

Another Layer of Easter

I was going to bed when a line popped into my head, “He did not leave my soul in hell.” It sounded like a familiar Bible passage, but I wasn’t sure. Neither was I sure if the writer was referring to Jesus.

I pulled out my smartphone and googled the phrase. It was in the Bible. You can find it in Psalm 16, where King David penned that line in prophecy speaking of Jesus: “For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”¹

Next I wanted to confirm that David was speaking of Jesus, so I looked a little further. The exact same passage is quoted again by Peter in Acts chapter 2, in his very first sermon at Pentecost. Jesus had just ascended into heaven and had told His disciples the Holy Spirit would come to them. The believers anxiously huddled together in an upper room waiting to see what was next. Then the Holy Spirit swept through in the form of flames of fire, and they were all filled with a power and boldness that they had never known.



At that time, Jerusalem was filled with Jews from all over the world. These devout believers were in Jerusalem to celebrate Passover—one of the most significant events in the Jewish calendar.

Upon being filled with the Holy Spirit, the disciples trickled out of their upper room and into the public, where they began declaring the gospel—in foreign languages none of them previously knew! All the Jewish visitors to Jerusalem were astounded that these people knew their languages. People were trying to figure out how it could be possible for them to speak in languages they had never learned. Some took to making fun: “They must be drunk.”²

Then Peter, the same Peter who had denied Jesus just a few weeks before, stood up and addressed this huge crowd: “We aren’t drunk; it’s only 9 in the morning. We’re filled with the Spirit just like the prophet Joel prophesied.”³



He goes on to explain that Jesus of Nazareth, the one that everyone knew had recently been crucified, was the Son of God, whom God had raised from the dead. He referenced David's prophecy in Psalm 16.⁴

Peter says, "Brothers and sisters, I can speak confidently about the patriarch David. He died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this very day. Because he was a prophet, he knew that God promised him with a solemn pledge to seat one of his descendants on his throne. Having seen this beforehand, David spoke about the resurrection of Christ, that he wasn't abandoned to the grave, nor did his body experience decay. This Jesus, God raised up. We are all witnesses to that fact."⁵

Then Peter pricked the crowd with the statement, "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."⁶



Peter's delivery was so powerful and anointed that the crowd was cut to the heart and cried, "Brothers, what do we do?"

"Repent and be baptized," was the reply. That day 3,000 believers were added to the church. And that was just the beginning.⁷

Through His death and resurrection, Jesus gave us gifts that have completely altered the course of mankind. These gifts are:

1. Salvation and a relationship with God
2. The Holy Spirit
3. The gift of healing, through His suffering on the cross.⁸

The gift of the Comforter is directly related to Jesus' death. I haven't always thought of the gift of the Holy Spirit as something to celebrate at Easter, but I can see that it is really a great gift to celebrate at Easter. Because of Jesus' physical departure from His disciples, they were—and we are—able to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.



“The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”⁹

The Holy Spirit is God living in us. It's His presence in our lives, and is available to us because Jesus was willing to give His life for us to have it. The Holy Spirit goes beyond salvation (which is already the most amazing, awesome, love-filled gift we could possibly receive), and ensures us an eternity with God in that it connects us to God's presence each and every day.

Thinking about the Holy Spirit in this way has added another layer to my appreciation of Easter and what Jesus has done for us. I'm grateful for this deeper understanding of what Jesus has done for me, and it's something I never want to take for granted.

Footnotes

¹ Psalm 16:10 KJV

² Acts 2:13

³ Acts 2:15–16,
paraphrased

⁴ Acts 2:27

⁵ Acts 2:29–32 CEB

⁶ Acts 2:36 NIV

⁷ Acts 2:37–38, 41

⁸ Isaiah 53:5

⁹ John 14:26 KJV

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*Authored by Maria Hodler, adapted. Originally published on Just1Thing.
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