

Sunday, May 19, 2024 Pentecost Sunday Morning Worship Sermon

「The old man dreams, the young man sees visions.」

Pastor Takaaki Inoue Joel 2 : 23~3 : 5, Acts 2 : 1~13

❶ 【The Holy Spirit will fall on those who wait for it】

Today is Pentecost. It is the third major festival along with Easter and Christmas. Since it is the 50th day after Jesus' resurrection, it is also called "Pentecost" (50 days festival), and in Greek it is called "Pentecost". Let's learn about the Holy Spirit today. You may think that it is a ghost when the kanji for "spirit" is used, but in Hebrew it is called "ruach" and in Greek it is "pneuma", which means "wind" or "breath". They probably used the word "spirit" because they couldn't see it, but in the Orthodox Church, they don't write "spirit," they write "holy god." The Holy Spirit is the breath of God that comes out of God's mouth.

Now, since the resurrected Jesus returned to heaven on the 40th day, I think that the only recourse for the remaining disciples was the promise that Jesus had left behind. "The Father will send another advocate" (John 14:16), "He will send an advocate to you." (John 16:7), and repeatedly taught His disciples that the Holy Spirit would come. Even after the resurrection. "Wait for the things that the Father promised, which you have heard from me before" (Acts 1:4), and "I will send you what the Father has promised." (Luke 24:49), and He commanded us to wait earnestly for the Holy Spirit. What we can see from this is that salvation does not end with the work of Jesus' cross and resurrection, but there is a continuation. In other words, it means that salvation is completed by receiving the Holy Spirit. So when the disciples returned to Jerusalem, they went up to the room where they were staying (the room where they had eaten the Last Supper) and waited for the promised Holy Spirit. It is written, "They all prayed earnestly with the women, with Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with the brothers of Jesus" (Acts 1:14). The icon of Pentecost depicts Mary as the center, because Mary the mother was also with the flock of apostles and praying. They didn't really know what the Holy Spirit was like. However, for them, there was no one to rely on but this Holy Spirit (advocate). I think that's very important. Not sure about the Holy Spirit? There are people who say. They don't ask for it because they don't know. But you don't have to know, so it's important to ask. Have you ever desperately asked Mr./Ms., like your disciples, "Holy Spirit, come"? Have you ever waited for the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit does not come to those who do not ask. The Lord said, "The world cannot receive this spirit, because it does not see or know it" (John 14:17). It is not only the people of the world who do not try to know the Holy Spirit, but also Christians.

●Anthony De Mello said: "The Holy Spirit is given only to those who wait, day after day, to those who continue to expose their hearts in prayer to God and His Word, to those who are willing to invest hundreds of hours in something that looks like a total waste of time in the eyes of productivity." "The sin against the Holy Spirit is that disbelief that he cannot believe that He can change the world, that He can change me. Such a person has become a practicing atheist, confessing with his mouth that he believes in God." He said.

Therefore, let's earnestly seek the Holy Spirit. Let's pray, "Holy Spirit, come."

② [Pentecost is related to preaching]

Let's read what it was like when the Holy Spirit descended. "When the day of Pentecost came, and they were all assembled, suddenly there was a sound from heaven that sounded like a violent wind blowing, and it resounded throughout the house where they were sitting, and a fiery tongue appeared in the division and rested on each of them. They were filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in the languages of other nations as the Spirit made them speak." On this day, the Holy Spirit descended from heaven with the sound of a violent wind blowing, and when the fiery tongues parted and stayed on each person, they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak of God's great deeds in the languages of various nations. The "fierce wind" represents the "breath of God," and the "tongue of fire" represents the "tongue of God." The Holy Spirit descended upon His disciples so that they could speak of God's great deeds to the world with His tongue. Therefore, we can see that the theme of Whit is "the beginning of world mission". The Holy Spirit created a missionary church. Moreover, it is written, "as the Spirit shall speak" (Acts 2:4). It means that the Holy Spirit is the subject of the mission, never a human being. Evangelism or preaching is the work of the Triune God, which is called "God's mission" (Missio Dei) in Latin. It's a mission in English. We don't do missions on our own. It's not about trying hard to tell people about Jesus and increasing the number of believers. God go! and be sent to the place where you command and to the people, and speak! He is forced to speak. A pastor said to me, "Teacher, I want to evangelize, but I don't have anyone to listen to me," so I said, "Teacher, you have to go out and do it, because Jesus appointed us to go out and bear fruit (John 15:16)." I said, I want the church to look outward, not inward. When we get together, I want them to talk about missions, not about "where it hurts or is hard."

③ [Breathe in the breath of God]

You can tell if a person is alive or dead by whether they are breathing or not. If you stop breathing, you will not be able to move, and eventually it will become

hard and cold. When a baby is born into this world, its body is ready, but it is not yet breathing. It is only when you breathe in and give birth that you become a "living being." The first Adam was no different. God created man from the earth, and when He finally breathed the "breath of life" into his nostrils, He became a living being. The breath comes in last. It is the same with the sacraments. Read the words of Jesus' enactment, and at the end, call on the Holy Spirit and become the Eucharist. It's the same in the book of Acts. The church community had already been created by Christ. Finally, the Holy Spirit put the "breath of God" into it. That's how the church got going. So are we. We also receive the Holy Spirit, the breath of God, and salvation is completed. This is why we should seek the Holy Spirit. All Christians first had faith because the Holy Spirit worked, but then the Holy Spirit left if they did not ask for it. Because the Holy Spirit enters and departs. Christians who do not seek the Holy Spirit have knowledge of faith, but they become more and more worldly. And they will try to do everything without God (without the Holy Spirit), that is, with the power and wisdom of man.

● I have allergic rhinitis, so my nose is dry very quickly. This makes it difficult to breathe, so I can't let go of my medication all the time. When I was a child, I had childhood asthma, and if I played too much, I would always get asthma. It's hard to breathe, and every time you inhale, you hear a "whoosh, whoosh." It was hard to breathe when I lay down, so I slept against the wall. Just as if we don't breathe in the breath of this world for a moment, we must be suffocated if we don't breathe in the breath of the Holy Spirit, and we must be suffocated, and we must not be able to live even for a moment. We must seek the Holy Spirit as continually as we breathe.

● Father Kolbe was usually short-tempered and hardworking. It was written in a book that he was not a good man from the beginning, but gradually became a martyr Father Kolbe. Missionary Stone, who died after the sinking of the Toya Maru and giving his float to others, was a very quiet person who usually did not stand out, did not binge eat, and was modest in everything. But they have something in common. He prayed to God every day, communed with Him, and finally gave his life to his neighbor and died. By praying, the Holy Spirit gradually fills you and transforms you so that you can live like Christ. That's where we find hope.

The title of today's sermon is "Old People Dream, Young People Visions," and the Holy Spirit has given us great hope. We have two breaths. It is the breath of man and the breath of God. The breath of man ends in this world, but the breath

of God lasts forever. Because God does not die, He breathes forever. Jesus said, "The Father will send another advocate to be with you forever" (John 14:16). If the breath of God, the Holy Spirit, is with us forever, then we become breathers all the time. What an amazing thing! Let us pray without ceasing, breathe in the breath of God called the Holy Spirit, and be moved by the Holy Spirit in this world and live forever in the hereafter.