



### **Pastors**

- 1, Please encourage people to get a copy of APC'S JOURNEYING TOGETHER JOURNAL and to use it daily.
- 2, Please encourage people to register for the "Engaging Muslim Communities with the Gospel" workshop coming Saturday.

### **Preparing for Declaration**

**Hebrews 13:5-6**

**5 ... For He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU NOR FORSAKE YOU."**

**6 So we may boldly say: "THE LORD IS MY HELPER; I WILL NOT FEAR. WHAT CAN MAN DO TO ME?"**

Because He has said....we boldly say....

Our speech and declaration must always be in harmony with what God has declared about us.

He calls us victors, overcomers, triumphant. He calls us healed, delivered, redeemed.

Because He has said that about us....we boldly make our declaration of who we are....

**Sunday January 31, 2016**

**Visitations and Moves of God in the book of Acts**

**Part 2 in the series on Revivals, Visitations and Moves of God**

This entire series will become available in print form shortly.

The book of Acts records approximately 40 years of such a visitation and move of God beginning with the outpouring of God's Spirit in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost. The outpouring of the Spirit became a habitation of God among this community of believers and the fire spread from Jerusalem, across Asia Minor, into Europe and all the way to the then capital of the world, Rome.

The book of Acts records what the Holy Spirit can do through people and communities.

### ***One Accord, In Prayer***

The 120 spent ten days, after the Lord's ascension, being in one accord and in prayer. (1:14)

### ***The Outpouring***

The outpouring of the Spirit, whose purpose was to empower the disciples to be witnesses to the ends of the earth, was accompanied by supernatural phenomena. A city that normally had about 100,000 residents, at the time of the Passover, feast of Firstfruits and feast of Pentecost was bursting over with nearly 500,000 people. Reactions to what was witnessed were quite diverse: some were confused (2:6), some



were amazed and marveled (2:7), some were amazed and perplexed (2:12), and some others were mocking (2:13).

### ***This is That!***

Although Acts 2 (sound of a rushing mighty wind, tongues of fire, other languages) bore no resemblance to Joel 2 (visions, dreams, prophecy), the Holy Spirit still said "this is that!".

### **Three sections:**

The first eight years : what the outpouring of the Spirit does in and through a community

The next ten years : how one community can spark revival fires and raise up several other communities in revival

The next twenty years : the life of one man Paul, a carrier of revival fire

### ***The First Eight Years (A.D. 30 - A.D. 38)***

Acts 2 - Acts 8

Here is the fruit of the outpouring of the Spirit in the church at Jerusalem and its impact on the life of people in Jerusalem:

1. A community that saw many souls being saved and brought into the Kingdom (2:41, 2:47, 4:4, 5:14, 6:7)
2. A community that continued *steadfastly* in teaching, fellowship, sharing, and prayer in the temple and house to house (2:42, 5:42)
3. A community that had great fear or reverence for God as they saw what was happening in their midst (2:43, 5:5, 5:11)
4. A community that demonstrated great power and great grace so that many wonders and signs were done that affected the city (2:43, 4:16, 4:33)
5. A community that boldly faced opposition and persecution from religious leaders (4:5-6, 5:17-18, 5:29-32, 5:40-41, 6:12, 7:59, 8:1)
6. A community that shared and were unselfish (2:44-45, 4:32-35)
7. A community of great prayer (4:29-31)
8. A community that was of one heart and one mind (4:32, 5:12)
9. A community whose influence spread over to other cities so that people came from other cities to Jerusalem to experience God's healing and delivering power (5:16)
10. A community that experienced angelic visitations bringing deliverance and instruction (5:19-20, 8:26)
11. A community that peacefully and with wisdom resolved disputes and problems (6:1-7)



12. A community where others were being raised up full of the Holy Spirit, faith, wisdom and power doing great signs and wonders among the people (6:3, 6:8, 6:10)
13. A community whose influence began penetrating the leadership system of their day so that many priests believed (6:7)
14. A community that had in eight years raised up disciples who could carry the fire of revival - the Word and Spirit - to other places across Judea, Galilee, Samaria (9:31) and into Syria (8:4-8, 11:19-21). It is estimated that about 20,000 believers from Jerusalem were scattered into about 200 towns and villages in Judea and Galilee. Overnight the fires of revival spread and multiplied. We have the record of Philip who preached in Samaria, Gaza and then throughout coastal Judea preaching the gospel from Azotus to Caesarea (8:40). Samaria experienced the work of the Spirit. We also have a record of believers from Jerusalem establishing a work in Antioch of Syria, 300km north of Jerusalem (11:19-21)
15. A community that saw God's divine intervention affecting people in high places - the Ethiopian eunuch and Saul of Tarsus (8:27, 9:1-6)

### ***What Church Should Really Be All About***

In many ways this captures for us the essence of a community of people who are experiencing a move of God's Spirit with great grace, power and glory being manifested.

### ***Do You Look for Fruit or Phenomena?***

The fruit of every genuine outpouring of the Holy Spirit and visitation of God is consistent, while the supernatural phenomena may vary.

In phenomena there are varied manifestations of the Spirit, many of which we are familiar with. The phenomena, or manifestations of the Spirit are always to be tested (1 Thessalonians 5:21)

The phenomena or manifestations of the Spirit are important since this is evidence or expression of the Spirit's working. It is through these gifts and demonstrations that lives are impacted, transformed and edified. So we must desire, welcome and embrace the gifts of the Spirit, the manifestations of the Spirit which constitute supernatural phenomena.

But an outpouring or a visitation of God is more than phenomena. It is the lasting fruit that we must secure.



