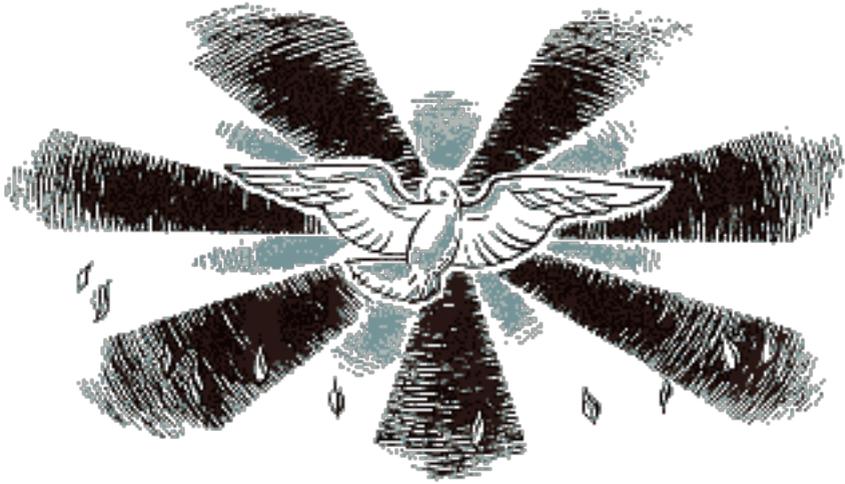


GOD'S POWER COMES



JUST before Jesus left his apostles and returned to his heavenly home, he told them to wait at Jerusalem until they were given power from God. The Bible calls God's power the Holy Spirit. You will remember I told you that God's power came upon Jesus when he was baptized by the Prophet John in the river Jordan. Now, Jesus' disciples were to work for him and they would need God's power too!

So they waited at Jerusalem for some time. One day while they were together talking about Jesus and about God, and praying, they heard something that sounded like a very strong wind. Then, what seemed just like streaks of fire appeared right over the heads of each of the disciples.

I don't know how long this lasted, but the apostles discovered that they could speak different languages! Wasn't that strange? What had occurred?

Why, the power of God had come upon them.

God had caused these things just to show the disciples how mighty and how powerful he is. They were to work for him and for Jesus, and he wanted them to know that his great power could help them whenever they needed his help. They knew, too, that God's power was upon them because they could speak in different languages.

This was necessary so that all to whom they told the story of Jesus could understand, no matter what language they spoke.

The day that the power of God came upon the disciples of Jesus was called Pentecost, which means fiftieth. It was the fiftieth day after Jesus was made alive. It was a time when the Israelites from all over the country came to Jerusalem to visit God's temple and to have the priest offer sacrifice for them.

Many of these Israelites had learned to talk other languages, because they had lived in other lands, and not in the land that God gave them. They could no longer talk the language of the Israelites. So you see, the disciples needed to know how, to speak various languages if they were to tell these people about Jesus. The Bible calls this "speaking with tongues," and it was the Holy Spirit, or holy power of God, which helped the disciples to speak languages which they had not learned.

The disciples were very happy that day. Probably they sang some hymns, too. The power of God was upon them, and they were beginning to do the things Jesus asked them to do.

Then Peter preached a wonderful sermon.

He told the people that Jesus was the One whom the prophets of God had said would come, and that the prophets also foretold that he would die for the people in order that they might be made alive again. Peter also told the people that Jesus already had been made alive again and had returned to heaven, and that was why the Holy Spirit had come from heaven upon them. We would all like to have heard Peter preach that sermon, wouldn't we?

Many of the Israelites felt sorry that they had helped to kill Jesus, and they asked Peter what they should do. He told them that they should "repent"—which means that they were to be especially sorry—and that then they should be baptized. If they did this it would mean that they wanted to be pleasing to God. It also would mean that they wanted to be followers of Jesus.

The Bible calls it following in his steps.—I Peter 2:21

This means that we try to do things as Jesus would have us do them. On this day when the Holy Spirit came upon the friends of

Jesus there were many who decided they would walk in Jesus' steps.

QUESTIONS

- What name does the Bible give to the power of God?
- What were the disciples of Jesus able to do after the power of God come upon them?
- What did the disciples' enemies say about them, and what did Peter say in reply?

Dawn Bible Students Association