

Pentecost Reading For Six Readers

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This Pentecost reading, from the second Chapter of Acts, is arranged for up to six readers. Its purpose is to bathe the sanctuary in the sounds of language, as in Acts 2:1-6. It can be done effectively with as few as three readers, but more readers makes for a fuller, more chaotic, sound at the end. It also can be done with more than six readers, if you wish to add more languages, but conceptually, the first six verses of Acts 2 are well grouped together and if you added too many more verses, you would have to cut the text off in the midst of the next phase of the story.

The reading is done this way: the first time through, the first reader reads the entire passage in English. The second time through each person will read a verse in the same order but their assigned different language. The third time through everyone will read their entire passage all at the same time, with each speaking in his or her own language. The first read-through will sound coherent. The second time through will be slightly incoherent, and the last time will sound like babbling. Don't worry, that's the point.

Most of the languages are from the romance languages, and therefore most English speaking readers can conceivably muddle their way through them, even if they don't know the original. It is, of course always better if you can find multi-lingual readers or people for whom these languages are first rather than second languages. We have also done this with Cambodian and Vietnamese readers, and that adds a lot. Just substitute the alternative language in at the appropriate places.

The available languages for the reading are:

- English,
- French,
- Spanish,
- Latin,
- German,
- Portuguese
- Greek (both in the original and Western transliterated script).

The original and transliterated Greek text is included, but is not for the faint of heart. This one might be best left for the pastor to muddle through. It might be the first opportunity to prove that he or she actually went to seminary after all.

It is even more effective when the readings can be made from all points around the sides of the sanctuary. When the sounds are coming from all sides, the sense of being surrounded with the sounds of language "each in their own tongue," is heightened.

First Reading: English

- Reader 1: When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.
- Reader 2: And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.
- Reader 3: Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them.
- Reader 4: All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.
- Reader 5: Now, there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem.
- Reader 6: And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each.

Second Reading: Individual Languages

- Reader 1, English: When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.
- Reader 2, French: Tout à coup il vint du ciel un bruit comme celui d'un vent impétueux, et il remplit toute la maison où ils étaient assis.
- Reader 3, Spanish: y se les aparecieron lenguas repartidas, como de fuego, asentándose sobre cada uno de ellos.
- Reader 4, Latin: et repleti sunt omnes Spiritu Sancto et coeperunt loqui aliis linguis prout Spiritus Sanctus dabat eloqui illis
- Reader 5, German: Es wohnten aber in Jerusalem Juden, die waren gottesfürchtige Männer aus allen Völkern unter dem Himmel.
- Reader 6, Portuguese: Genoménes dê tês phonês taútes sunêlthen tò plêthos kai sunechúthe óti êkouon ês êkastos tê idíã dialékto laloúnton autôn.

Third Reading: All Languages

Reader 1: English (New Revised Standard Version)

1. When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.
2. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.
3. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them.
4. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.
5. Now, there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem.
6. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each.

Reader 2: French (La Sainte Bible, Édition Revue, Alliance Biblique Universelle, 1998)

1. Le jour de la Pentecôte, ils étaient tous ensemble dans le même lieu.
2. Tout à coup il vint du ciel un bruit comme celui d'un vent impétueux, et il remplit toute la maison où ils étaient assis.
3. Des langues, semblables à des langues de feu, leur apparurent, séparées les unes des autres, et se posèrent sur chacun d'eux.
4. Et ils furent tous remplis du Saint-Esprit, et se mirent à parler en d'autres langues, selon que l'Esprit leur donnait de s'exprimer
5. Or il y avait en séjour à Jérusalem des Juifs, hommes pieux, de toutes les nations qui sont sous le ciel.
6. Au bruit qui eut lieu, la multitude accourut, et elle fut confondue parce que chacun les entendait parler dans sa propre langue.