### ***The Next Ten Years (A.D. 38 - A.D. 47)***

Acts 8 - Acts 13

- A.D. 38 Saul's Encounter with the Lord (9:1-6)
- The apostles from Jerusalem go out to strengthen new churches in other places : Samaria (8:14), many other places including Lydda, Sharon, and Joppa (9:35-36). Lydda was about 25 miles (40 kilometers) northwest of Jerusalem, located at the intersection of two important highways, the Egypt-Syria highway and the Joppa-Jerusalem highway. These churches are also thriving and experiencing the supernatural power of God.
- Divine intervention as God speaks through a vision to a Roman centurion. The door of the Gospel is opened to the gentiles, as Peter is sent to minister to a Roman centurion in Caesarea (10:1). The gentiles experience the work of the Spirit.
- Other leaders have been raised in the Jerusalem church (Barnabas, Silas, Agabus). Barnabas is sent to take care of the church at Antioch in Syria. Paul is brought to Antioch. Agabus, the prophet and other prophets are sent from Jerusalem to minister at Antioch (11:27).
- A.D. 44, Herod Agrippa I, grandson of king "Herod the Great," (who ruled Judea before Jesus' birth), hands out more persecution, killing James (the brother of John) and arresting Peter. We see the church in Jerusalem still strong in prayer. We see angelic deliverance for Peter. We see divine judgment on Herod.
- In summary, we see several other communities being raised up, that had the same essence of the Jerusalem church in Word and Spirit, while being relevant to people in their individual context.
- Because of the visit, ministry and impartation of leaders from the Jerusalem church into the new "daughter" church communities, we see that these new church communities develop very quickly. Example, in Antioch, within 3-4 years there are leader, prophets and teachers (13:1).

### ***The Next Twenty Years : The Apostle Paul (A.D. 48 - A.D. 68)***

Acts 13-28

- A.D. 38 Paul is converted in Damascus (9:1-19), when he is somewhere between 29 years to 33 years of age.
- Paul preaches in the synagogues of Damascus for a short time immediately following his conversion (9:19-22)
- Paul then goes into Arabia, then part of the Nabatean kingdom with the purpose of preaching to Gentiles (Galatians 1:17)
- Paul returns to Damascus and for the rest of the three-year period, and again preaches in the synagogues there (9:23-25)



- Jews and agents of Aretas IV (9 B.C.-A.D. 40), the ruler of the Nabatean kingdom in Arabia try to find and arrest Paul (2 Corinthians 11:32-33)
- Paul escapes from Damascus and travels to Jerusalem

### **A short visit to Jerusalem**

- Barnabas brought Paul “to the apostles” (9:27). However, Paul says that on this occasion he stays with Peter for 15 days and “saw none of the other apostles — only James, the Lord’s brother”
- During his stay in Jerusalem Paul speaks “boldly in the name of the Lord” (9:28). He debates with the Grecian or Hellenistic Jews.
- When the disciples learn of the plot against Paul, they quickly escort him to Caesarea. He is put on a ship and sent home to Tarsus (9:30).

### **The silent years**

- A curtain is drawn over Paul’s life for what may be six years or as long as ten years. Paul refers to this interval only in passing. He says that after leaving Jerusalem he goes to Syria and Cilicia (Galatians 1:21,23). More specifically, he is referring to Antioch in Syria and Tarsus in Cilicia. Tarsus is the leading city of Cilicia, and Paul’s hometown.
- Later, when Barnabas needs assistance in building the church in Antioch, he goes to Tarsus to find Paul, and brings him to Antioch (11:25-26).

While we can study Paul's life from different perspectives, as a leader, as an apostle, etc. we look at Paul from the perspective of being a carrier of the move of God's Spirit, a carrier of revival. (This is no way disregards his calling as an apostle). What can we learn from his life, that will enable us to be carriers of the move of the Spirit of God?

### ***Paul's First Missionary Journey (A.D. 44 - A.D. 46)***

### ***Paul's Second Missionary Journey (A.D. 49 - A.D. 52)***

Paul writes 1 & 2 Thessalonians

### ***Paul's Third Missionary Journey (A.D. 53 - A.D. 58)***

Paul writes 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Romans

### ***Paul's Journey To Rome And Roman Imprisonment (A.D. 60 - A.D. 63)***

Acts 28:11-31

Paul writes Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, Philippians (called the 'prison epistles')



### ***Paul's Final Years (A.D. 63- A.D. 67)***

#### **Period of release (A.D. 63 - A.D. 67)**

Paul writes 1 Timothy, Titus (and Hebrews)

#### **Paul's Second Roman Imprisonment (A.D. 67)**

Paul writes 2 Timothy

#### **Paul's Last Days and Martyrdom (A.D. 67 - A.D. 68)**

#### **Summary of Paul, a carrier of the move of God**

- A.D. 44-68, in about 20 to 24 years of ministry
- Covered about 49 named cities/towns across Asia Minor and Europe
- Not just preaching but gave rise to communities that experienced the same fire and work of the Spirit (e.g. Corinthians, Ephesians)
- Raised up many others who carried the same fire and could do similar work, about 24 people are mentioned by name as his fellow-workers (e.g. work started in Colossae)
- Was able to impact across cultural (both Jews and Greeks) and social lines (rich and poor, educated and uneducated)
- Impacted cities, the marketplace and people in high places (13:12, 17:4, 17:12, 18:8). In some cases entire cities were affected.
- Wrote 13 (or 14 including Hebrews) epistles to strengthen churches.

Let us press in for revival and welcome a mighty outpouring of God's Spirit.

Let us prepare to be a community of people saturated with God.

Let us set ablaze other communities with revival fire.

Let each of us become carriers of revival into our spheres of influence.

#### **Salvation Call : A short gospel message and prayer**