

The Tower of Babel, Pentecost, & The Red Thread (Part 4) ~ Jesus in the Old Testament



The Tower of Babel, Pentecost, & The Red Thread ~ Finding Jesus in the Old Testament

When God came down to stop the people from building the Tower of Babel, He wasn't being a fun-sucker. ([Genesis 11:1-9](#))

He was protecting them from the danger of exalting their own name.

(In my series [What Was So Wrong With The Tower of Babel?](#) we

looked at those dangers. If you don't know what was so wrong with the Tower of Babel, and why we should even care, check it out.)

Now we're going to look at how God, in the midst of all the drama, masterfully wove into these events several Red Thread Clues. ^[†]

Quick Review of The Tower of Babel:

After the flood, God had given Noah and his sons the command to spread out and fill the earth. ([Genesis 9:1](#))

Many basically responded, "We choose 'No' to that." ([Genesis 11:1-9](#))

Instead, they settled in Shinar and began to build a tower to their own "great name and praise."

Therefore, God came down and confused their language so that no one could understand each other.

Having lost the power to communicate, they lost the ability to build the tower to their own greatness – and they got the message that God – and *His* name – was greater.

God then scattered them out across the earth as He'd originally told them to do.

Now, let's fast forward from Genesis to the book of Acts to see some Red Thread Clues.

Red Thread Clues: Babel & Pentecost

(If you'd like to open up to the scene in Acts in a new tab, click here: [Acts 1:1-11 & Acts 2.](#))

Pentecost was originally solely a Jewish holiday, also known as *Feast of Weeks* or *Shavuot*. Think of it as kind of a Thanksgiving Day celebration.

In [Leviticus 23:9-22](#), God commanded the Jews to count fifty days from the Feast of First Fruits, hence the origin of the name Pentecost.

Eventually Pentecost also commemorated the day God gave the Law at Mt. Sinai in the days of Moses.

At the time of Christ, Jewish law required the men to come to Jerusalem from wherever they lived for Pentecost.

Jesus rose from the grave on the day of the Feast of First Fruits, and fifty days later on Pentecost, the believers were gathered together in Jerusalem and received the Holy Spirit, which Christ had promised to them.

Pentecost is now a Jewish Holiday & a Christian Holiday.

It doesn't take long before the events in Acts 1-2 begin to reflect the Tower of Babel – only opposite.

On the day of Pentecost, all the believers (*those who believed in Jesus Christ for their salvation from sin*) were meeting together. Suddenly the sound of a rushing wind filled the place and what looked like “tongues” of fire rested on each of them.



At the Tower of Babel, God came down and removed their “power.”

At Pentecost, God's Spirit came down and filled them with His

power.

Each one of them, now filled with God's Spirit, began to speak in other languages by the power of the Holy Spirit.



At the Tower of Babel, the people all spoke one language until God confused their language, leaving them unable to communicate with each other.

At Pentecost, God's Spirit gave the believers the ability to speak and understand other languages.

(How much would you have loved for God to have done that for you when you were in your foreign language class? After three years of a language some have still only mastered counting to ten. Did you know [I speak German?](#))

At Pentecost, devout Jews from every nation were living in Jerusalem. (These weren't believers, but rather Jews dedicated to the Law of Moses, but who refused to believe the things [Moses wrote about Jesus.](#))



At the Tower of Babel, God scattered the people across the world, creating different nations.

At Pentecost, God brought the Jews together into Jerusalem from every nation.

When the Jews heard the sound of the rushing wind, they ran to see what was happening. *(That had to have been quite a sound for it to travel around that crowded city.)*

When the Jews heard their own native languages being spoken by Galileans, who shouldn't have been able to speak their tongues, they stood in shock.

(It makes me wonder how they knew they were Galilean. Was it like hearing a Southerner speaking French? No matter how well a Southerner knows the foreign vocabulary, they're probably still going to sound like they're from Paris, Tennessee – not Paris, France.)

What were the believers saying in these many languages?



At the Tower of Babel, everyone spoke one language and talked about the wonderful things they were doing and would do. They exalted their own name.

