 1906). By contrast, Parham never abandoned it (Anderson, *Pentecostalism*, 190).

⁴⁸E.g., Wayne E. Warner, *The Woman Evangelist: The Life and Times of Charismatic Evangelist Maria B. Woodworth-Etter* (Studies in Evangelicalism 8; Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1986), 256-57; Rex Gardner, *Healing Miracles: A doctor investigates* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1986), 38, 142-43; McGee, "Shortcut"; idem, *People of Spirit*, 24, 46-47, 57, 61, 64, 75; Robeck, *Mission*, 268-69; Gordon Lindsay, *John G. Lake: Apostle to Africa* (Dallas, TX: Christ for the Nations, 1981), 25, 27; Edith Blumhofer, "Portrait of a Generation: Azusa Street Comes to Chicago," *Enrichment* 11 (2, Spring 2006): 95-102, here 96, 99; Vinson Synan, *Voices of Pentecost: Testimonies of Lives Touched by the Holy Spirit* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 2003), 60, 76-77, 84, 101-2; most extensively, Ralph W. Harris, *Acts Today: Signs & Wonders of the Holy Spirit* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1995), 108-30.

⁴⁹See e.g., Henry I. Lederle, "Initial Evidence and the Charismatic Movement: An Ecumenical Appraisal," 131-41 in *Initial Evidence*; earlier, see e.g., McGee, "Hermeneutics," 107-10; Jacobsen, *Thinking in Spirit*, 293, 314-13, 395 n. 4.

It is probably no coincidence that Pentecostalism in one century experienced perhaps the most massive growth rates of any Christian movement in history, given that it was birthed in a context that emphasized holiness (uncompromised devotion to God), prayer, faith and missions. Of course, that connection also serves as a warning, because many movements that began with such emphases and growth rates eventually cooled and were supplanted by other movements of God's Spirit. We do not retain the Spirit merely by retaining a heritage or tradition that enshrines a past experience of the Spirit, or simply repeating what our predecessors have done. As we have seen, the earliest Pentecostals were flexible, correcting their ideas where needed.⁵⁰ To maintain the blessing that inaugurated Pentecostalism, we need what made it really work: *God's Spirit*. As we noted at the beginning of this paper, we cannot do his work without him.

4. The *Peoples* of Pentecost (Acts 2:5-13)

Luke's narrative goes on to reinforce the point that we have just observed with a prophetic foreshadowing of the gospel reaching the ends of the earth. Luke indicates the presence of Diaspora Jews "from every nation under heaven" (2:5). Although they are Jewish, the breadth of their geographic exposure foreshadows the mission to the nations laid out in 1:8,⁵¹ just like the African "ends of the earth" in 8:26-40 or evangelizing in the heart of the empire in 28:16-31.

Although there is no absolute consensus, most scholars think that Luke here alludes to the account of the Tower of Babel.⁵² (This was

⁵⁰Early Pentecostalism exhibited flexibility on secondary theological questions (Henry I. Lederle, *Treasures Old and New: Interpretations of "Spirit-Baptism" in the Charismatic Renewal Movement* [Peabody: Hendrickson, 1988], 29-31, esp. 29; see also Walter J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals* [Peabody: Hendrickson, 1988; reprint of London: SCM, 1972], 32, 331-36). Among more recent examples of change: today Pentecostal scholarship is flourishing. The Spirit's shaping of our intellectual perspectives, though not always emphasized traditionally, is important (cf. Craig Keener, "'Fleshly' versus Spirit Perspectives in Romans 8:5-8," 211-29 in *Paul: Jew, Greek and Roman* [ed. Stanley Porter; PAST 5; Leiden: Brill, 2008]).

⁵¹Cf. e.g., Martin Dibelius, *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles* (ed. H. Greeven. Trans. M. Ling; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956), 106; F. J. Foakes-Jackson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (MNTC; London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1931), 11; Robinson, *Studies*, 167.

