

(PP1) The Jesus we never knew x23.

04th June 2017 10.30 am.

(PP2) Jesus and the Spirit for all people – all nations. READ verses 1 – 21.

Acts 2: The Day of Pentecost.

Finally, the day promised by the prophet Joel in the early 8th century BC arrived. No one expected anything different than the usual celebrations for the **Feast of Weeks** but Jerusalem was packed. 50 days or 7 weeks plus 1 day after the Feast of First Fruits/ Resurrection of Jesus the 120 believing disciples were waiting for the coming of the Spirit as Jesus had promised. (Only 3 annual festivals required every able bodied Jewish male to be in Jerusalem: Passover, the feast of Weeks (Shavuot *), and Tabernacles).

(* Shavuot has a double significance: it marks the important wheat harvest on the land of Israel Ex 34:22 and commemorates the giving of the Torah to the entire nation on Mt Sinai. 7 weeks have been counted from Passover so called “weeks”).

So, it was busy as the text says with people from all over the dispersed Jewish world and **this day was about reaching out to people of every nation and background with the news of Jesus of Nazareth.** There were people from various Diasporas – Parthia, Media and Elam; from Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia: from Pontus and Asia, from Phrygia and Pamphylia, from Egypt and the regions of Libya near Cyrene. Some were from Rome, both Jews and Gentiles converted to Judaism, and some were from Crete and Arabia. (They were from all the world that Jesus spoke of when you said to his disciples *you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the end of the earth.1:8*) There were probably also Greeks from mainland Europe too as well as Rome.

(PP3) What strikes you when you hear the account of what happened? I think every time I read it I spot something different as I stand in the crowd and picture what was happening. This time I saw that:

Some people heard in their own language and dialects the disciples of Jesus speaking the wonderful (mega) works of God (v11) and though amazed and confused they asked: what does this mean? Others simply heard what they said was a drunken babble (v13). They mocked and laughed. So, who was hearing correctly?

How striking this is: that different people heard and witnessed the same thing but experienced and understood it completely differently. Were some kept from hearing the wonderful works of God – if so by what? Was it their own prejudices – fears and pre-conditioning? Or was it something else?

(PP1) The Jesus we never knew x23.

What is meant in the gospels by Jesus talking of “keeping” people blind and deaf so they may not perceive and understand?

Jesus in *Mark 4:12* and *Matthew 13: 13* says that his reason for using parables is that some people will *listen but not understand*. He adds that this is a fulfilment of what was said by Isaiah: he is quoting *Isaiah 6: 9,10*. This does not have to be prescriptive but simply descriptive – suggesting that in common parlance “there’s none so blind as those who won’t see” – suggesting perhaps that there is no point in reasoning with some people because they won’t listen to reason. The Isaiah passage says that ***they have stopped up their ears and have closed their eyes. Otherwise, their eyes would see, their ears would hear, their minds would understand, and they would turn to me, says God, and I would heal them.***

As we have said in our previous studies on *Jesus and Miracle* – some people witness and put active trust in God but for others witnessing acts of God does not produce faith in them. What happened on this Day of Pentecost was no different. Some heard the mega works of God described and praise attributed to God BUT some just heard a babble which they attributed to drunkenness even though it was only 9 o’clock in the morning. For some the curse of Babel was reversed and for others it caused them to mock. THIS IS STRIKING TO ME: some are able to hear something new and for whatever reason are unable. **How do we pray about this? What stops people from being able to hear, to see, to understand and discern God’s mega works?**

In Jerusalem on a Festival like this it was usual to hear praises being offered in all the languages described – but what was NOT USUAL was to hear Galileans speaking God’s praises in these many different languages and dialects. This was not just ecstatic vocal incandescence utterances but understandable languages. Some glossolalia needs interpretation (*1 C 14: 23*) but this just needed explanation to make sense in the context.

Peter explained that this was a fulfilment of what the prophet Joel had spoken of. Here the Spirit had powerfully manifest itself on and in 120 men and women (present in the upper room) but **the Spirit was now going to be released “upon all flesh”** (*Joel 2: 12-14*) – men and women, young and old. This outpouring of prophetic gifting would be seen in gifts from God of dreams and visions as well as prophetic speech.

(PP4) The Day of Pentecost like Calvary is a one off: but just as no one can close a door on the blessings of Calvary and Resurrection no one can close a door on the blessing of the Spirit on God’s people.

Warren W. Wiersbe says in Acts 2 we see 4 things:

- The church waiting for the Spirit

(PP1) The Jesus we never knew x23.

- The church worshipping the Lord – speaking/ prophesying the mega works of God
- The church witnessing to others from all parts of the world
- The church walking and living as a community of the Spirit

Peter in his talk to the people of Jerusalem – hearing and unhearing people said that we are in the last days (**v17**).

He preached **v22** Jesus of Nazareth – a man whose Divine authority was proved with signs and wonders – especially **v24** the Resurrection.

V33 Pentecost outpouring happened because of the resurrection and ascension to glory (Trinitarian verse).

Vv38,39 the Promise for continuing generations (the Spirit to fall on us)

V41 That day 3,000 people joined the Community of the Spirit: which is a community of learning, fellowship, hospitality and prayer. This community included sharing of property and possessions as was needed (current e.g. Crossroads Counselling building and Mission Housing Association). This included DAILY meeting and not just the “first day of the week” all together.

ARE WE A PART OF THAT COMMUNITY OF THE SPIRIT? 1 Corinthians 12: 13
baptised by Jesus into the Body and given the Spirit to drink.

Are we waiting together on the Spirit, worshipping together in the Spirit, witnessing together in the Spirit’s power, walking together in the Holy Spirit?