At Pentecost, the believers spoke languages from every nation, all exalting God's great name and the things He's done.

Of course, those who perhaps didn't want to deal with the truth that they crucified the Son of God, grasped for an excuse.

"They're just drunk, that's all!" they said.

How ridiculous is that?

Alcohol impairs the ability of someone who's drunk to speak

even their *own* language well. No one is suddenly fluent in Swahili after one too many beers.

This large group of believers had not come together at 9:00 am to drink Mimosas and then instantly became fluent in the languages of every nation.

Despite some detractors, many listened to the message with humble hearts. They asked, ***“Brothers, what should we do?”*** (***Acts 2:37***)



The people in Babel had heard God’s message and rejected it, refusing to “scatter and fill the earth.” Their hearts were full of pride.

The people in Jerusalem heard the message and accepted it. They trusted in Christ, repented of their sins, and received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Their hearts were humble.

About 3,000 were saved that day.

Fast forward to [Acts 8](#).

God once again *scattered* the people, but this time for a different reason.

“. . . And on that day a great persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.”

~ Acts 8:1

God didn’t create the persecution; He just used it. (*He’s good at using man’s own evil choices to fulfill His purposes.*)

In Babel, God sent the people off in shame and confusion, babbling as they went.



In Jerusalem, God sent the believers off in unity and in the power of His Spirit – no babbling – to proclaim the singular message of God’s incredible grace in offering salvation to every nation through His Son Jesus Christ.

The Lesson For Us Today:

- ◆ When we humble ourselves before the Lord, we’ll be blessed.
- ◆ When we choose not to humble ourselves and exalt ourselves instead, God is able to humble us for our good, and His glory.
- ◆ We must rest in the sovereignty of God. His ways don’t always make sense to us, but He always knows what’s the absolute best in every situation.
- ◆ God is exceedingly patient. He’s willing to wait thousands of years between giving a promise and its fulfillment. Don’t let doubt steal you of your joy as you wait for God to move in a situation.

All of the Old Testament prophets eagerly awaited the first coming of Christ into the world, and all were blessed, but none lived to see it. We must not lose our eternal perspective. God’s timing is best.

- ◆ When we learn to rest in Him and listen to Him, we’ll follow Him wherever He leads without regret.

May the Name that is above all names be exalted!

And what a difference it makes when the right name is

exalted:

*“They worshiped together at the Temple each day,
met in homes for the Lord’s Supper,
and shared their meals with great joy and generosity –
all the while praising God and
enjoying the goodwill of all the people.
And each day the Lord added to their fellowship
those who were being saved.”
~ Acts 2:46-47*

If you’ve enjoyed this post and series, I hope that you’ll share it with others via FaceBook, Twitter, Pinterest, and good old fashioned email. (Ha! Email is now actually old fashioned!)

QUESTION: How has God taken you from a Tower of Babel mentality to a Day of Pentecost heart? *(Let me hear from you in the comment section.)*

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[+] ([BACK TO POST](#)) A Red Thread Clue is a term I came up with

to lump together any picture of Jesus Christ revealed in the Old Testament.

They can range from official prophecies given by the great prophets of God to mere reflections of Christ in the works or character of those we see in the Old Testament.

God left prophecies, types, and symbols of Christ throughout the lives and history of the Old Testament so that those living in the time when Christ came into the world in the form of man would have no excuse not to recognize Him as the Promised One – the Messiah.

This was important because many individuals, who came before and after Jesus came, claimed to be the Messiah, but only Jesus Christ fulfilled every single prophecy, type, and symbol.

Over two thousands years later, we can open the Bible and see how God worked every detail of every life to fulfill His purposes, including the purpose of pointing those living in the days of the Old Testament forward to His Son Jesus Christ, and those who've lived in the New Testament days back to Jesus and the Red Thread Clues of His Coming.

There are still many Red Thread Clues in the Old Testament that have yet to be fulfilled. Their fulfillment will come when Christ returns for the church, brings judgment upon those who have rejected His salvation, and sets up His Heavenly Kingdom.