

Acts 2:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Analysis

Filled with the Holy Ghost (ἐπλήσθησαν πνεύματος ἁγίου)—The aorist passive verb indicates God's sovereign action, not human achievement. This fulfills John the Baptist's prophecy (Luke 3:16) and Jesus' promise (Acts 1:5). **Began to speak with other tongues** (γλώσσαις λαλεῖν)—the Spirit's first manifestation was multilingual witness, enabling gospel proclamation to Jews from 'every nation under heaven' (v.5). The 'tongues' were recognizable languages (dialects, v.6), not ecstatic speech—a reversal of Babel's confusion (Genesis 11). This supernatural gift demonstrated the gospel's universal scope.

Historical Context

The 'other tongues' enabled Galilean disciples to be understood by Diaspora Jews speaking Parthian, Median, Elamite, etc. (vv.9-11). This equipped the church for global mission from its inception. Around 3,000 converts from various nations would carry the gospel back to their homelands.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does Pentecost's tongue-speaking as clear communication differ from unintelligible ecstatic speech?
2. In what ways does the Spirit still equip believers to cross cultural and linguistic barriers?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἐπλήσθησαν ἄπαντες πνεῦμα ἁγίου καὶ ἤρξαντο
And filled all Ghost with the Holy And began
G2532 G4130 G537 G4151 G40 G2532 G756

λαλεῖν ἐτέραις γλώσσαις καθὼς τὸ πνεῦμα ἐδίδου
to speak with other tongues as Ghost gave
G2980 G2087 G1100 G2531 G3588 G4151 G1325

αὐτοῖς ἀποφθέγγεσθαι
them utterance
G846 G669

Additional Cross-References

Acts 13:52 (Holy): And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.

Mark 16:17 (Parallel theme): And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

Acts 4:31 (Holy): And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

Ephesians 5:18 (Spirit): And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

1 Corinthians 12:10 (Spirit): To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

John 14:26 (Holy): But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Acts 7:55 (Holy): But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

Acts 19:6 (Holy): And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

Acts 10:46 (Parallel theme): For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,

Acts 9:17 (Holy): And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.