⁵²E.g., C. F. D. Moule, *Christ's Messengers: Studies in the Acts of the Apostles* (New York: Association, 1957), 23; Bruce, *Commentary*, 64; Justo L.

the view of many ancient commentators⁵³ and early Pentecostals⁵⁴ as well as that of many modern scholars.) Luke provides a list of nations from which these Jewish worshipers came (2:9-11), and such a list would evoke most easily the Bible's first list of nations in Gen 10.⁵⁵ That list was followed in Gen 11:1-9 by God coming down to scatter the languages.⁵⁶ Whereas God scatters languages there in judgment, he scatters languages here to bring a new cross-cultural *unity* in the Spirit.⁵⁷

Cross-cultural unity is a major activity of the Spirit. The Azusa Street Revival occurred in a historical context of revivals elsewhere in

González, *Acts: The Gospel of the Spirit* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2001), 39; Stendahl, *Paul*, 117; Bert B. Dominy, "Spirit, Church, and Mission: Theological Implications of Pentecost," *SWJT* 35 (2, 1993): 34-39; D. Smith, "What Hope After Babel? Diversity and Community in Gen 11:1-9; Exod 1:1-14; Zeph 3:1-13 and Acts 2:1-13," *HBC* 18 (2, 1996): 169-91; F. Scott Spencer, *Acts* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 32-33; Georgette Chéreau, "De Babel à la Pentecôte. Histoire d'une bénédiction," *NRTh* 122 (1, 2000): 19-36; Alexander Venter, *Doing Reconciliation: Racism, Reconciliation and Transformation in the Church and World* (Cape Town, South Africa: Vineyard International Publishing, 2004), 155; Max Turner, "Early Christian Experience and Theology of 'Tongues'—A New Testament Perspective," 1-33 in *Speaking in Tongues: Multi-Disciplinary Perspectives* (ed. Mark J. Cartledge; SPCI; Waynesboro, GA; Bletchley, Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2006), 32.

⁵³Cyril of Jerusalem *Catechetical Lecture* 17.16-17; Arator *Acts* 1; Bede *Comm. Acts* 2.4; patristic sources in Marguerat, *Actes*, 81 n. 45.

⁵⁴Anderson, *Pentecostalism*, 44.

⁵⁵E.g., Scott, "Horizon," 529-30. The geographic content is similar (Goulder, *Type and History*, 153-54, 158; Moule, *Messengers*, 24); early Judaism continued to use this list of nations, as noted in Scott, "Horizon," 507-22; idem, "Geographical Perspectives in Late Antiquity," 411-14 in *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (ed. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000), 412-13; idem, *Paul and the Nations. The Old Testament and Jewish Background of Paul's Mission to the Nations with Special Reference to the Destination of Galatians* (WUNT 84; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1995); Dean Philip Bechard, *Paul Outside the Walls: A Study of Luke's Socio-Geographical Universalism in Acts 14:8-20* (AnBib 143; Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2000), 209-31.

⁵⁶With Goulder, *Type and History*, 158.

⁵⁷Cf. González, *Acts*, 39; Hinne Wagenaar, "Babel, Jerusalem and Kumba: Missiological Reflections on Genesis 11:1-9 and Acts 2:1-13," *IntRevMiss* 92 (366, 2003): 406-21; Frank D. Macchia, "Babel and the Tongues of Pentecost: Reversal or Fulfillment? A Theological Perspective," 34-51 in *Speaking in Tongues: Multi-Disciplinary Perspectives* (ed. Mark J. Cartledge; SPCI; Waynesboro, GA; Bletchley, Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster Press, 2006).

the world, including the Welsh Revival and the outpouring of the Spirit at Pandita Ramabai's orphanage in India. The major human figure providing leadership in the Azusa Street Revival was William Seymour, an African-American man of prayer, in a time of severe racial segregation in the United States; the revival was multicultural.⁵⁸ Frank Bartleman, a white American participant in the revival, celebrated that "The color line was washed away by the blood."⁵⁹ Unfortunately, it was washed away only temporarily, before the social realities of Jim Crow laws in the southern U.S. and other factors led to a new segregation.⁶⁰ Seymour's white mentor Charles Parham criticized the events at Azusa Street in racial terms, and Seymour, feeling betrayed, shifted the focus that his preaching emphasized in Acts 2. Seymour noted that in Acts 2, the outpouring of the Spirit involved crossing cultural barriers. The true reception of the Spirit must involve ethnic reconciliation and unity among Christ's followers.⁶¹ Most nations in the world have minority cultures among them; most of us can think of people groups that are despised by or hostile to our own. As Seymour came to emphasize through his bitter experience with Parham, the true experience of the Spirit must go beyond speaking in other people's languages under the inspiration of

