

Sunday 9th June 2019

Whit Sunday
Day of Pentecost

Red



Collect

God, who as at this time taught the hearts of your faithful people by sending to them the light of your Holy Spirit: grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgement in all things and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Acts 2:1-21 English Standard Version (ESV)

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

2¹ When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested^[a] on each one of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. ⁵ Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶ And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. ⁷ And they were amazed and astonished, saying, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? ⁸ And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? ⁹ Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, ¹¹ both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.” ¹² And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” ¹³ But others mocking said, “They are filled with new wine.”

Peter's Sermon at Pentecost

¹⁴ But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. ¹⁵ For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.^[b] ¹⁶ But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: ¹⁷“And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men

shall dream dreams; ¹⁸ even on my male servants^[c] and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. ¹⁹ And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke; ²⁰ the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. ²¹ And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Footnotes: a. or *And tongues as of fire appeared to them, distributed among them, and rested.* b. that is, 9 am. c. Greek *bondservants*; twice in this verse.

COMMENT: The Jews celebrated Pentecost long before the Christian Church adopted it as the anniversary of the gift the Holy Spirit. John’s Gospel refers to it by its Jewish name, “the Festival of Weeks.” Originally a harvest festival, it also had a connection with the covenant God made with Noah (Genesis 9:8-17). About AD 200 the Jewish rabbinical tradition linked with the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai. This passage tells how the Spirit came unexpectedly upon the apostles fifty days after the resurrection to give them the mandate for a new mission: to proclaim the sovereignty of God’s love through the resurrection of Jesus, the Messiah/Christ. The difference between the traditions is related to the results of the experience. Luke, the presumed author of Acts, makes it clear that on this occasion the disciples received the spiritual power to carry out their newly assigned mission.

John 14:8-17, [25-27] English Standard Version

¹⁴ ⁸ Philip said to Jesus, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” ⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves. ¹² Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.”

Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit

¹⁵ “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. [²⁵ These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. ²⁶ But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”]

COMMENT: John, or possibly disciples of the apostle John, will have written this discourse from the remembered words of Jesus. The words that John records address those who have a problem seeing Jesus as the full revelation of God. In response to Philip’s longing, “Show us the Father and we will be satisfied,” Jesus gave an indirect, somewhat rhetorical answer designed to elicit Philip’s (and our) faith. Then he unequivocally declared his total identity with God: “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.” He follows this with a further declaration as to the validity of the words he has spoken and the deeds he has done. Then he makes an astonishing claim: “Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these because I am going to the Father.” This assertion can only be understood in the light of Pentecost. We must remember too that this passage was written some sixty or more years after that unique event. On that day, that powerless troop of Galileans could no more imagine than we can how God could redeem the world through their witness of words and deeds. With faith in Jesus, the Messiah/Christ, Son of God, comes the gift of the Spirit and moral responsibility. The Spirit blesses us with the spiritual grace to live in love for God and neighbour, as did Jesus himself.

Psalm 104:24-35 *Quam magnificata* Grail Psalter

℟ Send forth your spirit, O Lord, and renew the face of the earth.

²⁴ How many are your works, O Lord!
In wisdom you have made them all.
The earth is full of your riches. ℟

²⁵ There is the sea, vast and wide,
with its moving swarms past counting,
living things great and small.

²⁶ The ships are moving there
and the monsters you made to play with. ℟

²⁷ All of these look to you
to give them their food in due season.

²⁸ You give it, they gather it up:
you open your hand, they have their fill. ℟

²⁹ You hide your face, they are dismayed;
you take back your spirit, they die,
returning to the dust from which they came.

³⁰ You send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the earth. ℟

³¹ May the glory of the Lord last for ever!

May the Lord rejoice in his works!

³² He looks on the earth and it trembles;
the mountains send forth smoke at his touch.

✠ Send forth your spirit, O Lord, and renew the face of the earth.

³³ I will sing to the Lord all my life,
make music to my God while I live.

³⁴ May my thoughts be pleasing to him.

I find my joy in the Lord.

³⁵ Let sinners vanish from the earth
and the wicked exist no more.

Bless the Lord, my soul. ✠

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

COMMENT: Someone has said that nature is the language of the Bible. This psalm brings this characteristic to the fore by declaring the dependence of all nature, including humanity, on God.

Short Preface

And now we give you thanks that, after he had ascended far above all heavens, and was seated at the right hand of your majesty, he sent forth upon the universal Church your holy and life-giving Spirit; that through his glorious power the joy of the everlasting gospel might go forth into all the world.

Post Communion

Faithful God, who fulfilled the promises of Easter by sending us your Holy Spirit and opening to every race and nation the way of life eternal: open our lips by your Spirit, that every tongue may tell of your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Blessing

The Spirit of truth lead you into all truth, give you grace to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, and strengthen you to proclaim the word and works of God; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**