

A PIVOTAL MOMENT IN TIME

TRANSITION FROM OLD TO NEW TESTAMENT PRE-PENTECOST

Note: From Genesis until this point, only select people experienced the Holy Spirit temporarily for specific purposes, but now Jesus begins declaring God's will for all believers to soon experience Him ongoing.

Luke 1:12-15

12 When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. 13 But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. 14 He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, 15 for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born.

Luke 1:39-41

39 At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, 40 where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. 41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Luke 2:25-26

25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. 26 It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.

John 7:37-39

37 On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them." 39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

John 20:21-22

21 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." 22 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

Luke 24:49

"I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

(BEFORE PENTECOST)

LET'S OBSERVE...

Observe Luke 1:12-15

• Questions

- Did this take place before or after Jesus' birth?
- What covenant were Zechariah and Elizabeth living under at this moment?

Observe Luke 1:39-41

- Read Luke 1:39-45 for full context
- What covenant is active at this moment?
- Mary and Elizabeth converse. Observe Luke 1:43
 - Elizabeth acknowledges Mary as the mother of the _____, the One who will eventually bring about a New Covenant.

Observe Luke 2:25-26

- What covenant is Simeon living under?
- Observe verse 5: Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the **consolation** of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him.
 - Consolation: **paraklésis (Strong's G3874)**
 - Usage: Paraklésis primarily refers to the act of calling someone to one's side for the purpose of offering comfort, encouragement, or exhortation. It encompasses a range of meanings from consolation in times of distress to encouragement and exhortation in the context of moral and spiritual guidance. In the New Testament, it is often associated with the work of the Holy Spirit, who is described as the "Comforter" or "Helper".
- Observe verse 26: It had been _____ to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.

We can conclude: The above observations indicate that they were living in tumultuous times and on the verge of major change. Change of covenants, of an era of grace, of the birth of the church. But first, the old must die. Jesus' death & resurrection is the crescendo moment of the old way dying, and giving birth to the era of the Spirit-filled church.

Observe John 7:37-39, John 20:21-22, and Luke 24:49

- Jesus is building up in the disciples a great anticipation for something new on the horizon.
 - Do you see the shift starting to take place?
- John 20:21-22 and Luke 24:49 take place after the resurrection. The New Covenant is now in motion. And yet He is declaring that there is even more amazing change to come! In other words....get ready!



CONCORDANCE ACTIVITY

Look up the following words:



Upon: Greek: (Epi)
Strong's G1909



Reveal: Greek:
(chrématizó)
Strong's G5537



Receive: Greek: (Lambanō)
Strong's G2983



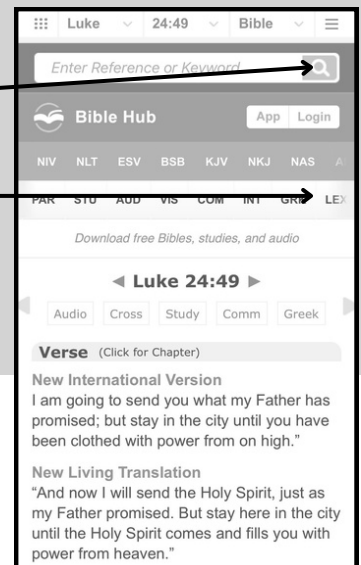
Promise: Greek
(Epagelía)
Strong's G1860



ONLINE RESOURCE ACTIVITY

Observe Luke 24:49

- Go to BibleHub.com and do a search for Luke 24:49, and then click on the magnifying glass.
- Once it loads, click on the button titled "LEX" (lexicon).
 - Read the **Strong's** column (3rd column) all the way down for the Greek definitions of each word in the verse.



LET'S INTERPRET...

- What do you believe all of these verses mean?
- What is God speaking to you personally through this study?
- Read a trusted commentary and compare to your interpretation.



NOW, LET'S READ THE AFTER-SUMMARY TOGETHER

Zechariah and Elizabeth lived in a time of great national turmoil, as Israel longed for deliverance from Roman rule and awaited the fulfillment of God's promises. Zechariah, a faithful priest, encountered the angel Gabriel in the temple, receiving the staggering news that he and his wife, long past childbearing age, would have a son—John—who would be filled with the Holy Spirit from the womb (Luke 1:12-15). Elizabeth, carrying this miracle child, experienced a profound moment when her cousin Mary visited, and the baby within her leaped at the sound of Mary's voice, recognizing the presence of the Holy Spirit within her (Luke 1:39-41). It must have been overwhelming to witness the Spirit's movement in such an intimate and undeniable way, all while the world around them remained in uncertainty and oppression. Yet, in the midst of these pressures, they were living proof that God was beginning something new, even in the most impossible circumstances.

