

Divine Empowerment in an “Inclusive” Age: The Baptism of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2

The Empowerment of followers of Messiah Yeshua (Jesus)

[Acts 2](#) is one of my favorite passages of Scripture:

When the day of Shavu'ot [Pentecost] had come, they were all together in one place. Suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And tongues like fire spreading out appeared to them and settled on each one of them. They were all filled with the Ruach ha-Kodesh [Holy Spirit] and began to speak in other tongues as the Ruach [Spirit] enabled them to speak out. Acts 2:1-4, TLV

I think it is my favorite because it was completely *ignored* by the church I attended growing up.

And I attended faithfully.

Obsessively faithfully.

If the doors of that church were open, I was there. Choir practice, youth leadership teams, bell choir, instrumental ensembles. It was a very large church with a large staff, so there were many opportunities for me, and I'm thankful for that. I probably wore out the pastors with all my theological questions, but they put up with me!

But despite all of those years in the church, I had never heard [Acts chapter 2](#) when the LORD empowered the believers with the power of the Holy Spirit (*Ruach haKodesh*).

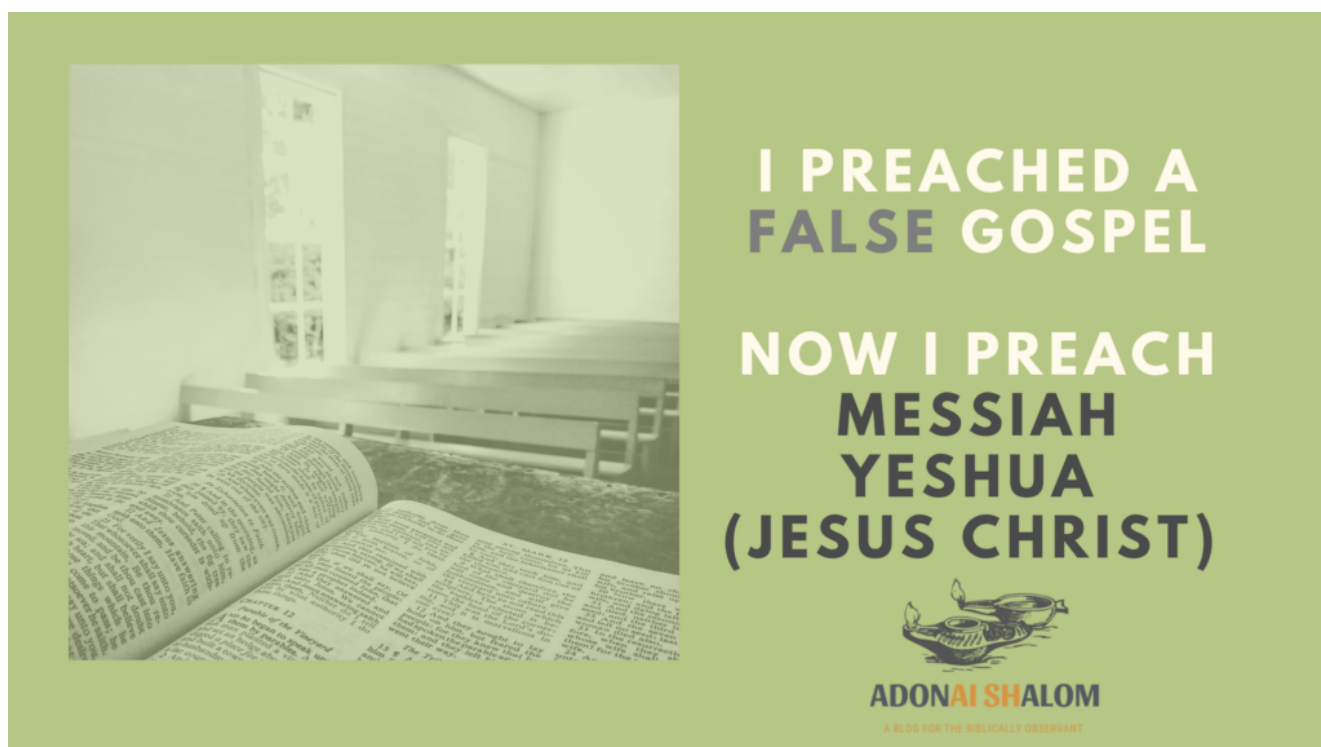
I even learned to preach and lead entire worship services before I went to college.

The problem is, I had learned to preach a false gospel...

I didn't know that, of course.

But when I did figure that out, I felt deceived!

I was angry, hurt, but on-fire for Jesus (Yeshua).



My experience in a universalist church

See, I grew up in a universalist type of 'church' in which everything and anything could be considered 'divine' and the deity of Messiah was even questioned.

It was normal to practice 'mysticism' and the congregation built a pagan labyrinth so that they could become 'closer' to God. 'Sin' was explained away through relativism and none of the leaders I knew believed in a literal eternal hell.

Liberal social justice agendas were presented as 'gospel;' and homosexual clergy were not only accepted, but encouraged.