⁵⁸See Robeck, *Mission*, 88, 137-38; testimony in Stanley M. Horton, *I & II Corinthians: A Logion Press Commentary* (Springfield, MO: Logion, Gospel Publishing House, 1999), 66 n. 29; cf. Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 80, 109-11, 165-69, 172, 178-79, 182-83, 221; idem, "Seymour, William Joseph," 778-81 in *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (ed. Stanley M. Burgess, Gary B. McGee, and Patrick H. Alexander; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 778-81; idem, "The Lasting Legacies of the Azusa Street Revival," *Enrichment* 11 (2, Spring 2006): 142-52, here 148-49; Leonard Lovett, "Black Holiness-Pentecostalism," 76-84 in *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, 83; David D. Daniels, III, "God Makes no Differences in Nationality: The Fashioning of a New Racial/Nonracial Identity at the Azusa Street Revival," *Enrichment* 11 (2, Spring 2006): 72-76; Jacobsen, *Thinking in Spirit*, 63, 260-62.

⁵⁹Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street* (foreword by Vinson Synan; Plainfield, NJ: Logos, 1980; reprint of 1925 ed.), 54.

⁶⁰Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 72-73; see similarly in India, Yong, *Spirit Poured*, 56-57.

⁶¹See e.g., Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., "William J. Seymour and 'The Bible Evidence,'" 72-95 in *Initial Evidence*, 81-89; Jacobsen, *Thinking in Spirit*, 78.

the Spirit. We need to work for that unity to which tongues-speaking points.

The rest of Acts develops this theme. For example, despite the conflict between Hebrews and Hellenists in 6:1, the new Hellenist leaders are themselves full of the Spirit (6:3, 5, 10; 7:51, 55).⁶² These bicultural ministers carry the mission forward across a cultural barrier not yet breached by the Twelve, setting the example for them (e.g., 8:25).⁶³ The Spirit continues to drive God's own resistant people across cultural barriers (8:29; 10:19; 15:28); God baptizes new groups in the Spirit so that they become the Jerusalem believers' partners in mission, not just recipients of their ministry (8:15-17; 10:44-46; 19:6).

5. The *Prophecy* of Pentecost (Acts 2:17-21)

As we have been noting, the disciples' worship in other tongues (2:4) fulfilled Joel's prophecy about prophetic empowerment (2:16-18). As readers of this passage have long noted: when the crowd heard "this" sound (2:6), they asked, "What does 'this' [praise in many languages] mean?" (2:12; cf. 2:11). Peter then responded, "'This' fulfills what Joel said" (2:16) about God's people prophesying (2:17-18).⁶⁴

In light of Joel, all God's people are now to be empowered as end-time prophets for Christ. Peter quotes Joel 2:28-32, but he also adapts the wording at points to bring out the meaning (a common Jewish practice).⁶⁵ Joel said that God would pour out the Spirit "afterward"—

⁶²The seven selected in 6:5 are surely Hellenists, given that all had Greek names (a unanimity that is surely deliberate, with e.g., Craig C. Hill, *Hellenists and Hebrews: Reappraising Division within the Earliest Church* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992], 47). Even in Rome, where only 1% of Jewish inscriptions are in Semitic languages, 15.2% of the names include Semitic elements (Harry J. Leon, *The Jews of Ancient Rome* [Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1960], 107-8).

⁶³For Philip as Peter's "forerunner," in terms of narrative function, see F. Scott Spencer, *The Portrait of Philip in Acts. A Study of Role and Relations* (JSNTSup 67; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 220-41.

⁶⁴For the connection, cf. e.g., Pesch, *Apostelgeschichte*, 1:119.