Mary, a young girl suddenly chosen to bear the Savior, was thrust into the heart of this transition between covenants. She likely felt the weight of both fear and faith, carrying the Messiah while witnessing the growing hostility and unrest in her nation. Simeon, a devout man led by the Holy Spirit, confirmed this tension when he prophesied over the infant Jesus, saying He would bring salvation but also division and suffering (Luke 2:25-26). How difficult it must have been for Mary to hold this truth, knowing her son was destined to shake the foundations of the world! The Spirit was moving powerfully, revealing glimpses of what was to come, yet the people of Israel were still caught in the in-between—a place of waiting, hoping, and struggling to understand how God's kingdom would arrive.

The disciples, after following Jesus through His ministry, found themselves in the darkest moment of their lives as they watched Him crucified. Everything they had hoped for seemed lost, but after His resurrection, Jesus breathed on them, imparting the Holy Spirit in a way that gave them a foretaste of what was to come (John 20:21-22). Even then, they were still in a period of waiting, told to remain in Jerusalem until they were "clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). It must have been an agonizing paradox—to have seen Jesus alive again, to know He was the Messiah, yet to still live in the tension of uncertainty, wondering what this promised Holy Spirit would mean for them. Would it be like the prophets of old, momentary and selective, or something entirely new?

Today, we often find ourselves in similar moments of transition, waiting on God, feeling uncertain about the future, and struggling with the tension of faith and doubt. Just like Zechariah, Elizabeth, Mary, and the disciples, we live in a world full of turmoil, yet the Holy Spirit is still moving, still filling us, still leading us toward God's greater plan. The promise Jesus gave—living water that would flow from within those who believe (John 7:37-39)—was not just for them, but for us. We, too, stand between what has been and what is to come, called to trust in the Spirit's guidance, even when we don't fully understand. And just as they experienced the fulfillment of God's promise at Pentecost, we can trust that God will not leave us in the waiting, but will empower us to walk in the new life He has prepared.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- **Applying Luke 1:12-15:** When Zechariah doubted God's promise, he was silenced for a time but still witnessed the miraculous fulfillment of God's word. In what ways have you struggled to trust God's plans in uncertain times, and how might the Holy Spirit be working behind the scenes despite your doubts?
- **Applying Luke 1:39-41:** When Mary greeted Elizabeth, the Holy Spirit caused John to leap in the womb, affirming the presence of God. How can you be more aware of and responsive to the Holy Spirit's presence in the people and circumstances around you?
- **Applying Luke 2:25-26:** Simeon was led by the Holy Spirit to see the fulfillment of God's promise before his death. In what areas of your life do you need to trust that God's timing is perfect, to rely on His sufficient grace, even when it feels like nothing is happening?
- **Applying John 7:37-39:** Jesus promised that streams of living water—the Holy Spirit—would flow from within those who believe. In what ways are you allowing the Holy Spirit to refresh and guide you daily, and where might you be resisting His work in your life?
- **Applying John 20:21-22:** Jesus breathed on His disciples, giving them a taste of the Holy Spirit before Pentecost. How can you actively receive and rely on the Spirit's presence today, rather than waiting for a "perfect" moment to trust His power?
- **Applying Luke 24:49:** Jesus told His disciples to wait until they were clothed with power from on high. Are you in a season where God is calling you to wait on Him but remain productive in faith rather than frustration?

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we are able to look back at the pivotal moment in time when the old covenant was coming to an end and the New Covenant was on the horizon. You were at work, setting the stage for monumental change in the earth that would impact every generation to come. Your Son came, died, rose again, then ascended to be seated at Your right hand. Yet You didn't leave us without. The anticipation of Your Holy Spirit was enough to revive Your disciple's hope. Through Your Word, we see that you were in control the entire time. Their world felt shaky, but was giving birth to necessary change for the saving of souls and expanding Your Kingdom by the empowerment of Your Spirit.

Father, it would feel as though the chaos of our current world is feeling quite similar. It is by faith that we trust You are still in control and at work, as You prepare Your bride for the return of Christ. We ask that You continue to reassure our faith and remind us in the shaking that You are still in control, executing Your plan in the earth. We are so grateful to have the comfort and companionship of Your Holy Spirit. We ask that You make us sensitive to Your Spirit's leading, so that we can navigate the times with faith instead of fear. Teach us Your ways, and use us for Your glory! We ask this in the matchless name of Jesus, amen!



Homework: For personal reflection, complete any unanswered Application Questions above.

Next Week: We will study the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, beginning at Pentecost.