

This Sunday on the Liturgical Calendar, churches celebrate Pentecost. When we think of Pentecost today, we think of it in terms of the New Testament readings. In the New Testament, Pentecost was the occasion of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles and other followers of Jesus. The word *Pentecost* means fifty days. Christians celebrate Pentecost fifty days after Easter. But Pentecost isn't really a New Testament event. Pentecost was a feast day on the calendar of ancient Israel celebrating the giving of the Law to Moses at Sinai. The celebration took place fifty days after the giving of the Law. This morning, let's look together at a little bit of what happened in the New Testament on that day and consider how it fit into the culture of those First Century believers:

On the day of Pentecost, all the believers were meeting together in one place. Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.

### **Acts 2:1-4**

You've read that before, right? This familiar event took place on Pentecost. It might be good to remember that, while Pentecost was a feast day on the Hebrew calendar, it wasn't one of the major feasts. Nobody was expecting God to do anything significant or special on that day. In many ways it was a day just like any other day. But on God's calendar, it was The Day. It was the day that He filled the disciples with the Holy Spirit and three thousand people were converted. It was the day when Peter discovered he could preach the Gospel. It was the day we now call "The Birthday of the Church". The Bible says, "*Suddenly* there was a sound from heaven." *Suddenly*. In 1972, God suddenly apprehended me and changed my life forever. I didn't know it would be a significant day---it wasn't on my calendar---but on God's calendar it was my day. It wasn't that I had been preparing myself for something special to happen; it was God's special day for me. I've had other "suddenlys" since then; maybe you have too. Can you think of some days when God suddenly intervened in your life? Are you ready for some more? Today, take a few moments to think back on times when God suddenly reached into your life and changed it. Ask God to help you to keep your heart open. God may move again...will you be ready to move with Him?