⁶⁵E.g., Lou H. Silberman, "Unriddling the Riddle. A Study in the Structure and Language of the Habakkuk Peshet," *RevQ* 3 (1961-1962): 323-64, passim; Cecil Roth, "The Subject Matter of Qumran Exegesis," *VT* 10 (1, Jan. 1960): 51-68, here 64-65; Timothy H. Lim, "Eschatological Orientation and the Alteration of Scripture in the Habakkuk Peshet," *JNES* 49 (2, 1990): 185-94; on adaptation of quotations to fit new contexts, see especially Christopher D.

in the context, after a period of terrible judgment (Joel 2:25-27), at the time of Israel's restoration (3:1). Emphasizing that the eschatological promise was now being fulfilled, Peter adapts the wording in line with the original context: God pours out the Spirit "in the last days" (Acts 2:17). "Last days" is eschatological language,⁶⁶ yet it was being fulfilled already in the present (cf. similarly Rom 8:22; 1 Tim 4:1; 2 Tim 3:1; Heb 1:2; 2 Pet 3:3; Rev 12:5-6, 10). Peter's adaptation underlines the fact that Jesus' first coming had already introduced the end-time, though it will be consummated only with his return.

Peter adds another line that highlights the prophetic nature of the gift: "And they will prophesy" (2:18). This line simply reiterates what Peter has already quoted directly from Joel: "your sons and daughters will prophesy"; they will also dream dreams and see visions (2:17), experiences most typical in biblical history for prophets. Acts is full of examples of such activity, which are meant to characterize the Spirit-empowered, eschatological people of God, i.e., the church.

The universality of the gift is one of its most striking features in this passage. The promise involves "sons and daughters," that is, both genders (Acts 2:17).⁶⁷ Not surprisingly, Luke tends to pair female

Stanley, *Paul and the language of Scripture: Citation technique in the Pauline Epistles and contemporary literature* (SNTSMS 69; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 291; cf. 335, 337, 342-44. Targum typically proved more expansive (though apparently more in later targumim), and midrash even more so. A primary function of midrash was to reapply texts to contemporary settings (Addison G. Wright, "The Literary Genre Midrash," *CBQ* 28 [2, April 1966]: 105-38, here 133-34).

⁶⁶E.g., Is 2:2; Ezek 38:16; Hos 3:5; Mic 4:1; Dan 2:28; 11Q13, 2.4; *1 En.* 27:3-4; *T. Iss.* 6:1.

⁶⁷In Ecuador, women Pentecostals tend to prophesy and have visions more (though prophetic dreams less) than men (Joseph L. Castleberry, "It's Not Just for Ignorant People Anymore: The Future Impact of University Graduates on the Development of the Ecuadorian Assemblies of God" [Ed.D. dissertation, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1999], 142). Historically, many women have found empowerment for their ministry in this text (Janice Capel Anderson, "Reading Tabitha: A Feminist Reception History," 108-44 in *The New Literary Criticism and the New Testament* [ed. Edgar V. McKnight and Elizabeth Struthers Malbon; Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1994; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994]), particularly prominently in Pentecostalism (see Janet Everts Powers, "'Your Daughters Shall Prophesy': Pentecostal Hermeneutics and the Empowerment of Women," 313-37 in *Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel* [ed. Douglas Petersen, et al.; Oxford: Regnum, 1999], 318; Yong, *Spirit Poured*, 190-94; in early Pentecostalism, see Wacker, *Heaven*, 158-65 [though note countervailing

prophetesses with male prophets (Lk 2:26-38; Acts 21:9-11; cf. Lk 1:41-45, 67-79); because Philip has *four* prophesying daughters, Luke actually mentions more prophetesses than prophets.⁶⁸ The mention of young and old (Acts 2:17) shows that the gift is for all ages; although ancient Mediterranean society respected elders,⁶⁹ Luke reports the prophetic young daughters of Philip (21:9)⁷⁰ as well as the aged widow Anna (Lk 2:36-37). Luke obliterates the class distinction in Joel's promise that the Spirit will also fall on slaves (Joel 2:29), but only because Luke emphasizes that the prophets are *God's* slaves (Acts 2:18),⁷¹ a common biblical designation for prophets.⁷² That they are

