

LESSON 44

Pentecost

ACTS 1:15–2:12



BIBLE TRUTH

THE PROMISED HOLY SPIRIT IS Poured OUT.

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Acts 1:15—2:12 from the Scriptures or read story 122, “Pentecost,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

3. OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Talk about the Promise

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ Abraham costume: an old sheet, a rope for a belt, a fake beard, and a staff

4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

Choosing Lots for a Chocolate Bar

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ one chocolate bar
- ✓ six straws (one of which is cut shorter by one-half inch)

6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

7. ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Color a Picture

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 44—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

These Men Are Drunk

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a couple volunteers who can each speak a different foreign language.

TOTAL 75 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

The betrayer Judas is replaced—Peter addressed the group of about 120 believers and explained that a witness to Christ’s resurrection had to be chosen to replace Judas who had killed himself after betraying Jesus. Peter laid down the requirement: he had to be a man who had been with them from the time of John’s baptism through the ascension (Acts 1:22). Two men were chosen who filled these requirements: Justus and Matthias. Rather than make the final choice through debate, they prayed for God’s will, cast lots, and allowed the providence of God to guide their choice.

The Holy Spirit is poured out—On the day of Pentecost, fifty days after the Passover was celebrated and about ten days after Jesus ascended into heaven, the waiting for the Holy Spirit ended. As the Holy Spirit was poured out, a sound like a tornado came from heaven and filled the whole house (Acts 2:2). Something that looked like tongues of fire settled upon each of them. All of them began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them (Acts 2:4).

The assembly was amazed—The people from various nations heard the disciples speaking in their own language. They could not understand how the disciples could do this since they were Galileans. Yet there were others who heard only a loud babble they could not understand. They wrongly assumed the disciples were drunk.

This event marked a major development in God’s salvation plan for man. It signaled that the gospel was for all peoples and all tongues. God was now going to take initiative by his Spirit, through the followers of Jesus, to reveal himself to people outside of Israel. From this point on, people did not have to identify with the nation of Israel and learn the Jewish tongue to know God. He was now speaking by his Spirit, through his disciples, to the whole world in order to reach every tribe and tongue.

God had separated the nations by confusing their language at the tower of Babel (Genesis 11:7). Now, with the beginning of the advance of the gospel, God was at work bringing them together again.

Where Is the Gospel? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

In the Old Testament, the feast of Pentecost was called the Feast of Harvest or day of the firstfruits (Exodus 23:16; Numbers 28:26–30). On this day, bulls, lambs, and a goat were sacrificed, in addition to the regular offering, to make atonement.

Now that Jesus has been sacrificed upon the cross and salvation has come to the people of Israel, there is no longer need to kill the goat of atonement. In addition, the promised blessing to Abraham has been fulfilled. With the arrival of the Spirit of God, the disciples were free to begin the advance of the gospel to people of every tribe, language, and nation.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Acts 1:15—2:12 from the Scriptures or read story 122, "Pentecost," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Talk about the Promise

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ Abraham costume: an old sheet, a rope for a belt, a fake beard, and a staff

This exercise is designed to connect Pentecost to the larger work of God.

Have a helper dress up as Abraham and prepare for an interview with you. Following are some questions to ask, along with possible answers:

- TEACHER:** Abraham, can I call you Abe?
- ABRAHAM:** No, I would prefer Abraham. God named me, you know.
- TEACHER:** Well, Abraham, we are reading the book of Acts where the Holy Spirit came down on Jesus’ followers and we wondered what you think of all that.
- ABRAHAM:** Well, it is just a continuation of my story or, I should say, God’s story.
- TEACHER:** What do you mean?
- ABRAHAM:** When God first revealed himself to me, he said that I would be the father of many nations. That is why he gave me the name Abraham. You know it means “Father of a Multitude.”
- TEACHER:** So how does your name factor in here?
- ABRAHAM:** Simple. At Pentecost Jewish converts gathered from all over the world for the feast. When the Holy Spirit came, Jesus’ followers spoke in other tongues. Each person present heard them speak in their own language. Do you see? People of every nation were blessed by what they said. That is the promise. It is being fulfilled!
- TEACHER:** So you are saying that the promise given to you is being fulfilled through the ministry of Jesus?
- ABRAHAM:** Exactly! He is my great-, great-, great-, great- and so on grandson. I’ll bet you can’t say that. I’m mighty proud of that fellow, uh, I mean my Lord.
- TEACHER:** Well Abraham, thanks for helping us understand how the whole Bible connects.
- ABRAHAM:** You are welcome. Hope to see you soon in heaven...I mean when you die. Oh forget it—I hope you don’t die for a while.

TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESON 2 10 MIN

Choosing Lots for a Chocolate Bar

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ one chocolate bar
- ✓ six straws (one of which is cut shorter by one-half inch)

Read the story of the choosing of Matthias to replace Judas at the end of Acts chapter 1.

We should not make important life decisions by casting lots, but in spite of our cultured sensibilities, it is biblical! Our culture uses a form of “casting lots” each time they flip a coin in a football game. They might call it chance, but we know God is in control of all things—even the casting of a lot or the flipping of a coin.

Divide the class into groups of six and have each group pick a straw. Take the finalists and have them each choose a straw to determine the “winning group.”

Read Proverbs 16:33 and ask the following questions:

- **What does God’s control over the lot tell us about God?**
(God is in control of everything, even those things that seem to happen by chance.)
- **Should we cast lots to make decisions?**
(No. Even though God works through lots, it is wiser to use the other means God has given us, such as reading his word, listening to wise counsel, and following the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We should never use the lot to determine our behavior. It would be unwise if you use the lot to determine whether or not to steal someone’s bike. God’s Word already speaks clearly to that issue.)
- **Why did the disciples use the lot to determine Judas’s replacement?**
(They did not rely on the lot alone. Peter laid out very specific criteria. It is very likely that they could not tell which of the two men would be better. They were both fully qualified. Perhaps some suggested one man while others suggested another. That is when the lot was brought in to allow the sovereignty of God to make the choice.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Color a Picture

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 44—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- **What happened when the Holy Spirit fell upon the apostles?**
(A great wind blew through the place, tongues of fire appeared over the disciples, and they spoke in other languages.)

- **Does the Holy Spirit still fill people today who believe?**
(Yes, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside every believer.)

- **Does the Spirit come on people today in tongues of fire?**
(No, but the Spirit still comes upon people to empower them to be witnesses for Christ and spread the gospel.)

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's Scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

These Men Are Drunk

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a couple volunteers who can each speak a different foreign language.

Ask the volunteers to come prepared to read or recite Genesis 11:8–9 along with a sentence of praise to God in their native language.

In class, have the volunteers take turns reading aloud the account of the tower of Babel in Genesis 11:1–7. Then have them read or recite Genesis 11:8–9 in their native languages to depict the confusion of their languages. Acting as the narrator, you can read Genesis 11:8–9 in English so the children can understand.

Now read the account of the coming of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:1–12. When you get to Acts 2:6 stop the narration and have your guests start praising God in their own language. After a sentence of praise to God have them repeat the sentence in English. After your guests have done this, return to your narration of the passage by reading Acts 2:7–13.

Talk about how through the gospel, God is now gathering together the people he once scattered at Babel.

