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## A Man's Celebration

### Acts 2:26

Peter is preaching an amazing sermon. It is the explanation of the Pentecost event. The words are coming from his mouth, but the Spirit of God is moving through him, sourcing those words. The Jews of the Dispersion, having just witnessed the Pentecost event, are open and responding to the new thing God is doing through Pentecost. They are eager to know how they too may experience Pentecost just as the one hundred and twenty believers. How can this apply to their lives?

Jesus is the explanation! This is Peter's opening sentence. God proved Pentecost in *Jesus of Nazareth, a Man*. He did it through the life of Jesus, His death, and His resurrection. The focus of the explanation is on sourcing. The essence of the Spirit of God sourced everything which flowed from the being of Christ. The central issue of Pentecost or Christianity is sourcing. It is not about theological correctness, proper behavior, or right versus wrong. It is about sourcing. Who is responsible for what is coming through and from you? Is it coming from you or through and from the Spirit of God?

Peter is very much aware that this kind of statement will produce a reaction. Certain questions will be raised. How can this happen in my life? If I experience Pentecost, how will I maintain a consistent sourcing of the Spirit? He forcibly says the answer is still found in Jesus. He quotes to us a Messianic Psalm (Psalm 16:8-11). This passage can easily be broken into three sections. These three sections combined give us the secret of how *Jesus of Nazareth, a Man* maintained on a consistent basis the sourcing of the Spirit of God even in and through death.

The three sections are **CONCENTRATION** (Acts 2:25), **CELEBRATION** (Acts 2:26), and **COMMUNION** (Acts 2:27-28).

Jesus' concentration was completely on the Father. This is a Messianic Psalm. This means we must take these words as those of Christ. He boldly says that the Father is in His eye. His entire vision is the Father. The Father is so large in His eyesight that Jesus can see nothing else. This vision is not a picture of the Father, ideas about the Father, or a statue of the Father. The actual Father, in the essence of His Spirit is present. His very presence acts like a body guard which defeats every enemy. Jesus is able to maintain this vision of His Father because of the Father. He does not have special discipline, techniques, or meditation methods. It is the Father Himself who sources the consistency. As Jesus sees the Father, He is captured by Him. Because He is captured by the Father, He consistently sees the Father. The very presence of the Father sources the consistency. Jesus is simply responding to the Father. Remember this is an explanation of Pentecost. What is happening in Jesus is now transferred to the disciples. This is also promised to us. This is the key to our lives as well.

The overflow of this is **CELEBRATION** (Acts 2:26). This seems to describe the tone of the response which is constantly going on in the life of *Jesus of Nazareth, a Man*.

*Therefore my heart rejoiced and my tongue was glad;*

*Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope* (Acts 2:26).

He begins with the Greek word translated *therefore*. There are two Greek words which are translated into this one English word. The first Greek word is the same as in the above study for the Greek word translated *always*. It is a primary preposition denoting the channel of an act, through, or during. It implies motion, through a place. The second Greek word can be translated "that thing." So a proper translation beginning this great statement would be "through that thing." What was the constant attitude present through the concentration (Acts 2:25)? If Jesus lived in a total focus on the Father, He was in His eye, what was happening in the inner life of Christ through it all?

The Messiah seems to realize that His life is filled with "rejoicing." *Rejoiced* is a translation of a compound Greek word. The first word is "well" and the second one is "mind." This is an entirely different Greek word than what Paul uses in Philippians as he instructs us to *Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!* (Philippians 4:4). Paul uses the same Greek word Jesus used in the Sermon on the Mount concerning persecution. *"Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven,"* (Matthew 5:12). However, the Greek word Peter is using here in quoting David is only used fourteen times in the New Testament. Six of those times it is translated "merry." It is an interesting word because it is a verb used in the context of relationship. It is used strongly in the Parable of the Prodigal Son. Upon the return of the son, the fatted calf was killed and a party was given. Jesus said, *"And they began to be merry,"* (Luke 15:24). The elder brother accused the Father by saying, *"You never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends,"* (Luke 15:29). It has the connotation of having a party with one's friends. Paul makes the use of this word plain in asking a question, *"For if I make you sorrowful, then who is he who makes me glad (merry) but the one who is made sorrowful by me?"* (2 Corinthians 2:2). Since this Greek word has to do with relationship, it becomes very important in regard to intimacy with God. The chief sin in one's relationship to

God is denial of God as the cause of joy. When I depend upon circumstances, materialism, or power to determine my merriment, I have sinned. In Stephen's great message to the Jews he related the story of the golden calf. He said, "**And they made a calf in those days, offered sacrifices to the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands**" (Acts 7:41). The golden calf was not their only sin, but they had shifted the cause of their joy to something other than God.