cultural and traditional tendencies, 165-76]). For women's ministry in Pentecostalism, see e.g., Powers, "Daughters," 313 (worldwide); Julie Ma, "Asian Women and Pentecostal Ministry," 129-46 in *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia* (ed. Allan Anderson and Edmond Tang; foreword by Cecil M. Robeck; Regnum Studies in Mission, AJPS 3; Oxford: Regnum; Baguio City, Philippines: APTS, 2005), 136-42 (the Philippines); Abraham T. Pothan, "Indigenous cross-cultural missions in India and their contribution to church growth: With special emphasis on Pentecostal-Charismatic missions" (Ph.D. Intercultural Studies, Fuller Theological Seminary, School of World Mission, 1990), 191-92, 255 (on Indian missionaries); Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2008), 161-62 (in Africa).

⁶⁸This does not count the likelihood of the "prophets" in Acts 11:27 being male, since a gender-mixed company would be less likely to travel together in this period (except with relatives; Lk 8:2-3 was exceptional). But of these prophets, only Agabus is given an active role in the narrative (11:28).

⁶⁹E.g., Homer *Il.* 1.259; 23.616-23; Livy 5.25.3; 6.24.7; Diogenes Laertius 8.1.22 (Pythagoras); Pliny *Ep.* 8.14.4, 6; *Select Papyri* 3, pp. 476-77, §116; 4 *Bar.* 5:20; Sir 8:6; Ps.-Phoc. 220-222; Syriac Menander *Sentences* 11-14; *Epitome* 2-4; *t. Meg.* 3:24; 1 Tim 5:1-2; 1 Pet 5:5. Also in some other societies (e.g., Confucius *Analec*s 2.8; 13.20).

⁷⁰"Virgins" probably suggests that they are no older than their teens, since women usually married young and "virgins" thus often functioned as a designation for age. Comparing Mishnaic usage, Hilary Le Cornu with Joseph Shulam. *A Commentary on the Jewish Roots of Acts* (Jerusalem: Nitivyah Bible Instruction Ministry, 2003), 1159, suggests that they had not yet reached puberty.

⁷¹Finny Philip, *The Origins of Pauline Pneumatology: The Eschatological Bestowal of the Spirit upon Gentiles in Judaism and in the Early Development of Paul's Theology* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 213, suggests that this limits "all flesh" to all *believers*.

⁷²2 Kgs 9:7, 36; 10:10; 14:25; 17:13, 23; 21:10; 24:2; Ezra 9:11; Is 20:3; Jer 7:25; 25:4; 26:5; 29:19; 35:15; 44:4; Dan 3:28; 6:20; 9:6, 10; Amos 3:7; Zech 1:6; later, cf. *'Ab. R. Nat.* 37, §95 B.

“male” and “female” servants reinforces the transcending of gender barriers.

But perhaps of most immediate importance for Luke’s larger narrative in Acts is Joel’s “all flesh” (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17).⁷³ The point of the phrase that may elude Peter within the narrative at this point will be obvious to Luke’s own audience (cf. Lk 2:32; 4:25-27); for them it may recall a programmatic text from Isaiah, cited in Lk 3:6, about “all flesh” seeing God’s salvation. When Peter concludes the sermon with an echo of Is 57:19, indicating that the promise of the Spirit is for all who are “far off,” whoever God will call (Acts 2:39),⁷⁴ he reinforces (again perhaps unknown to himself at that point) God’s plan to transcend all cultural barriers to reach all peoples (cf. 22:21). God wants to pour out his Spirit on everyone who will call on his name.

6. The *Preaching* of Pentecost (Acts 2:22-40)

Although 2:22-40 is one of the longest sections we are covering, my comments here will be relatively brief. In keeping with the preaching throughout Acts, this passage underlines the sort of Christocentric message that the Spirit particularly empowers. Having quoted the passage from Joel relevant to the current outpouring of the Spirit, Peter now begins to explain the part of that passage most relevant to his audience: “whoever calls on the Lord’s name will be saved” (Acts 2:21).

