



From Our Vicar

Rev. Wayne Walters

Pentecost Acts 1:4-8; 2:1-21

The Jewish festival of Pentecost (originally called the Feast of Weeks) was a celebration of the first fruits of the harvest (Leviticus 23:15). We can see God's purpose in the symbolism by which he prepared his people for the coming of the Holy Spirit—the first fruits of the Kingdom. The disciples had been asking Jesus when he would restore the Kingdom to Israel.

Jesus answered by telling them that very soon they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them to be his witnesses to the whole world. In so saying he shifted their focus in several ways— from something Jesus would do unilaterally to something they would be empowered by God to do; from a nationalistic and political emphasis to one of witness to Jesus; and from a focus exclusively on Israel to reaching to the ends of the earth!

The disciples still did not understand. However, the experience of the Holy Spirit coming upon them changed all that. Peter preached with boldness and insight into the prophetic scriptures with such power that 3000 men were converted and baptised that day. The harvest had begun. This was the first fruits.

The coming of the presence of the Holy Spirit into a believer's life is described by the Apostle Paul. He explains that it is a deposit or guarantee of the fullness of the inheritance that belongs to God's people (Ephesians 1:13b -14). It is a foretaste of what is to come: our adoption as God's sons and daughters; the gifts of healing and miracles, prophecy and wisdom; and the fruit of the Spirit transforming us over time to be more like Christ, and empowering us to continue the very work that Jesus had been doing.

May God pour out his Spirit afresh on his people in this day, so that a needy world may hear and see the power and presence of the love of Jesus in their midst. And God, please start with us ... and that wonderfully means you and me!

God bless,
Wayne