



Pentecost

Sunday, June 9th, 2019

Pentecost

Romanticism, the Spirit and the Church



The three weeks of Ascension (last week), Pentecost) and Trinity (next week), follow sequentially for good reason: they are connected. Ascension Sunday, when Jesus, leaves his followers with the Spirit, to have the freedom to get on with the job of renewal of the world, paints a picture of human beings as co-creators with God is shaping history: hence last week, the theme of “You shall be as God”: the Christian Doctrine of *theisos*, summed up in the idea that “God became human so that humans might become Godlike.

Today, we continue this idea of human beings moving beyond sinfulness to become God’s creative partners in the world, in the idea of Pentecost. In an ancient world characterized by tribalisms, the vision of people hearing God speak, each in their own language, was unheard of. Language is one of the most concrete, tangible marks of difference between people, a mark that makes people unintelligible to each other. The experience of people hearing God in their own diverse languages, directly challenged the idea of a God who should reflect national or cultural, or group interest. At Pentecost, the vision is romantic, broad and dramatic. To use the modern term over-worked term, it is about inclusivity – but grounded in God, not in national, cultural or linguistic identity.

We Gather Together

Announcements

Preparation: The Lord is my light (TiS 747, Jacques Berthier, Taize)

The Lord Is My Light

Theme A

The Lord is my light, my light and sal - va - tion:

God I trust, in God I trust. The

Fine

Detailed description: The image shows two staves of musical notation in 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 4/4 time signature. It contains a melodic line with a repeat sign and a first ending bracket. The lyrics 'The Lord is my light, my light and sal - va - tion:' are written below the notes. The second staff continues the melody with a second ending bracket and a fermata over the final note. The lyrics 'God I trust, in God I trust. The' are written below. The word 'Fine' is written above the final note of the second staff.

Invitation to Worship

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit
 The Lord be with you
And also with you

We light the Paschal Candle

We have lit the candle celebrating the vision of Pentecost when we envision, imagine, dream and commit

Hymn: I sing the almighty power of God (TiS 119, Ellacombe 361, Isaac Watts)

A Prayer for Pentecost:

Questioning and Challenging the Securities We Build Around Ourselves as Adoptees of the Holy Spirit

God stuck her tongue out at the church
and we grabbed hold of it,
as if it were a swimming-pool noodle
 and before we knew it
 we were hearing things, speaking things
 we had never dreamed of or wondered about.

Welcome stranger, alien, outsider,
now you are called sister, brother, friend
 Gather around asylum seeker, refugee, immigrants,
 we hear your language,
 no-one shuns you here.

***Dance your way through the door, lost ones
 and teach us your wild moves
 and we will teach you ours***
 Stroll in you wounded souls and skins
 and let us wrap and kiss your pain to healing.

Make room, settled ones
***for the wave is surging
 and it will unsettle your closed-mouth silence.***

Nothing,
 not even our reserved-ness can stop our mouths
 from sputtering words of grace
 able to blow open
 any door,
 any wall,
 opening living spaces
 for all people, for all flora and fauna.

***O what the Spirit can do
 when set free to tousle the world's hair,***

The Peace

SMG

LET'S HEAR THE WORD

Acts 2:1-11 (The Message)

Marian Kingham

One of the three pilgrimage festivals, Pentecost falls 50 days (seven weeks) after Passover, as its Greek name, *Pentecoste* (50th), preserves. It is also called the Feast of Weeks, an occasion to celebrate the gathering in of the harvest (Exod 3:14-17; Lev 23:15-22). It also became a time to celebrate the coming of the divine Law on Sinai. Legend has it that on that occasion a flame came down from heaven and divided into 70 tongues of fire, one for each nation of the world. All could understand, but only one nation promised

to keep the Law, Israel. We celebrate the Day of Pentecost as the day of the coming of the Spirit because of Luke's symbolic history. In John's gospel the Spirit is a gift of the risen Jesus on the day of resurrection when he appears after having risen and ascended to the Father - all back to front, when compared with Luke's scheme. He is celebrating the presence of the Spirit in the early Christian movement. He does so with a slight sense of humour. He alludes to the phenomenon of speaking in tongues, which Paul also mentions, and gives it also a symbolic twist. It makes people sound like drunks to those who do not know what is going on. But to those who do know, here is a language miracle, which reverses the curse of the story of the Tower of Babel in Genesis. Communication is restored! Luke nowhere follows his creative innovation through to its logical conclusion at a literal level, namely, that Christians filled with the Spirit don't have to learn languages! How often people have wished that they could! So, here, too we have symbolism.

Like a movie director, Luke creates a scene with wind and fire. The scene is a commentary on the whole movie to follow. The God of Sinai and the Law is acting again. The promise of an abundant flow of God's Spirit is being fulfilled.

2 ¹⁻⁴ When the Feast of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Without warning there was a sound like a strong wind, gale force—no one could tell where it came from. It filled the whole building. Then, like a wildfire, the Holy Spirit spread through their ranks, and they started speaking in a number of different languages as the Spirit prompted them.

⁵⁻¹¹ There were many Jews staying in Jerusalem just then, devout pilgrims from all over the world. When they heard the sound, they came on the run. Then when they heard, one after another, their own mother tongues being spoken, they were thunderstruck. They couldn't for the life of them figure out what was going on, and kept saying, "Aren't these all Galileans? How come we're hearing them talk in our various mother tongues?"

Parthians, Medes, and Elamites;
 Visitors from Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia,
 Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia,
 Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene;
 Immigrants from Rome, both Jews and proselytes;
 Even Cretans and Arabs!

"They're speaking our languages, describing God's mighty works!"