Joel announced that “whoever calls on the name of YHWH will be delivered,” among “those whom the Lord calls” (Joel 2:32). In Acts, Peter breaks off the quote at “whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Acts 2:21) and then picks up some of the rest of it at Acts 2:39: “as many as the Lord our God shall call.” In accord with common midrashic procedure, between these two lines he is expounding the line he has quoted. Given that the eschatological time, the time of salvation, has broken in upon them, they must now call on the Lord’s name to be saved.⁷⁵

⁷³Cf. e.g., I. Howard Marshall, *The Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction and Commentary* (TNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 73 n. 3; York, *Missions*, 82; Hans F. Bayer, “The Preaching of Peter in Acts,” 257-74 in *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts* (ed. I. Howard Marshall and David Peterson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 268.

⁷⁴Pao, *Isaianic Exodus*, 230-32.

⁷⁵With e.g., Dunn, *Acts*, 27; José Geraldo Costa Grillo, “O discurso de Pedro em Pentecostes: Estudo do gênero literário em Atos 2:14-40,” *VS* 7 (1, 1997):

But what is the Lord's name on which the text invites them to call? The Hebrew text of Joel refers to YHWH, but Jewish people generally avoided pronouncing the divine name, and the Greek text uses the normal surrogate for YHWH, namely, "lord." By linking together texts with common key words, a common Jewish interpretive technique,⁷⁶ Peter shows that Jesus is the "Lord" at the right hand of the Father, hence the "Lord" on whom they are to call. (He thereby implicitly preaches Jesus' deity.) The apostolic witnesses (and the Spirit) testify that Jesus has risen, and Peter argues that Scripture makes the theological implications of this reality for their situation clear. In Ps 16:8-11 the risen one (according to Peter's application) is at God's side (Acts 2:25-28); in Ps 110:1, the one at God's right hand is the "Lord" (Acts 2:34-35). They must therefore call on the name of the divine Lord, Jesus.⁷⁷

For Peter, this "calling on" the Lord Jesus is not simply reciting a prayer; it is a public profession, and one that was no less offensive in that culture than John the Baptist immersing fellow Israelites as if they were Gentiles. The concrete expression of "calling on" the Lord that Peter demands is repentance and baptism "in the name of Jesus Christ" (2:38). Baptism in Jesus' name in Acts does not involve a formula that one says over a person being baptized; the expression "in Jesus' name" accompanies the verb for "baptize" only when it is in the passive voice, i.e., when people are *receiving* baptism. It thus involves not the baptizer's formula, but the prayer of one receiving baptism (cf. 22:16: "be baptized ... calling on his name"). The temple mount was full of

37-52; I. Howard Marshall, "Acts," 513-606 in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 536, 543; Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971), 184 n. 5; Dupont, *Salvation*, 22; Richard F. Zehnle, *Peter's Pentecost Discourse: Tradition and Lukan Reinterpretation in Peter's Speeches of Acts 2 and 3* (SBLMS 15; Nashville: Abingdon, for the Society of Biblical Literature, 1971), 34; Pao, *Isaianic Exodus*, 231-32.

⁷⁶E.g., *Mek. Pisha* 5.103; *Nez.* 10.15-16, 26, 38; 17.17; in this passage, see Richard N. Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 97.

⁷⁷For devotion to Jesus in Luke-Acts, see Larry W. Hurtado, *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God? Historical Questions about Earliest Devotion to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 160-62; cf. Robert F. O'Toole, *Luke's Presentation of Jesus: A Christology* (SubBi 25; Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2004), passim; C. Kavin Rowe, "Luke and the trinity: an essay in ecclesial biblical theology," *SJT* 56 (1, 2003): 1-26.

baptismal pools for ceremonial washings;⁷⁸ to publicly accept immersion as would one turning from former Gentiles ways, however, constituted a radical declaration of new obedience.

7. The *Purpose* of Pentecost (Acts 2:41-47)

God poured out the Spirit to empower his people to evangelize cross-culturally, but what was the anticipated outcome of cross-cultural evangelism? God intended to create a new community in which believers would love one another and demonstrate to this age the very image of the life of his kingdom.

