

#945 The Whore's Latter Rain – Toward April 9, 1906, and the Azusa Street Revival

This and the next two Unsealings are not so much about unsealing and revealing, but are primarily informational.



Charles Fox Parham. Beginning in the late 1800's, Christians associated with what was called the Holiness movement became oriented toward divine healing and the possibility of speaking in tongues. One of these was a young Kansas collegian named Charles Fox Parham. Parham adopted a more radical Holiness belief in a "baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire." As early as 1891, Parham was heard to claim that glossolalia – speaking in unknown or foreign tongues – should accompany this baptism in the Holy Spirit. To perpetuate his views, Parham opened a Bible school in Topeka, Kansas, in 1900.



Agnes Ozman. Parham and his students conducted a service on New Year's Eve of 1901. One of the students, 30-year-old evangelist Agnes Ozman, asked (in Parham's words) "that hands be laid on her to receive the Holy Spirit." She hoped to go to foreign mission fields, and, following some of Parham's thinking, believed that perhaps the Lord would give her a "speaking in tongues" foreign language which would help her to evangelize. As he prayed for her, she is reported to have spoken in a "heavenly language," though it is also said to have been Chinese. Within a few days, about half of the school's 34 members, including Parham, spoke in tongues. Because of this, the Pentecostal movement is sometimes dated from the early a.m., January 1, 1901, experience of Agnes Ozman. From

1903 to 1905, Parham preached through the Midwest, Texas, the East Coast, and into Canada, claiming a following of several thousand.



William Joseph Seymour. In 1905, Parham took some of his protégés into Texas. He preached, distributed his *The Apostolic Faith* newspaper, won converts, and set up a non-credit Bible school. One of his students was a 35-year-old former waiter and southern Holiness preacher, William Joseph Seymour, a black man, the son of former slaves, who was blind in one eye from smallpox. Seymour received an invitation to pastor a small Los Angeles church of Baptists expelled from their congregation for espousing Holiness doctrines. Seymour boarded the train to California with the Parham gospel. Though he had never spoken in tongues, he believed

that such a sign should be part of a believer's experience of a "baptism of the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:4 was his chief text. His early efforts to deliver the Pentecostal message were rebuffed, and he was locked out of the church.

*Acts 2:1-4 (KJV) And when **THE DAY OF PENTECOST** was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.*

2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

*4 And **THEY WERE ALL FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST, AND BEGAN TO SPEAK WITH OTHER TONGUES,** as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

Edward Lee. Seymour moved into the home of Edward Lee, a janitor at a local bank. It was an open door for ministry. The Lees and a small group had been praying for another Great Awakening, a revival that would turn Los Angeles upside down. Recently, there had been a great revival in Wales, and the Welsh Revival became a rallying cry for God to do it again. When the Lee home grew too small for the interracial crowd that gathered for Seymour's Bible studies and prayer meetings, Richard and Ruth Asberry opened their home at 214 (now 216) North Bonnie Brae Street. **On April 9, 1906, at his home, Edward Lee asked Seymour to pray for him that he would be given the gift of tongues. When Seymour prayed, Lee spoke in tongues.** Word was brought quickly to the Asberry home on Bonnie Brae, and others soon followed with the gift of tongues. Crowds of blacks and whites would descend upon the Asberry home over the next several days. The front porch would give way. A lease was negotiated for a building at 312 Azusa Street in Los Angeles. The Azusa Street revival had begun. It would be central to the rise of Pentecostalism in the 20th century.



214 North Bonnie Brae Street,
Los Angeles, ca. 1906



312 Azusa Street, Los Angeles, California,
prior to its purchase by the revivalists

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