



Pentecost Sunday - Acts 2: 1-11, John 20: 19-23

The winds of Pentecost

The Roman Centurion standing atop the fortress wall watched the roadway leading north from Jerusalem. With the bountiful Spring harvest there had been a steady movement of traffic bearing grain into the city. Under a darkening sky, the Centurion noticed one man running toward Herod's Gate. As he struggled up the hill he was barely passing the slow moving caravans.

Peter had been jogging hard, but the final hill slowed him to a walk. He was late for the meeting with the disciples and friends of Jesus. A fresh gust of wind swirled up a cloud of dust as Peter walked briskly under the gate and into the city. Once inside, he followed the narrow street to the meeting house.

He was welcomed into the house and found it packed with people. Peter smiled greetings, put his arm around shoulders and gripped hands as he made his way toward the open breezeway that joined the inner garden patio with the main room of the house. Still breathing heavily from the running he headed to the inner garden for more air.

When Peter stepped into the open, the roaring sound began. It was a deep, moaning sound of powerful wind. Looking skyward, what hair Peter had began to fly wildly about his head. The warm wind poured over him like a fast

flowing river of water. He felt a smile rising on his face as joy filled his heart. This wind had a "presence" in it and Peter knew it must be Jesus.

Everyone was now on their feet in alarm as the roaring wind swallowed up their shouts and cries of fear. The roar was terrifying. Those in the house struggled past each other to escape into the open garden and squint up at the dazzling sky. They saw long streamers of light begin to float down from the clouds, hanging like tentacles. Peter, grinning in fearless joy saw one of the streamers of light come spiraling down at him. With a snap, it struck Peter on his lips. It tingled, leaving a salty after-taste in his mouth.

"Pneuma!" Peter shouted in perfect Greek, startled both at what he said and that he also knew the word meant "spirit."

All that Jesus had said was being fulfilled. The Holy Spirit had been sent to them, just as Jesus promised.



Today, the same Holy Spirit that was visited upon the first Christians, is now present in us. God has not abandoned us. We discover him in the Spirit, moving like a wind through our lives and through the world in which we live. If we can be silent for a moment we can discover that he is within us already. With the courage of faith we can move out of our safe places and into the raging wind where we can look up in confidence for the long streamers of light that can dance down from the skies and ignite our hearts with love and peace and joy.