

God Fills the Failures

Pentecost 2020

Part 1

Today is Pentecost Sunday. It is 50 days from Passover Sunday, which was the last time I shared, and I felt I should follow that up, because it is a big part of, not just a good message, but sort of a bit of prophetic word of where we are at in relationship to the coronavirus thing and all of that.

Just to recap what was shared before: I shared on Passover, and we talked about Israel being in Egypt. There was a plague – just like the situation we are in now – and the children of Israel had to shelter in place. They had to do what we are doing, stay in their homes. For the Egyptians and for the world it was a plague. For them – and for us – it was an opportunity to eat the Lamb, and that is what we should be doing between Passover and Pentecost. And then on after, but that there was going to be a journey, and we talked about that as well. So that time could be set aside for, not just seeking the Lord, not just being a Christian, but for eating the Lamb like Israel did (Exodus 12:3-11).

That is exactly what Jesus did on Passover. He broke the bread and said, “This is Me, this is My flesh. Take, eat, take Me in! Don't just preach Me or just believe in Me or pray to Me far away,” but putting that Life and nature within us. But then after the Passover, the disciples were supposed to continue to eat the Lamb. They were supposed to understand what the cross was really about. They were at least supposed to shelter in place, if you will, and **keep taking in that Lamb**, but they did not understand, and so there was a lot of failure between Passover and Pentecost.

I want to talk about that. I want to talk about it in relationship, first of all, to the failure, and then I want to talk about it in relationship to the **Amazing Heart of God** at the end of this at Pentecost, and all the journey that He is going to set up at this time. Let's start in Matthew 26. Jesus and the disciples are in the garden of Gethsemane – so we know there were failures there! The Lamb is about to be given, and they are sleeping! After this is when they came to take Jesus, and of course Peter grabs a sword and cuts off Malchus's ear. Jesus is speaking right after that:

Matthew 26:53-58:

“Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hand on me. But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled. And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. But Peter followed him afar off...”

We have, immediately after the preparation of the Lamb is to be slain, and to be eaten, that the disciples forsook Him and they fled, and Peter did follow, but he followed afar off. Not long

after that he denied the Lord three times! Now let's look a couple of chapters later. (We are reading these scriptures to set up the beauty of what is going to happen at Pentecost.)

“Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept” (Matthew 28:11-13).

The chief priests and elders are setting up an even worse scenario for the disciples, spreading the word that they are sneaking around and lying. The disciples are already afraid! They have already fled! But now there is this word being spread against them too.

*“Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, **believed not**”* (Mark 16:9-11).

Mary goes to His disciples as they mourn and weep. They had been mourning and weeping this whole time! Freaked out! Not just because Jesus was taken and killed, but because of the fear over the rumors being spread, and everything that has been going on. Mary told them that she had seen Jesus, and that Jesus told her to go to them. And they were in mourning and wept and felt like failures and were not in tune with what was going on! They were confused and believed not! John 20:18-19 tells us what happened next:

“Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her. Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear...”

Notice, no matter what they have heard, they are *still* shut in! Sheltered in place, in the Upper Room. Shut in for fear! Then the end of the verse:

“...then came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.”

They were supposed to be eating the Lamb. They were supposed to be making the most of this sheltering-in-place time. *They were supposed to be filling up for the journey and getting prepared.* But they were not! They were not. They were quivering with fear. They were doubting. We have seen that in the scriptures and will see it in more scriptures to come. They were hiding and afraid. *They were unsure of themselves instead of being full of the Lamb!* You could say, in a certain sense, they were hiding from the death angel. Now, it was not like that first Passover where there was a death angel that was going to pass over. This was everything from the Romans to the chief priests' rumors. Some of the scriptures we read said some had fled for their lives. Some denied Him. Some betrayed Him. They all hid, that was in the scriptures we read. They are hiding right here at this point! Yes, they are sheltering in place, but they are all hiding up there! All this stuff is swirling and they are going, “What do we do? How do we handle all of this?”

Their failures had made them worthy of being fearful of the future! Instead of filling up on that Lamb, they were thinking, “We have failed! We have missed the Lord! We fell short! We did not understand.” So many things can go in our minds! So many things can attack our emotions and mess with us over these things. But remember: today is legally the day of Pentecost. Jesus told the disciples in John 16:13-14, “*I must go away.*” When He said that, He was talking about the cross! He was not just saying, “I am going to go fly away to my Father.” He said, “I am going away, and the Holy Spirit is going to come! And He is going to explain Me in a way that you have not known Me!”

Well, here they are! They are still in that Upper Room thing, sheltering in place! Sheltering in place until the day of first fruits. The first ripe fruits.

Now let’s read Acts 1:4-8:

“And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, [this is the Lord with them] but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?”

They are looking at the externals! He is about to bring the internal. **The eternal!**

“And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses [martyrs] unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.”

