

IN THE LONG WEEKS OF LENT AND THEN EASTER,

I HOPE THAT PEOPLE RECOGNIZE A CERTAIN PATTERN.

IT'S ONE OF CONNECTIVENESS.

NO STORY OF SCRIPTURE MAKES ANY SENSE UNLESS IT IS SOMEHOW TIED IN WITH ALL THAT GOES BEFORE IT.

THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL HAD THEIR MOMENTS IN RELATION TO THEIR GOD.

THERE WERE MANY TIMES THEY STRAYED FROM HIS MESSAGE AND HIS WAYS.

MANY TIMES THEY EVEN DOUBTED HIM AND HIS PROVIDENCE.

BUT THROUGH THE YEARS THEY ALWAYS RETURNED HOME.

THEY ALWAYS RETURNED TO GOD AFTER BEING FORGIVEN.

BECAUSE OF THE HISTORY OF THE ISRAELITES,

THE GROUNDWORK WAS MADE FOR THE COMING OF CHRIST.

HE CAME FROM THE JEWISH NATION, HE GREW IN FAITH BECAUSE OF IT.

HE SAW HIMSELF AS A CONTINUATION OF EVERYTHING THAT HAD COME BEFORE.

IN HIS LIFE, HE LEFT BEHIND ONLY A FEW TRUE FOLLOWERS, HIS DISCIPLES.

HE HAD NOT CLAIMED A KINGDOM ONCE AND FOR ALL.

THERE WAS STILL MUCH THAT HAD TO HAPPEN TO FINISH THE MISSION.

THE DISCIPLES WOULD FORM THE BASIS FOR IT ALL AND WOULD TRAVEL TO KEEP THE WORD ALIVE.

THEY WOULD WIN MANY CONVERTS AND THE WORD WOULD SPREAD.

BUT THEY NEEDED HELP.

THEY COULD NOT DO IT ON THEIR OWN.

SO JESUS TALKED ABOUT THE PARACLETE, THE HOLY SPIRIT,

THAT WAS GOING TO GET LOOSED ON THE WORLD.

FROM THE TIME OF THE EARLIEST JEWS ITS ALL CONNECTED.

ONE POINT LEADING TO ANOTHER.

A MESSAGE CONSTANTLY MOVING FORWARD.

THAT'S WHAT WE CELEBRATE ON THIS DAY.

WITH THE COMING OF PENTECOST A PRACTICAL AND A SPIRITUAL CONNECTION.

EVERYONE WOULD HEAR THE WORD OF GOD IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE AND RESPOND IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE.

NO ONE WOULD BE DENIED.

THE ROMANS AND SOME OFFICIALS HOPED THEY COULD CONTAIN IT.

BUT AFTER PENTECOST THEY WOULD HAVE THEIR HANDS FILLED LIKE NEVER BEFORE.

PENTECOST WAS A GREAT MOMENT.

HOW LONG WOULD FAITH AS WE KNOW IT LAST, IF GOD JUST CREATED THE WORLD AND THEN LEFT US TO OUR OWN DEVICES.

PROBABLY NOT LONG.

BUT HERE IN THIS FEAST A PROMISE REPEATED MANY TIMES OVER THE CENTURY.

WE ARE NEVER LEFT ALONE BY GOD. WE NEVER LEFT OPRHANED.

WE HAVE TO SAY 'YES' TO EVERYTHING BUT IT IS GOD WHO INITIATES AND MAKES THINGS HAPPEN-
WHEN WE ALLOW OURSELVES TO FEEL HIS PRESENCE.

THE FEELING OF A LACK OF GOD IS OUR PROBLEM, NOT HIS.

AS LONG AS WE TURN THE RIGHT WAY, HE BUILDS, HE ENCOURAGES, HE LEADS AND GUIDES AND HE
MAKES GOOD THINGS HAPPEN.

TWO THOUSAND YEARS LATER THE WORD OF GOD HAS INDEED BEEN PROCLAIMES TO ALL THE
NATIONS.

BUT WE DON'T HAVE TO LOOK FAR TO SEE MANY CHOOSE TO LIVE IN DIFFERENT WAYS AND WE KNOW
THE KINGDOM AND ITS MISSION ARE STILL NOT COMPLETE.

AND IN THAT MANNNER, OUR MISSION IS STILL NOT COMPLETE.

FROM THE TIME OF ISRAIEL, TO THE PRESENT, PEOPLE OF FAITH, WITH THE HELP OF THE SPIRIIT,
STILL NEED TO TAKE CHANCES, TO STRUGGLE, TO PULL AWAY AND COME BACK WHEN NOTHING ELSE
WILL MAKE SENSE.

ITS ALL CONNECTED THROUGHOUT THE AGES.

A STRUGGLE BETWEEN MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICES AND THE WRONG ONES.

SO AS WE CELEBRATE TODAY, LET US REMEMBER THAT THE FEAST OF PENTECOST IS A CELEBRATION OF
PAST MOMENTS AS WELL AS THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE MOMENTS TO COME AND A TESTAMENT
GOD'S PRESENCE AT ALL TIMES.

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MAY WE GIVE THANKS TODAY FOR GOD WHO IS PERSISTENT AND SLOWLY LEADING US IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

MAY WE GIVE THANKS FOR THE GOD WHO DOES NOT GIVE UP ON US.

MAY WE GIVE THANKS FOR THE GOD WHO HAS INITIATED IN THE PAST AS WELL AS THE PRESENT AND WILL BE WITH US, IN HIS SPIRIT, WHEN WE ENCOUNTER HIM IN OUR FUTURE.