

The King's Highway.

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness.—Isaiah 58

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"THE DAY OF PENTECOST"

Acts 2:1-4, "When the day of Pentecost was fully come. . . they were all filled with the Holy Ghost".

We are living in an age that is noted for its emphasis on "Great Days"—orators, teachers, preachers and politicians are kept busy preparing special talks for special occasions. It seems to be the fashion to make a fuss over the outstanding characters and landmarks of history; and well we might—provided our words are not merely cant and hypocrisy; the human race might well remember the noble and heroic accomplishments and characters of the past. Man is too prone to forget the failures and exploits of yesterday even though they may contain valuable lessons.

In choosing our subject the thought of stressing the greatness of another great day did not rise upper-most; our discussion is chiefly concerned with the significance and meaning of the descent of the Holy Spirit.

During the past year readers, no doubt, have been impressed with the extraordinary number of books and articles published on the theme of Pentecost. The world, after nearly two thousand years, is beginning to realize that the influence of Pentecost's released power was and is no idle and insignificant matter of history and experience. As Dr. E. Stanley Jones has said, "The world-ground is being prepared for a spiritual awakening on a very extensive scale." If this is really the case those who believe and profess "the Blessing" should be alive and doing; there should not be "foolish virgin" when such a great question as this is at stake. Every live Christian should be on the "qui vive" and "ready to take the current as it serves".

We need only mention the fact that the year 1930 was universally acknowledged to be the Twentieth Centennial Celebration of Pentecost. It is probably partly due to this fact that the Church as a whole has been led to ponder over this almost forgotten event.

In further considering the subject let us first discover the origin of the expression, "Pentecost". We are first impressed with the construction of the word itself, it is derived from the Greek word "pentekoste" meaning 'fiftieth'. The dictionary further enlightens us by noting that Pentecost was a Jewish festival on the fiftieth day after the Passover, in commemoration of the giving of the Law.

We read that Pentecost was (1) a celebration, known as the "Feast of Weeks", which took place fifty days after the Passover when an offering of the first fruits of the harvest was made. (2) A celebration of the giving of the Law on Sinai and (3) finally the commemoration of the descent of the Holy Spirit.

One can readily see that this day must surely be most significant; it did not just 'happen' that Pentecost, as we think of it, came just when it did—the writer of Acts says "The day of Pentecost was fully come", (fully prepared for).

Every great day has been said 'to be predestined' and this is certainly no exception. Another factor relating to the first two celebrations of Pentecost might well be noted here, the first celebration emphasizes an "offering of the first fruits", while the second stresses "the giving of the Law". Notice how wonderfully these two aspects of Pentecost typify the two sides of "Entire Sanctification—on man's side—'Consecration after the New Birth' and on God's side, 'filling with the Holy Spirit' as a 'seal of promise'—a giving and a receiving.

Although a study of the history of Pentecost is very interesting we must not dwell too long on the external form of the word itself. We should be more interested in the 'inner or spiritual significance' to us as individuals of the twentieth century.

The remainder of our study will be concerned with two approaches to a solution of this thesis—1. The general significance of Pentecost. 2. The Holy Spirit.

Pentecost ushered in a new dispensation—an age of individual initiative guided and strengthened by the Holy Spirit. No longer was God to rely on kings, prophets, and priests alone to be His agents for the advancement of His Kingdom—from now on the Word was "ye shall be witnesses—Go ye"; everybody is appointed to be a bearer of Good News.

This great day also speaks of a new approach to God. Hitherto the world looked to seer, prophet, and priest as being the voice and intermediaries of God. Jesus in speaking of the Holy Spirit said: "He will guide you into all truth"—with the Paraclete as a companion and Jesus as an advocate every individual can directly approach unto God.

Pentecost set free a new influence whose power could be felt over the whole world and in every heart. Prophets, priests, and, we say it reverently, even Jesus were limited as to the sphere of their influence while they lived in human bodies, but God's Spirit, whom Jesus said "the Father would send in my name, can brood over the whole earth—convicting, teaching, guiding, and comforting. This advent was new because a new significance and a new conception of God was to be freely broadcasted.

Finally Pentecost was a great day because it made available a new liberating force and energy—a Spirit of Regeneration, a Spirit of Baptism and Cleansing, a Spirit of Prayer, and a Spirit of Energizing. We may say that in Him (the Holy Spirit) we can enjoy life complete.

Now let us consider the fact of the Holy Spirit from a historical background.

If we should ask ourselves, 'where did the Holy Spirit come?' We would discover that at Pentecost He made His advent in a home—in an upper room occupied by ordinary men and women. Dr. Jones has told us that all these seemingly insignificant factors are saturated with meaning. Before this period religion had been associated with sacred spots and groves, temples, tabernacles, or synagogues. Here we have religion

freed from the shackles of a sacred sanctuary; religion and salvation by its advent to the humble cottage has opened up the possibilities of having a sanctuary in every home—yea, verily within each heart.

Not only is man freed from sacred places, but it is also freed from sacred groups and privileged classes—ordinary men and women could share alike in the Gift of Eternal Life; "they were all of one accord in one place."

When we ask ourselves upon whom the Holy Spirit fell we can again speak authoritatively and full of meaning. When Jesus was preparing the hearts of His followers for the Spirit's arrival John writes, "This spake He of the Holy Spirit. . . which they that BELIEVE on Him should receive". . . the Spirit of Truth. . . whom the world cannot receive. . . neither seeth or knoweth." Paul speaking of the same thing in Galatians said, "Because ye are SONS God hath sent His Spirit into your hearts." A study of the book of Acts ought to convince one that the Holy Spirit was only for God's believing people—the true Church. There is no reason to believe that this order has ever been changed—the Holy Spirit is still the heritage of every true believer.

If we should ask, Under what conditions did He come? Once more we would discover that the law of cause and effect lies back of the spiritual world as well as the physical—if certain conditions are met something is bound to happen. First, we must say that the Holy Spirit came in accordance with and in fulfillment of Divine Promise—over and over the promise is repeated in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Joel—"I will pour MY spirit upon My seed" Peter in his Pentecostal sermon testified and said, "This is THAT".

Again, using a phrase of Dr. Jones, we say that the Holy Spirit came "behind closed doors". The hundred and twenty were in the upper room (the appointed spot) presumably shut in from the world and its worldly influences. Jesus in speaking of praying said: "Enter into thy closet". It would seem as though spiritual power and grace come as the result of tarrying "behind closed doors"—it is there that the heart can be cultivated and prepared for the enlarging process.

There are still other conditions that must be full flowered before the Holy Spirit will come upon God's children. The Holy Spirit will only come to the disillusioned. Before the Crucifixion and Pentecost the disciples felt self-sufficient; as Peter, they could say, "Lord, why cannot I follow thee NOW? I will lay down my life for thy sake." So often in our spiritual childhood we imagine the vigor of manhood is flowing through our veins—we look for mountains to scale, but the very ant-hill under our feet fells us to earth. Jesus knew his disciples too well; He felt they must be taught a lesson and so He went on explaining to them about the necessity for His departure. At this point it is significant to note that Jesus gave them one of the longest talks of His ministry—and that, centering about the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit. Just when

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