



Dear Friend

It's so good to be back sharing these thoughts with you once again. I am very grateful to Linda, Alison and Richard for taking over this daily message for the last month, and as I gradually start active ministry, they will continue to share these messages with me.

Yesterday was the Day of Pentecost, or Shavuot in Judaism, a festival of the firstfruits of the harvest. For Christians we celebrate the harvest of the Spirit which Jesus promised to his followers: "Stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high". Today I'd like us to reflect on the Old Testament reading from yesterday's service, Numbers 11.24-30 where God takes some of the Spirit that is on Moses and gives it to the seventy elders who were gathered at the tent of meeting - the Tabernacle. Two of the seventy - Eldad and Medad, for some reason which is not explained, remained in the camp. When the Spirit was given to these seventy men, they prophesied - probably something akin to speaking in tongues as it was clear to the onlookers that something extraordinary was happening - and Eldad and Medad also prophesied. This was a one off event, which presumably was intended to indicate to the people of Israel that they now shared in the gift of leadership bestowed upon Moses.

At least one person was unhappy that Eldad and Medad were prophesying and told Joshua, who told Moses to stop them - after all they were not in the right place! It is Moses words that are so significant for us: 'Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit on them!'

On the Day of Pentecost Moses' desire came to fruition. Throughout the Old Testament the work of the Holy Spirit was limited; now the Spirit has been poured out without limit, upon "all flesh" and everyone has the potential to prophesy, which is much more about proclaiming the word of the Lord in our present circumstances than it is about forecasting the future. The Church has been given the authority of heaven to speak truth to power, to challenge the status quo as well as to bring God's love close to us. Interestingly the name Eldad in Hebrew means "God has loved", and Medad simply means "love". The Spirit of God is love, and is given not as a one off event but to enable us to live every moment in and through and by the love of God.

So as we begin to see the lockdown eased and look forward to returning to the church building, let us be willing to allow God the Holy Spirit to challenge our own status quo, and let us pray that the Church would find her prophetic voice to call the world to the knowledge of God's love.

The verse for today: Hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. *Romans 5.5*



And something to make us smile:



Seen on a bumper sticker: "Please be patient, God hasn't finished with me yet."

May you know God's love deep in your heart today and always.

With much love and prayer

Simon