



The Festival of Pentcost **The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit**

April 16, 2017 - 10:15 a.m.

Rev. Todd Goldschmidt, Pastor

**Theme: O THAT THE LORD WOULD PUT HIS SPIRIT
ON ALL HIS PEOPLE!**

Sermon Text: Numbers 11:24-30

²⁴ So Moses went out and told the people what the LORD had said. He brought together seventy of their elders and had them stand around the tent. ²⁵ Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke with him, and he took some of the power of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied—but did not do so again.

²⁶ However, two men, whose names were Eldad and Medad, had remained in the camp. They were listed among the elders, but did not go out to the tent. Yet the Spirit also rested on them, and they prophesied in the camp. ²⁷ A young man ran and told Moses, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.”

²⁸ Joshua son of Nun, who had been Moses’ aide since youth, spoke up and said, “Moses, my lord, stop them!”

²⁹ But Moses replied, “Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD’s people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!” ³⁰ Then Moses and the elders of Israel returned to the camp.

Sunday Worship Service: 10:15 A.M. (Sunday School/Adult Bible Study 9 am)

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Our sermon text for this Day of Pentecost opens with the words, **“So Moses went out.”** The word **“so”** indicates that we’re at the end of the story. Moses’ words, **“I wish that all the LORD’s people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!”** conclude a far longer series of events, and his words—spoken in reply to Joshua’s call to stop two men from prophesying—became a promise that would be fulfilled centuries later on the Jewish harvest festival of Pentecost. On that day, God poured out the Holy Spirit on His people. And ever since, the Lord has put His Spirit on all His people in a way greater than He’d ever done before.

The events of the Israelites’ exodus from Egypt are unparalleled in the history of civilization. God’s people had lived in Egypt for four centuries, having arrived there at the invitation of the Pharaoh whom Joseph served as his 2nd in command. They were given the most fertile grazing land in Egypt, where the mineral-rich Nile River empties into the Mediterranean. They multiplied greatly, as did their flocks and herds. But **“Then a new king, to whom Joseph meant nothing, came to power ... Look,’ he said ... ‘the Israelites have become far too numerous ... we must deal shrewdly with them or they will become even more numerous and, if war breaks out, will join our enemies, fight against us and leave the country.’ So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor”** (v. 8-10).

But the more they were oppressed, the more God blessed them, and they continued to multiply. So Pharaoh increased their work-load, cut down on their provisions and even issued an edict that whenever a male Israelite was born, his soldiers should kill him immediately. But that plan, too, was foiled by God-fearing Hebrew midwives who refused to acquiesce to Pharaoh’s murderous plot. Moses was one of those newborns. His parents hid him in their home for as long as possible until it became too risky. That’s when his older sister, Miriam, proposed a plan to her parents: **“I know where the princess bathes each morning in the Nile. We could make a reed-boat, coat it with tar and pitch, and set it afloat upstream from that spot. I’ll watch, and when she finds my baby brother, I’ll offer to find a Hebrew mother to raise the child until he’s weaned.”** By God’s design, her strategy worked perfectly! Miriam brought her brother back home, where he spent the first few years of his life being raised by his own loving, God-fearing Hebrew parents.

The next 35 years, Moses lived the life of Riley as a royal prince in the palace. He was no doubt tutored by Egypt’s finest scholars, and became adept at navigating the maze of high-level politics and learned the inner-workings of court life—knowledge that would prove invaluable during the 3rd chapter of his life. In the meantime, he never, ever forgot the plight of his own people or the debt he owed to the Lord for bringing him to faith in the promised Savior and to his lofty post. When Moses was around forty years old, we’re told that he **“went out to where his own people were and watched them at their hard labor. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people. Looking this way and that and seeing no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand”** (Ex. 2:11-12).

The next day, he tried to intervene in an argument between two Israelites, one of whom **“said, ‘Who made you ruler and judge over us? Are you thinking of killing me as you killed the Egyptian?’ Then Moses was afraid and thought, ‘What I did must have become known”** (v. 14).

When Pharaoh caught wind of what Moses had done, **“he tried to kill”** him, **“but Moses fled from Pharaoh and went to live in Midian,”** where he married Zipporah and shepherded her

father's flocks in the very region through which he'd lead the Israelites on their exodus to Canaan.

