

Who was mocked for being drunk?

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What happened on Pentecost in AD31? What have we traditionally understood about this event?

This study is a focus on how to get value out of the scriptures and really go to the crux of God's word. Effectively standing back and seeing the overview, looking at all those involved and the circumstances surround an event, the event's timeline too. In this instance we'll look more closely at an event that occurred on Pentecost in AD 31. What have we traditionally understood about this event? Do we need to revise our thinking?

[2 Timothy 2V15](#) Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

It takes work and effort to get the most out of God's word. Paul is here telling Timothy that he should not be ashamed for putting the effort in. It seems that Timothy was being criticised for putting effort into gleaning understanding. Let's go back one verse;

[2 Timothy 2V14](#) Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.

And on to verse 16;

[2 Timothy 2V16](#) But shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

Perhaps people wanted Timothy to agree with them or make a judgement about who was right or wrong when it came to teachings, and perhaps they wanted Timothy to give an instant answer, while he preferred to go and look at the scriptures with prayer for understanding.

Paul seems to be encouraging Timothy that he was doing the right thing. Taking time, working at knowledge and understanding, asking God for guidance, and that he should not be ashamed for doing that so that when he came back to the people he could give them accurate understanding, to counter that subversion from those who wanted to push their own beliefs.

With that in mind let's go to Acts and read about what happened on the day of Pentecost in 31AD.

[Acts 2V1](#) And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

[V2](#) And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

[V3](#) And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

[V4](#) And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

[V5](#) And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

[V6](#) Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

[V7](#) And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?

[V8](#) And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

[V9](#) Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,

[V10](#) Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,

[V11](#) Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

[V12](#) And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

[V13](#) Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

Peter's Response

[V14](#) But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

[V15](#) For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

Firstly, let's look at who the people are here.

[Verse 5](#) “And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.”

In the New Testament the term “Jew” typically refers to the ruling class, members of the Judean aristocracy, the Pharisees and Sadducees, usually educated people of lineage and wealth. While everyone in and around Jerusalem were ethnically Jewish, of the tribe of Judah, Levie and Simeon, that is not what is being referred to here.

The Jews that are mentioned here are different, they are “devout men, out of every nation under heaven”. These are educated people of lineage and wealth who have come to Jerusalem to observe the holy day season. They are not members of the local aristocracy, but are educated foreign men.

Contrast this with what is said about the disciples.

[Verse 7](#) “And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?”

The disciples were ethnically Jewish, but they were referred to as Galileans. They were from an area of uneducated fishermen, they were not of the Jew class, they were not people of wealth, influence and lineage, and certainly not typically educated in the scriptures.

So here at this gathering are essentially three groups, local Jews who largely conspired to assassinate Jesus, the devout Jews from other nations who had come to worship God according to His holy seasons, and the uneducated disciples.

Of course there were also thousands of ordinary people from Judea there too. They are referred to as the “multitude” in verse 6, and we can confirm that there were a lot of people because in [Acts 2 verse 41](#) it states that about 3,000 people were baptised that day.

Let's take a moment to consider the time frame.

God specified that a day begins and ends at sunset, night comes before day, and this is how the people of Judea observed each day ([Genesis 1:5,8,13,19,23,31](#)). In [Acts verse 1](#) it states; “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.” This would have been in the evening in the first few hours of the day. It is likely that the disciples would have shared a meal together, discussed the events leading up to Christ telling them to wait until this holy day of Pentecost, and at some point in the evening God empowered these 120 faithful with His holy Spirit.

In addition, God typically used a pillar of cloud to represent His presence during the day and a pillar of fire at night, see [Exodus](#) chapters [13](#) & [14](#), [Numbers 14](#) and [Nehemiah 9](#). It is therefore likely that the “cloven tongues like as of fire” would have appeared on the heads of the disciples at night, most dramatic in the dim evening light.

In [Acts verse 6](#) it states: “Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together ...”. It would have taken time for these events to be talked about; the multitude would have taken time to assemble, not just the ordinary Judeans, but also the Jews, the priesthood, the elite of society, and the visiting people from other countries. This ties in perfectly with Peter’s statement in verse 15; “... seeing it is but the third hour of the day.”, which would have been about 9am, the 3rd hour of the daylight part of the holy day.

Now let’s read these verses again and look at the detail of what happened.

[Acts 2V1](#) And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

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[V8](#) And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

[V9](#) Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,

[V10](#) Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,

[V11](#) Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

[V12](#) And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

The devout men, and presumably women from all nation, of which some are listed in verses 9, 10 and 11 could hear and understand the disciples. Was the miracle in the speaking, the hearing or both? It doesn’t matter, and it’s not the focus of what we are investigating here.