¹² Their heads were spinning; they couldn't make head or tail of any of it. They talked back and forth, confused: "What's going on here?"

¹³ Others joked, "They're drunk on cheap wine."

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Psalm 104 (NIV)

Marian Kingham

Psalm 104 is one of the great psalms of the collection, often called 'the pearl of the Psalter'. It is a hymn to the Lord as creator and is written in typical hymnic style. It has found wide use in both Jewish liturgy (it is chanted on the morning of Yom Kippur, the 'Day of Atonement', and on the evening of the New Moon, and on Sabbaths through winter; all these are occasions celebrating new life) as well as in Christian liturgy. In Greek Orthodox churches Psalm 104 is sung daily in vespers in gratitude for the life of the day. It has also been associated in Christian circles with Pentecost activities, chiefly because of the reference to the 'spirit' in v. 30. Historically, the psalm bears many similarities to the Egyptian hymn to Aten (the sun god) from the period of so-called Egyptian 'monotheism' under Akhenaten (1364-1347 BCE). These similarities are strong enough to suggest that parts of the psalm have been taken from the Egyptian hymn. On the other hand we should also note that Psalm 104 has similarities to Genesis 1.

- ²⁴ How many are your works, LORD!
 In wisdom you made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.
- ²⁵ There is the sea, vast and spacious,
 teeming with creatures beyond number—
living things both large and small.
- ²⁶ There the ships go to and fro,
and Leviathan, which you formed to frolic there.
- ²⁷ All creatures look to you
to give them their food at the proper time.
- ²⁸ When you give it to them,
 they gather it up;
***when you open your hand,
 they are satisfied with good things.***
- ²⁹ When you hide your face,
 they are terrified;
***when you take away their breath,
 they die and return to the dust.***
- ³⁰ When you send your Spirit,
 they are created,
and you renew the face of the ground.
- ³¹ May the glory of the LORD endure forever;
may the LORD rejoice in his works—
- ³² he who looks at the earth, and it trembles,
who touches the mountains, and they smoke.
- ³³ I will sing to the LORD all my life;
I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.

³⁴ May my meditation be pleasing to him,
as I rejoice in the LORD.

³⁵ Praise the LORD, my soul.
Praise the LORD

John 20:19-23 (The Message)

Elwyn Hoskin

Luke's was not the only stream of storytelling about the Spirit. John's gospel pictures Jesus ascending on the day of his resurrection (after meeting Mary! 20:17) but before he appears as the risen (ascended one) to his disciples (20:19-23). On that same day of the resurrection Jesus appears to his disciples and gives them the Spirit (19:22). What Luke describes as happening over 50 days John portrays as happening all on the same day! What really happened may be somewhere in between Luke and John. More important, however, than trying to work out what happened when, is the importance of what is being described and celebrated. John helps us to link resurrection and Pentecost in one single scene. 'Peace' (Shalom) may be just, 'Hello!', but it probably includes much more than a greeting. It is the greeting that makes all the difference to them - and us! Its importance comes through what follows: having said, 'Peace', Jesus shows them his hands and side. This is not because they would not otherwise recognise him. Rather it is as the one who suffered that he presents himself. It is like saying: 'Please don't think I have left all that behind!' From a broader perspective we might say that it reminds us that the resurrection is not about turning away from the life poured out in compassion to something else like reward, power and glory, *but* an assertion that this way of love and brokenness is the way, the truth and the life which leads us to God and reveals what God is also like. The cross and resurrection are linked both in Christ and in human experience.

¹⁹⁻²⁰ Later on that day, the disciples had gathered together, but, fearful of the Jews, had locked all the doors in the house. Jesus entered, stood among them, and said, "Peace to you." Then he showed them his hands and side.

²⁰⁻²¹ The disciples, seeing the Master with their own eyes, were exuberant. Jesus repeated his greeting: "Peace to you. Just as the Father sent me, I send you."

²²⁻²³ Then he took a deep breath and breathed into them. "Receive the Holy Spirit," he said. "If you forgive someone's sins, they're gone for good. If you don't forgive sins, what are you going to do with them?"

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Christ

Hymn: She sits like a bird (TiS 418, Thainaky, John L Bell and Graham Maule)

Some thoughts....

Let's Give: Our Offerings

Doxology

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
praise him, all creatures here below,
praise him above, ye heavenly host,
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.***

Prayer of Dedication

Prayers of the People

Robyn Egarr

At the end of each prayer/petition with the words, ***Lord Christ, hear our prayers*** we say ***refresh us to live as children of the Spirit***

Lord's Prayer

Let us say the Lord's Prayer

***Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.***

***Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.***

하늘에 계신 우리 아버지여
이름이 거룩히 여김을 받으시오며
나라이 임하옵시며
뜻이 하늘에서 이룬 것 같이
땅에서도 이루어지이다.

오늘날 우리에게 일용할 양식을 주옵시고
 우리가 우리에게
 죄 지은 자를 사하여 준 것 같이
 우리 죄를 사하여 주옵시고
 우리를 시험에 들게 하지 마옵시고
 다만 악에서 구하옵소서
 대개 나라와 권세와 영광이
 아버지께 영원히 있사옵나이다. 아멘

Closing Hymn: Sing of the Lord's goodness (TiS 183, The Lord's Goodness, Ernest Sands)

Blessing and Sending Out

We have access to the Spirit of God!
 We see reality more generously
 Renewed people!
 Renewed society!
 Renewed environment!
 Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

In the name of Christ

We sing twice: Veni Creator – Come Creator Spirit (TiS 750, Jacques Berthier)

Veni Creator
 Veni Creator
 Veni Creator Spiritus

Musical Postlude

Organist/Pianist

John Hughes