Reader 3: Spanish (Dios Llega al Hombre, Versión Popular, 3ra edición, 1983, Sociedades Bíblicas Unidas)

1. Cuando llegó el día de Pentecostés, estaban todos unánimes juntos
2. Y de repente vino del cielo un estruendo como de un viento recio que soplaba, el cual llenó toda la casa donde estaban sentados;
3. y se les aparecieron lenguas repartidas, como de fuego, asentándose sobre cada uno de ellos.
4. Y fueron todos llenos del Espíritu Santo, y comenzaron a hablar en otras lenguas, según el Espíritu les daba que hablasen.
5. Por aquellos días había en Jerusalén judíos cumplidores de sus deberes religiosos, llegados de todas partes del mundo.
6. La gente se reunió al oír aquel ruido, y no sabía qué pensar, porque cada uno oía a los creyentes hablar en su propia lengua.

Reader 4: Latin (Vulgate)

1. Et cum conplerentur dies pentecostes erant omnes pariter in eodem loco
2. et factus est repente de caelo sonus tamquam advenientis spiritus vehementis et replevit totam domum ubi erant sedentes
3. et apparuerunt illis dispersitae linguae tamquam ignis seditque supra singulos eorum
4. et repleti sunt omnes Spiritu Sancto et coeperunt loqui aliis linguis prout Spiritus Sanctus dabat eloqui illis
5. erant autem in Hierusalem habitantes Iudaei viri religiosi ex omni natione quae sub caelo sunt
6. facta autem hac voce convenit multitudo et mente confusa est quoniam audiebat unusquisque lingua sua illos loquentes.

Reader 5: German (Luther's *Die Bibel*)

1. Und als der Pfingsttag gekommen war, waren sie alle an einem Ort beieinander.
2. Und es geschah plötzlich ein Brausen vom Himmel wie von einem gewaltigen Wind und erfüllte das ganze Haus, in dem sie saßen.
3. Und es erschienen ihnen Zungen zerteilt, wie von Feuer; und er setzte sich auf einen jeden von ihnen, und sie wurden alle erfüllt von dem heiligen Geist und fingen an, zu predigen in andern Sprachen, wie der Geist ihnen gab auszusprechen.
4. Es wohnten aber in Jerusalem Juden, die waren gottesfürchtige Männer aus allen Völkern unter dem Himmel.
5. Als nun dieses Brausen geschah, kam die Menge zusammen und wurde bestürzt; denn ein jeder hörte sie in seiner eigenen Sprache reden.

Reader 6: Portugese (*Bíblia Sagrada*, Alfalit, Brasil, 1996)

1. Sete semanas já se haviam pasado desde a morte e a ressurreição de Jesus, e com isto chegou o Dia de Pentecoste. Quando os crentes se reuniram naquele dia,
2. de repente apareceu um som semelhante ao rugido de um poderoso vendaval no céu por cima deles, e aquilo encheu a oasa onde estavam reunidos.
3. Então, viu-se algo parecido com labaredas ou línguas de fogo que pousaram sobre as cabeçdeles.
4. Todos os presentes ficaram cheios do Espírito Santo, e começaram a falar em línguas que não conheciam, porque o Espírito Santo deu a eles esta capacidade.
5. Em Jerusalém estavam habitando judeus, homens religiosos, de todas asnações que estão debaixo do céu.
6. Correndo aquela voz, ajuntou-se uma multidão, e estava confusa, porque cada um os ouvia falar na sua própria língua.

Greek (Transliterated from United Bible Society text, 2nd Edition, 1965)

1. Kai èn tò sumplerousthai tèn hèmèran tès pentekostès èsan pántes ómou èpì tò autó.
2. Kai ègéneto àphno èk toû ouranoû êchos hósper pheroménes pnoés biaías kai éplérosen h`òlon ton oíkon hóu esan kathémènoi
3. kai òphesan haútoîs diamerizómènai glóssai hòsei pyròs kai hékáthisen éph' h`èna hékaston autón.
4. Kai épléthesan pántes pneúmatos hàgío kai èrzanto laleîn hètérais glóssais kathòs tò pneúma èdídou ápophthéggèsthai haútoîs.
5. Esan dè eîs Ierousalèm katoikoúntes Ioudaíoi, àndres eùlabeîs ápó pantòs èthnous tòn ùpò to ouranón;
6. Genoménes dè tès phonês taútes sunêlthen tò plèthos kai sunechúthe óti èkouon eîs èkastos tê idía dialékto lalóunton autón.