Keep in mind: the Holy Spirit has not come at this point. Jesus said all this to them, and it was not the day before Pentecost when He said it.

So, they are still up in that Upper Room! They are still shut in. They still do not know and are fearful. And if they are still up there, even if they have seen Jesus, that actually kind of adds to the problem, because they can say they have seen Jesus, but nothing has changed! They could say, “The Romans and chief priests are still out to get us! We still look bad. The Romans could break down the door at any time. We have not changed one bit! In fact, we are still praying and mourning and all of this. Jesus came and told us all this stuff and now He is gone! He told us to wait. Wait on what? We do not understand all of this.”

Now Acts 2:1-4:

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place...”

They are still sheltering in that same place where they shivered and feared and did not understand and doubted. All the different scriptures that we read had those elements in them. When they were first mourning and weeping, they did not know Jesus was alive. As far as they knew, they had totally failed! And since then, nothing has really changed. They are thinking, “From the time of eating the Lamb until now, we are just the furthest thing from that.”

“And suddenly [sometimes you just need a “suddenly”] there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.”

Most of the time the emphasis is on the rushing mighty wind! But notice: this one's not coming from the earth, it is coming from above!

And all of what house? All the shelter-in-place house! All the house, like in Egypt when they were there and the death angel was going to pass by! Well, this isn't the death angel. **This is going to be the answer!**

“...and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

As of fire! This is undeniable Fire! This is not, “Well, I just want to be on fire for God” or “I’m on fire for God!” No! This is the *Holy Spirit* and *He is like fire!* How did Jeremiah put it? “Shut up in my bones!” Man, He's got me on the inside...on the structure of what I am, shut up in those bones! (Jeremiah 20:9)

So, here it is, the Day of Pentecost! It has been 50 days since they sat with Jesus in that same upper room! Fifty days of not going out and being fearful of what is out there. And it's probably, of sorts, spiritually. To go out. And weeping and mourning, and hearing good news but doubting and not believing, and doubting themselves. Doubting what they are going to be now without Jesus. Fifty days! You know, this was like the Spanish flu pandemic: on Passover it had reached the highest point! It had gone on for a long time, but in the United States, it reached a peak on Passover! But on Pentecost Sunday, 50 days later, the pandemic broke! That is historically a fact! It had been going on before that, but it reached that peak, and nobody would have believed on that Passover day, that this thing could start dissipating and going away, starting on Pentecost!

“And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?”
(Acts 2:12)

“What does it mean?” That is us! That is so us. God can do all kinds of stuff and we are going, “What does it mean?” Well, good thing it's not a mental thing He is trying to get in us. He is not trying to explain all outward evidences; He is trying to get His Spirit, His own Spirit, in us to be able to declare **Christ in a way we have never known Him before.** *And that would start on Pentecost Sunday, which is today! That would start, and the journey would start!* That is when the journey started. They have been sheltering for fifty days. But the journey starts on Pentecost Sunday!

In the book of Acts (Acts 2:12-13), the Holy Spirit starts moving within them...

“And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? And others mocking...”

So you have two groups: the people in the upper room that this is happening to, and they still do

not really know what is going on for sure. Then you have the people externally outside who heard it, and knew something big was going on, and they are mocking. They, in a sense, are the plague – they're against you, some of them have been looking for where you were, and nobody is expecting this kind of treatment, that God is going to come down and fill the failures. **God fills the failures!** That is good news!

The other group of people are expecting failure from the disciples, the failing disciples. “Of course you're failing. You're drunk, you have been messed up! You've been mourning! Your Lord, the One you followed, is no longer here! You have no direction. You must be drunk! That has to be what is going on! You guys must have been drinking because you don't have any real direction. You have so totally messed up that you have decided to just drink yourselves silly!”

Acts 2:14-17:

*“But Peter, **standing up** with the eleven, lifted up his voice, [Man, this took the Holy Spirit! Because he denied Jesus! He denied Him three times!] and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days...”* The last days of our life as failures! That does not mean we will not fail, but we will not be those kind of failures! This is the last days of that.

“...saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit [My Spirit!] upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams...”

So, Peter stands up and tells them, “You expect drunkenness and depression from us. And you probably have every right to think that because we did not do so good during this filling up on the Lamb thing! But, that is not what this is. You expect that from us! We expect it from us! But that's not what this is! This is the fulfillment of the Word of God that was spoken by our prophets a long time ago! That He is pouring out His Spirit on the lacking! The ones who lack. Us! He is pouring out the Spirit on the people who were least deserving.”

Peter has really got it now! He is up there and starting the journey! The journey from being Peter of the disciples to **Peter with the Lamb formed in him...**

(Part 2 continues in next month's newsletter, *The Journey of God Filling the Failures!*)