I am a very spiritual person and have been since I was very little, so I was intrigued by the "historical Jesus" debate and the off-center teachings presented to me by my pastors as a teenager. I had the opportunity to travel to France, and walked on the Chartres labyrinth, excited to bring back books and souvenirs reflecting what I know now to be an occult practice.

I had no idea that we were so outside of a Biblical framework, but I did know that the pastoral staff thought ill of evangelicals, calling anyone who took the Bible at its word a "fundie," their pejorative term for a fundamentalist.

There was always talk of "inclusion," but this really meant including only those who agreed with their far left agenda.

I was taught an imitation, but the LORD led me to TRUTH

When I went to college and later to Divinity School, I realized how far the church had strayed from Biblical Truth.

By studying Hebrew, I was awakened to the reality that Scripture is inspired and without error in its original form.

The one nice thing about being raised as a 'Unitarian Considering Christ' was we were always open to Judaism. I never struggled with the concept that Messiah Jesus stood on this earth as a practicing Jew, a Holy Rabbi with the greatest teaching of all time. Eventually, I accepted my Savior Yeshua and the glorious gift of salvation.

Hallelujah!

The Postmodern/Emergent Church is looking for an “experience”

The postmodern and emergent church movements were popular when I was a student. One thing that stands out to me with those who want to start drawing and painting in church is that people are genuinely looking for an “experience.”

The church, as a whole, has strayed so far from Scripture that people don't realize that the experience they are looking for is found within the pages of the Holy Bible and that **everything else is a cheap imitation.**

Well-meaning people add things into worship services, not intending to become idolatrous, yet these extraBiblical practices lead people far far away from what they *actually* need.

Truth vs. Imitation

The church, as a whole, has strayed so far from Scripture that people don't realize that the experience they are looking for is found within the pages of the Holy Bible and that everything else is a cheap imitation. People add things into worship services, not intending to become idolatrous, yet these extraBiblical practices lead people far far away from what they actually need.



ADONAI SHALOM

A BLOG FOR THE BIBLICALLY OBSERVANT

Worldly empowerment vs. Divine

empowerment

Inclusiveness, feminism, empowerment – all key words in the liberal agenda, **mask the true need in the world today**. The Gospel is inclusive of all who would be willing to make a change, but **the Gospel isn't going to change to suit humanity's deviant desires**.

It is good to feel empowered! But you have to be empowered with the right thing!

That's why the power from on high is so important. [Acts 2](#) is all about **supernatural** empowerment!

The Holy Spirit will empower you in your calling to do the will of the Father.

The world offers a false empowerment. Feminists and liberal activists don't actually support or love women. They hate Biblical womanhood because they want women to be men.

That devilish agenda says: Go ahead, have children, but make sure you're back on the job in 6 weeks after you have your baby. We wouldn't want you to reconsider and stay home with your children.

When my second son was born, I had been serving as a hospital chaplain on a staff of primarily men. When I informed them I would not be coming back because I was choosing to stay home with our little ones, they told me I was overly traditional and that I would regret my decision.

No regrets here.

To me it was humorous that I had grown up more liberal than any of them, and now they were calling me ultra-conservative.

□

Shavu'ot = Pentecost

The believers gathered in the Upper Room were there on a feast day. It was called *Shavu'ot*, and Jewish believers had celebrated it for years. Our English translations call it "Pentecost," and many Christians today mistakenly believe it was a newly established feast day after the Resurrection, but that's not right.

The word for "Pentecost" comes from Greek, for 50, because *Shavu'ot* referred to the Feast of Fifty Days, better known as the Feast of Weeks. The timing of Messiah is perfect, so on this exact day, 50 days after the resurrection, the LORD poured out His Spirit upon the gathered believers to coincide with the feast.

Are you experiencing a time of waiting?

In [Acts 1:4](#), Messiah Jesus (*Yeshua*) told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they received the Promise of the Father.

Maybe you are waiting. Maybe you know the LORD has something more in store for you, but you're in a waiting pattern. If you are waiting, but with a sense of expectation, with faith that He will work in your life – I assure you, He will.

Don't be afraid in the waiting, nor discouraged.

Make sure you seek Him.

Who was empowered on Pentecost/Shavu'ot?

[Acts 2:3](#) says, "[There appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.](#)"

The last phrase there, in Greek, “upon each and every one of them” is important for those interested in “inclusivity.”

The Greek is *emphatic* meaning that this included men *and* women.

ἐφ’ ἓνα ἕκαστον αὐτῶν
eph hena hekaston auton
Upon each and every one of them

The gifts and calling of the Eternal One are irrevocable ([Romans 11:29](#)). He calls men **and** women to share the Good News, and to be empowered by His very Spirit to do it well.

What was going on *before* this moment, *before* the power of Adonai came?

Prayer and supplication. Both men and women were present in an Upper Room prayer meeting.

[These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary \[Miryam\] the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. Acts 1:14](#)



There were at least 120 men there ([Acts 1:15](#)), women and probably even children.