This becomes significant in the context of our passage concerning *Jesus of Nazareth, a Man*. It was through those things such as His life and His death that the focus on His Father strengthened. In the context of His relationship with the Father, there was a "well mind." He lived in dependence on the flow of the indwelling Spirit. This brought the spirit of merriment. It took place in His *heart*. It is exciting to see that the usage of this word in the New Testament does not depend upon the Greek concept or usage of the word but is influenced by the Old Testament. It refers to the inner person. It is the seat of understanding, knowledge, and will. It takes on the meaning of conscience. It is described most effectively by Peter in his challenge to wives. He calls them to something beyond *merely outward* adornment – *arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel – rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God* (1 Peter 3:3-4). *The hidden person of the heart* describes well the New Testament concept of *heart*.

In our passage, *therefore my heart rejoiced*, *heart* is the subject and *rejoiced* is the verb. It is interesting this verb is in the passive voice. This means the *heart* is not responsible for the merriment. This is not a matter of getting oneself into a positive mental state. We are not being challenged to discipline our thought process to blot out all negative thoughts. The *hidden person of the heart* of the Messiah is being acted upon by the very relationship of intimacy with the Father. He is living in a party, making merriment. But He is being brought to death! Yes, it is a death *delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God*. Even in death, the relationship is intimate and flowing in merriment.

The next clause in our passage is most exulting. *Jesus of Nazareth, a Man* exclaims, "**and my tongue was glad;**" (Acts 2:26). The Greek word translated *tongue* can mean the organ of the body or often it stands for speech or language. The Greek word translated *was glad* is a compound word. The first Greek word means "much;" the second Greek word means "to leap." Therefore, this Greek word means "to leap for joy, to show one's joy by leaping and skipping." This kind of activity denotes excessive or ecstatic joy and delight. Often in the Old Testament Septuagint this Greek word is used to speak of rejoicing with song and dance (Psalms 2:11; 20:5; 40:16; 68:3). This verb is normally found in the middle voice which has to do with personal preference. He is not expressing a quiet spirit of contentment. This is not resting as in napping. This is a party where things are getting out of hand. Merriment is taking place with my best friend, the God who is sourcing me. It is an occasion to dance on the table, blow party whistles, and play loud music! I just cannot help myself!

Both verbs, *rejoiced* and *was glad*, are in the aorist tense. It adds a timeless element to His condition. This corresponds to the Hebrew perfect tense as found in the original writing in the Psalms. As focus upon the Father is *always* present in His life, so also is the jubilant merriment. Do you see the interworking of these two concepts?

Peter is describing and explaining the Pentecost event. The explanation is Jesus! That which flowed in and through Jesus is now happening in the disciples. This is promised to you. Here is what you can expect when you are filled with the Spirit. When God sources you, look for these things. Jesus will be your total vision. Not because you refuse to see anything else, but because you cannot see anything else. You are captured by Him. You see Him, therefore He captures you. Since you are captured by Him, you see Him. This produces in your inner person a merriment which is not affected by circumstances, pressures, or even death!

The next major phrase in the Messiah's statement is just as startling. He says, "**Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope,**" (Acts 2:26). **Moreover** literally means "the continuation of a condition or action." It can also mean "in addition, further, or besides." How could there be anything more? To experience all we have just proposed would be more than one could expect in a multitude of lifetimes. It only points us to the abundance of His presence when flowing through **a Man**. There seems to be no end to the extravagant benefits.

It is very valuable for us to grasp the full significance of the reference to **my flesh**. The actual Greek word does refer to the physical body as distinguished from the spirit or soul. Many scholars believe this statement in our verse is in regard to the hope of the resurrection. Peter has just preached about the Spirit of God producing the death of Christ. Now he quotes the Messianic Psalm in which the Messiah is expressing His hope and trust in God who will raise Him from the dead. However, there is room for a larger and deeper interpretation than this.