We can see this purpose of evangelism in the structure of this closing paragraph of this opening section of Acts:⁷⁹

- Effective *evangelism* (2:41)
 - Shared worship, meals, and prayer (2:42)
 - Shared *possessions* (2:44-45)
 - Shared worship, meals, and prayer (2:46)
- Effective *evangelism* (2:47)

At the heart of the outcome of the new life of the Spirit is not only the Spirit's power and gifting for ministry, but what we might call (in Paul's language) the Spirit's "fruit." Spirit-empowered believers loved one another so much that they valued one another more than they valued their possessions (2:44-45).⁸⁰ Just as tongues is repeated at

⁷⁸See Bill Grasham, "Archaeology and Christian Baptism," *ResQ* 43 (2, 2001): 113-16; for the temple's water supply, see S. Safrai, "The Temple," 865-907 in *The Jewish People in the First Century: Historical Geography, Political History, Social, Cultural and Religious Life and Institutions* (2 vols.; ed. S. Safrai and M. Stern with D. Flusser and W. C. van Unnik; vol. 1: Assen: Van Gorcum & Comp., B.V., 1974; vol. 2: Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), 884; John McRay, *Archaeology and the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 123.

⁷⁹Acts 2:41-47 is the first major summary section; for discussions of such sections, see e.g., H. Alan Brehm, "The Significance of the Summaries for Interpreting Acts," *SWJT* 33 (1, 1990): 29-40; S. J. Joubert, "Die gesigpunt van die verteller en die funksie van die Jerusalemgemeente binne die 'opsommings' in Handeling," *SK* 10 (1, 1989): 21-35.

⁸⁰On this passage, see e.g., Thomas Hoyt, Jr., "The Poor in Luke-Acts" (Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University Department of Religion, 1974), 213-22; Alan C. Mitchell, "'Greet the Friends by Name': New Testament Evidence for the Greco-Roman *Topos* on Friendship," 225-62 in *Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship* (ed. John T. Fitzgerald; SBLBS 34; Atlanta: Scholars, 1997), 237-40; on Acts and sharing possessions, see e.g., Luke Timothy Johnson, *The*

various initial outpourings of the Spirit, this sharing of possessions recurs as a dominant element in the revival in 4:31-35, underlining the importance of this theme (cf. also Lk 12:33; 13:33). Whereas Peter's preaching leads to many converts on one occasion in Acts 2:41, it is the believing community's *lifestyle* that leads to continuous conversions in 2:47.

It also fits a pattern in Luke's theology of Christian transformation. When the crowds ask Peter what they must do to be saved, he summons them to repent and be baptized in Jesus' name (2:38). But this passage goes on to show us something of what a repentant lifestyle looks like. This fits a pattern of answers to the "What must I do?" question in Luke-Acts. When John the Baptist demands the fruits of repentance (Lk 3:8) and the crowds ask what to do, John admonishes whoever has more than their basic subsistence needs to share the rest with those who have less (Lk 3:11). When a rich ruler asks Jesus what he must do to have eternal life (Lk 18:18), Jesus urges him to donate all his resources to the poor and follow him (Lk 18:22). Even later, when the Philippian jailer asks Paul and Silas, "What must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30), they respond that he must believe in the Lord Jesus (16:31). Lest that seem like a lesser demand than those mentioned above, consider that the jailer then brought them to his own house and fed them (16:34), behavior that could have gotten him in serious trouble with the authorities.⁸¹ After all, he was ordered to securely guard these people

Literary Function of Possessions in Luke-Acts (SBLDS 39; Missoula, MT: Society of Biblical Literature, 1977); idem, *Sharing Possessions: Mandate and Symbol of Faith* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981); Bovon, *Theologian*, 390-96; see more recently John Gillman, *Possessions and the Life of Faith: A Reading of Luke-Acts* (ZSNT; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1991); Kyoung-Jin Kim, *Stewardship and Almsgiving in Luke's Theology* (JSNTSup 155; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 218-33; Karris, *Saying*, 84-104. For partial Qumran analogies, see e.g., Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* (2d ed.; Sources for Biblical Study 5; Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1974), 284-88; David L. Mealand, "Community of Goods at Qumran," *TZ* 31 (3, 1975): 129-39; Heinz-Josef Fabry, "Umkehr und Metanoia als monastisches Ideal in der 'Mönchsgemeinde' von Qumran," *ErAuf* 53 (3, 1977): 163-80; Hans-Josef Klauck, "Gütergemeinschaft in der Klassischen Antike, in Qumran und im Neuen Testament," *RevQ* 11 (1, 1982): 47-79; Reta Halteman Finger, *Of Widows and Meals: Communal Meals in the Book of Acts* (Grand Rapids, Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2007), 146-66.