One day, God appeared to Moses in a burning bush and called him to go back to Egypt and demand that Pharaoh let His people return to their ancestral homeland. When Pharaoh hardened his heart, God visited ten plagues on Egypt to force his hand. The last one was the worst: God went throughout the land and struck down the firstborn child in every Egyptian home, from the hovel of the lowliest serf to the royal palace. Pharaoh's hard heart was broken—at least temporarily. He ordered the Israelites to leave Egypt at once and never return. So Moses led God's people out of Egypt that night. Along the way they'd pass through the Red Sea on dry ground, stop at Mt. Sinai to receive the 10 Commandments and be mercifully sustained by Jehovah with water from rocks, and manna and quail from heaven.

But God's people were far from appreciative! They grumbled against God and Moses, worshipped a golden calf at Mt. Sinai and even attempted a mutiny or two. Worse yet, when Moses sent one man from each of Israel's 12 tribes to spy out the land of Canaan, only two of the ten—Joshua and Caleb—urged God's people to take the land from its inhabitants. The other ten concocted tales of giants in the land and told about the impregnable fortified cities they saw. As punishment, God made His people wander in the desert for 40 years and made sure that every adult died during the Exodus except Joshua and Caleb. No wonder Moses grew weary and worn-out. He got so dejected, in fact, that he even asked God to take his life and end his misery. In answer to his prayer, God raised up 70 elders to assist Moses in his duties—and what a tremendous blessing those leaders proved to be!

While Moses was on Mt. Sinai, Jehovah gave him detailed blueprints for a sacred "tent of meeting" above which He would appear in a glorious cloud of fire to indicate His presence among His people. When the glory of the Lord lifted from above the tent, the Israelites would embark. When it rested over the tent, they'd halt their march until it lifted again. Moses met with Jehovah during each respite to receive instructions from Him. When he came out of the tent, his face glowed with God's radiance—so much so, that God had Moses veil his face so the people couldn't tell when that radiance faded. God had Moses' back, plain and simple! Then come the events of our text. God poured out His Spirit on the 70 elders, and they prophesied. But two men—**"Eldad and Medad"**—who weren't at the tent of meeting prophesied, too. When Joshua, asked Moses to order them to stop their prophesying, Moses replied, **"I wish that all the LORD's people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!"**

With those words, he unwittingly uttered a prophecy that was fulfilled on Pentecost! On that day, the Church saw just how active the Spirit is. Do we ever forget about the Spirit's activity simply because we can't see it? Jesus told His disciples, **"The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit"** (John 3:8), and on Maundy Thursday He vowed that despite all the traumatic things they were about to see, He wouldn't abandon them.

"I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you" (John 14:18). Even when Jesus looked dead and gone, He'd live again and appear to His disciples many times before He ascended into heaven.

Friends, the Holy Spirit is no less active today than He was on the 1st Pentecost! The Spirit is a Paraclete—a Comforter—just as Jesus is (John 14:16). The Spirit would teach the disciples all things, just as Jesus had. The Spirit reminds us of everything that Jesus has said to us and done for us (14:26). And finally, Jesus says, when the Counselor comes, “he will testify about me” (15:26) through His followers’ efforts. We are those in whom God dwells by His Spirit; we are His witnesses. “You also must testify” (15:27) Jesus commands. Jesus died and rose again just like He said He would. 40 days later, He ascended up to heaven. Then came the day of Pentecost. The disciples heard the sound of the wind. They couldn’t tell where it came from or where it was going, except in this: that the Spirit’s flame came to rest on each of them—men and women—and witnessed through them, and 3,000 people from all over the world heard and believed and were baptized and were saved.

When a hydroelectric dam is built some of the river still flows downstream. Those who live near the river use its water to irrigate their crops. Towns have water for drinking and bathing. Recreational sports go on in the reservoir behind the dam and in the river below it. Before Pentecost, the work of God’s Spirit was less evident, confined largely to the land of Israel and mostly seen in the work of God’s Old Testament prophets, as is the case in today’s 1st Lesson. It’s like the people near the river. But when the water running thru the dam is used for generating electricity, its power extends to cities hundreds of miles away. The Hoover Dam, i.e., provides 4 billion kilowatts per year and powers the homes and businesses of 1.3 million people in Arizona, Nevada and California. Similarly, After Pentecost, the Spirit’s work was unleashed and the Church grew exponentially, empowering millions of people to believe in Jesus and to produce the fruits of the Spirit.

What a blessing to see the Spirit work in Charvi’s and Nihal’s Baptisms today! And so with them, with Moses of old, with the prophet Joel and with the Apostle Peter on Pentecost we rejoice in the certain promise that “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved”! Believe and live! Amen.