But all these people marvelled that they could hear what each disciple said in their own language. They could hear coherent facts and testimony about Jesus Christ. They could hear

the scriptures being expounded, they could hear the individuals witness of the resurrection and salvation.

How is it then that in [Verse 13](#) it says; “Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.”

We have traditionally been taught that “These men are full of new wine” were the disciples and the rest of the 120 that were gathered together on Pentecost. But what did the apostle Peter say?

[Acts V14](#) But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

[V15](#) For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

Peter said these were not drunken as you suppose. Was he talking about himself and the eleven who stood up with him?

There didn't seem to be any argument with what he said, nothing is recorded, so it seems he was believed. Would you take the word of a man who appeared to be drunk, whose colleagues appeared to be drunk? Yet these people seemed to.

No it wasn't Peter and the disciples and the rest of the 120 that had gathered together that day who appeared drunk. In fact they were speaking fluently and profoundly, everyone could hear them.

Further, as it states in verse 7; “And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?”

One of the reasons they were amazed is that these Galileans who were by and large uneducated, were expounding the scriptures with coherence and inspiration. The multitude of inhabitants of Judea heard them in their everyday language, the language of Judea which the Galileans spoke.

The answer that we are looking for is in verse 14. Who does it say he spoke to? It says in verse 14, “Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem”. Peter didn't address the devout men from other countries.

No, the people who were accused of being drunk were the foreigners, the “devout men, out of every nation under heaven”, the Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia and Cappadocia. People who dwelt in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers from Rome, Crete and Arabia. Peter was telling all the locals that these foreign people were not drunk.

All these people were excited, they were the ones saying outlandish things such as; “I can hear a Galilean speaking Greek”. They were the ones all talking in their various languages. A great cacophony. Imagine the scene; the Greek arguing with the Roman saying that the disciple was talking in Greek while the Roman said no, he is speaking Latin. The Egyptian saying that he could hear a disciple speaking Egyptian while another argued that it was Arabian.

The 120 who were gathered that day in one accord were so filled with the Holy Spirit that they most likely went into the crowd and talked to anyone who would listen, and in doing so would have conversed back and forth with all the people. Did the disciples and the 120 also hear every person in their Hebrew language? I expect so, how else would they be able to answer these peoples questions, to discuss the message of Christ effectively?

The “Jews” who were there, the ruling class, the autocracy of Jerusalem, heard what was being expounded. They also heard their fellow “devout men, out of every nation under heaven”. These devout men were behaving extraordinarily and out of character. They concluded that the only explanation was that they were drunk.

Peter began to understand that these devout men could hear and understand what he and his fellow disciple were saying. He could also see that the “Jews” who crucified Christ had been drawn in. This was a great opportunity to tell these Jews and everyone who would listen what a marvellous thing was being done.

So what he did next astounded the Jews and everyone else who had come to see what was going on. He, Peter, an uneducated Galilean, expounded the scriptures. He got up and spoke the words given to Joel.

[Joel 2V28](#) And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

[V29](#) And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

[V30](#) And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

[V31](#) The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.

[V32](#) And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

And everyone heard in their native language. Peter went on to expound Jesus Christ and tied Him into the lineage that the Jewish aristocracy claimed as their own, all from the scriptures, and reminded them of what they had done.

[Acts 2V22](#) Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

[V23](#) Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

[V24](#) Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

[V25](#) For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:

[V26](#) Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:

[V27](#) Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

[V28](#) Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

[V29](#) Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

[V30](#) Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

[V31](#) He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

[V32](#) This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

[V33](#) Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

[V34](#) For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

[V35](#) Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

And he concluded his sermon in Acts 2 verse 36, again expounding that Christ's sacrifice and resurrection was not for the Jews only, but for the whole house of Israel.

[Acts 2V36](#) Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

[V37](#) Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

[V38](#) Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

[V39](#) For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

[V40](#) And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

[V41](#) Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

The disciples were not drunk, God's Holy Spirit does not make people appear drunk, in contrast it imbues knowledge, wisdom, humility and power, the fruits of the spirit; see [Galatians 5](#) verses [22](#) & [23](#). No, the disciples were full of the Holy Spirit and the foreign visitor to Jerusalem were amazed, all talking with one another, a great cacophony, astonished, astounded and dumbfounded at what they heard!

What a marvellous event that God had planned, a stupendous announcement that His Spirit was now available to whomever He called. Not just the descendants of Judah, but to all the lost tribes of Israel (verse 36), and ultimately to all humanity.