⁸¹Dining with prisoners could be punishable even by death (Josephus *Ant.* 18.230-33; Brian Rapske, *The Book of Acts and Paul in Roman Custody* [vol. 3

(16:23) who were accused of preaching customs illegal for Philippian citizens to observe (16:21).

In Luke-Acts, true conversion involves repentance and commitment to a new Lord. Such commitment to the new Lord also involves commitment to one's new siblings in the new community. As Acts progresses, it becomes clear that this new community will not belong to simply one culture, its table fellowship circumscribed by sacred food customs (10:28; 16:34; 27:35-36).⁸² Sometimes Christians in Acts do prove reluctant to cross such boundaries (10:28; 11:3; cf. Gal 2:11-14), just as the Pharisees had about Jesus' table fellowship with repenting sinners in Luke's first volume (e.g., Lk 5:30; 7:34; 15:2);⁸³ but God gives them no rest until he brings them past these barriers. God is creating a new community that transcends human boundaries. God empowers his people with the Spirit to cross cultural barriers, to worship God, and to form one new, multicultural community of worshipers committed to Christ and to one another.

Conclusion

Acts 1—2 is a pivotal section for Luke-Acts, revealing the importance and purpose of the Spirit's empowerment for global mission. The promise of Pentecost (1:4-8) emphasizes the need for the Spirit, the eschatological character of the Spirit, and the prophetic empowerment dimension of the Spirit. Preparation for Pentecost (1:12—2:1) involves prayer together and getting ready for God's

in *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting*; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994], 392).

⁸²The meal in 16:34 cannot have been kosher (cf. Josephus *Life* 13-14), reinforcing the emphasis on crossing cultural barriers there (with Rapske, *Custody*, 215). Common meals in Luke-Acts reveal Christ's family transcending ethnic and cultural barriers (Finger, *Meals*, 280-81, 286; cf. John Ashworth, "Hospitality in Luke-Acts," *BibT* 35 (5, 1997): 300-4). The importance of table fellowship may be more intelligible in a modern Asian than a modern western context (Santos Yao, "Dismantling Social Barriers through Table Fellowship, Acts 2:42-47," 29-36 in *Mission in Acts: Ancient Narratives in Contemporary Context* [ed. Robert L. Gallagher and Paul Hertig; AmSocMissS 34; Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004], 33-35).

⁸³Pharisees emphasized pure table fellowship (Martin Goodman, *State and Society in Roman Galilee, A. D. 132-212* [Oxford Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies; Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allanheld, Publishers, 1983], 77). For *Christian* resistance to the gospel in Acts, see Brian Rapske, "Opposition to the Plan and Persecution," 235-56 in *Witness to the Gospel*, 239-45.

promise of the Spirit's empowerment in faith. The proofs of Pentecost (2:2-4) reveal eschatological signs, with tongues-speaking signifying the Spirit's empowerment for cross-cultural witness. The "peoples" of Pentecost (2:5-13), though Diaspora Jews, foreshadow the Gentile mission and probably evoke a partial inversion of Babel. The mission, this passage reiterates, is for all peoples. The prophecy of Pentecost (2:17-21) underlines the eschatological, prophetic and universal character of their empowerment. The preaching of Pentecost (2:22-40) models the Christocentric message that the Spirit particularly empowers. Finally, the purpose of Pentecost (2:41-47) involves the new community that the Spirit-inspired message is meant to form. The Spirit's empowerment of the church is central for Luke, and is inseparable from the church's mission in the present age.