[RELATED: 6 Stone Jars, 120 Gallons of Wine, and a Wedding in Cana](#)

The LORD uses men and women. In different ways, yes, but (if you are a woman reading this) don't let anyone tell you that there's no place for you in the ministry. That simply isn't true. If He has given you a voice, you have something to say, so long as it lines up with the Word of God. Most of the people in the Upper Room were men. The women were outnumbered. But they were most certainly included.

God chose this group of men and women to be present to receive the inaugurating outpouring of the fire of the Holy Spirit

because they were faithful in prayer and they were willing to obey!

Comfort will come after pain or loss

I have used this passage with women's ministry groups because women in all walks of life endure all sorts of challenges and pain: Women who have recently lost their own mother, women who have been told by doctors they cannot have children, women who have ended pregnancies due to poor guidance by nonChristian medical staff or women who genuinely felt there was no other option, women who now live with the regret or guilt of any type of past sins.

The most emotionally painful thing to endure might be the mother who lost a child, whether that child was an unborn baby or an adult child. Many times it is out of that pain that the LORD will use you to minister to someone else. If you've been marginalized from the pulpit because you are a woman, you will also understand a hurt others will not understand.

Whatever you relate to as a horrible pain to endure was exactly the kind of pain the women (and the men) endured the day after the crucifixion.

Even though they knew what they had seen and heard and they knew that Jesus was the Messiah, and He told them He would rise again and He promised to send another Comforter . . . even so, there must've been so many questions going through their minds.

We who are filled with the Holy Spirit today cannot now imagine what life would be like without Him, without His glorious presence. One of the most ***distressing(!!!)*** Psalms to me is [Psalms 51:11. "Cast me not away from Thy presence and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me."](#) Just the thought makes me

shudder!

Maybe you have experienced something earth shattering. Maybe you have watched as something you have loved, dreamed of, or even built seems like it's gone. When we ministered in Alabama and Tennessee, we frequently worked with people who had suffered devastating losses after tornadoes raged through their neighborhoods. Just know that the Spirit of the LORD can help you get through whatever has distressed you or twisted your life upside down.

What is your own personal Sabbath's Day journey?

The verses contained in [Acts 1:12-Acts 2:1](#) describe what occurred in (what most have calculated to be) 10 days from the Ascension described in [Acts 1:9](#).

If there is a situation right now in your life, give it a few days. It might take ten, it might be four . . . it might be more than 10. But like I said earlier, God's timing is perfect. You can trust Him.

[Acts 1:9](#) "Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched He was taken up..."

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives ([Acts 1:12](#)), a Sabbath's Day journey – meaning it was a fairly short walk. They would not receive the Promise of the Father without resting in Him, without listening for His voice.

Maybe you've been traveling *more* than a Sabbath's Day journey, keeping your agenda jam-packed. Honor the Sabbath, and the Lord of the Sabbath will meet you right where you are. Not everyone who desires to be baptized in the Holy Spirit receives that blessing right away. Think of it as a journey: He will satisfy your hunger and thirst when you need it most.

The Holy Spirit provides anointing so that you can be a Godly example to others

There is nothing more noble than to be an anointed, Holy Spirit-filled servant of God.

We need the power of God to change the way we speak, the way we interact, the way we present ourselves. You know, something that has been lost over time is the art of etiquette. I noticed this particularly when I lived in the south, having grown up in the north. Up North, we don't usually say "yes, ma'am" and "no, sir." It is wise and godly to teach your children, or your spiritual children, the etiquette of God's Word. How to be a Godly example for others. It is more than attending an assembly. It is living the Word in thought, word, and deed, so that the transformation Christ has worked in you will be evident to all.

We need our **etiquette** to be anointed! If you comport yourself with grace, doors will open for you.

The Holy Spirit will empower you to pray for the salvation of your city!

We are not in Jerusalem, but we *can* tarry in our own cities, asking the LORD to intervene in these last days. I know from experience that those who have been immersed in false doctrines CAN be led to the Truth, but it requires prayer!

I am thankful for believers who prayed for me!

Pray, with fervor, without ceasing so He will send an outpouring of His power upon and into you, either for the

first time, or for a new time.

Pray, pray, pray until the yoke-breaking, curse-disrupting and destroying, Almighty Power of the Most High descends upon you and believers around you and ignites your home and your city and your congregation with the Love of Messiah.

The most inclusive wonderful thing you can ever do is pray for someone and welcome them when they decide to become a citizen of heaven, too!

PRAY!

Pray, pray, pray
until the yoke-breaking, curse-disrupting and destroying,
Almighty Power of the Most High
descends upon you and believers around you
and ignites your home and your city and your congregation
with the Love of Messiah.



ADONAI SHALOM

I look forward to hearing YOUR testimony! share your comments below. If you have not yet met Yeshua, the Promised Messiah of Israel, please reach out. He loves you very much and lived and died so that you could live eternally with Him. I would be so honored to pray for you or with you. If you'd like, please consider subscribing to our email list! Blessings and Shalom!