In the preceding statement the Messiah has revealed the joy and merriment within His **heart** and **tongue**. We discovered the **heart** is the **hidden person of the heart**. This joy is a condition of the inner most person which certainly affects the flesh but is not dependent upon it. The Greek word translated **tongue** can most definitely refer to the organ in the body. As stated above, it can also refer to speech or language. However, David originally wrote this in the Hebrew language. In the original Psalm the Hebrew word is actually translated **glory**. It expresses the idea of abundance, honor, and dignity. This Hebrew word expresses the glory of God filling the temple. This would not be a focus on the physical presence of God, but the Spirit and essence of His presence. Peter, in quoting this Psalm, followed the translation of the Septuagint rather than the Hebrew text. In this change the translators shifted from the glory (Hebrew) to the tongue (Greek). In light of the total statement, the Messiah is expressing the condition of the inner person (**heart**). What is being expressed is not just from the physical tongue but from the very soul, being, or essence of His existence.

With this in clear focus, we must view the statement of **my flesh** as an expression of something beyond the physical body. This is not a statement of the confidence the Messiah has in the physical resurrection from the dead. As we have understood from Peter's sermon, the resurrection is more than an event. It is not just a physical resurrection of the body, although that is included. The resurrection is a state of being which flows from the indwelling and sourcing of the Spirit of God within the individual. So the idea of **flesh** in this verse must be seen as greater than just the physical. It represents the entire person.

This is further seen in a proper understanding of the concept of **will rest in hope**. The Greek word translated **will rest** literally means to dwell in a tent or tabernacle, to camp. This Greek word is used by Jesus in the Parable of the Mustard Seed. He tells us of the smallest seed the Jews possessed which grows into the largest tree in their land. It **becomes a tree, so that the**

*birds of the air come and nest in its branches* (Matthew 13:32). This portrays the idea of lodging or remaining. The birds do not simply alight temporarily in the tree but nest and permanently dwell.

*Jesus of Nazareth, a Man* says, “*Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope.*” Some scholars have interpreted this to be an expression of the Messiah’s faith. He could yield His flesh to death in confidence of the physical resurrection. So *hope* is the resting place, the camping site, or the permanent dwelling of His flesh in death. However, in understanding *flesh* as more than the physical body we begin to perceive a deeper meaning of this statement. *Hope* is not the place of dwelling, but literally means “as may be hoped.” The place of dwelling is His focus on the Father.

The Messiah said in the beginning of Peter’s quotation (Acts 2:26) that the Father was in His eye. This vision is so dominant, He cannot see anything else. No circumstances or difficulties are able to distract Him. This focus on the Father is absolutely consistent. This is not a picture of the Father, and it is not an idea or doctrine of the Father. The actual essence of the life of the Father has come to be His body guard. This means because He is seeing the Father He is consistently focused on the Father. Therefore, the Father is producing or sourcing the focus. Jesus is simply responding to the stimuli of the Father’s presence. This produces merriment in the depths of His inner being. It is so strong it permeates His entire life even to the physical body. Since His entire being, both spiritually and physically dwells, permanently lodges, rests, or nests in this focus, He may continue to hope in the Father. The Messiah will continue to live in the fullness of the Father. What the Father has been doing within Him, the Father will continue to do through Him. The unseen future holds no fear because of the dwelling place of the focus on the Father.

Peter is explaining Pentecost. Pentecost is Christianity. The Old Covenant is now gone and the New Covenant is present. *Christ in you* is now ours (Colossians 1:27). As the Father sourced Jesus, so Jesus now wants to source us. How can this be maintained on a moment by moment basis? The key is in the focus. We must focus on Jesus as Jesus focused on the Father (Acts 2:25). You and I can experience this same focus which takes place in the same sourcing of the Spirit. This will produce the same jubilant merriment which Jesus experienced in relationship with the Father. This sourcing can permeate our lives until He is our lodging place. We can live in the eternal hope of this focus and sourcing continues forever. Even in crucifixion there is no fear. The life both physically and spiritually is consumed by the focus of His presence. Christ is ours; we are His!