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A Man's Communion

Acts 2:27

Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, is being used by God to explain to the Jews of the Dispersion the outpouring of the Spirit of Christ. His explanation is for us as well. He focuses his explanation on Jesus. In order to understand Pentecost, we must understand Jesus. *Jesus of Nazareth, a Man* was the proof of Pentecost. God sourced this *Man* so all could see and understand the full potential God intends for mankind. God sourced the life of Christ (Acts 2:22), the death of Christ (Acts 2:23), and the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2:24).

What was the spiritual condition of Jesus which allowed this sourcing? Furthermore, how did Jesus maintain this sourcing moment by moment? To answer these questions, Peter reverts back to the Old Testament Scriptures. There must not be any chance of misunderstanding. This is not Peter's opinion, cultural perspective, or memorized answer. The explanation comes from King David who speaks concerning the Messiah (Acts 2:25). It is a quotation from a Messianic Psalm (Psalms 16:8-11).

The Father sourced Jesus because of His spiritual condition. The key element was Christ's focus. The **CONCENTRATION** of Christ was on the Father (Acts 2:25). The Father appeared in the eye of Christ until He could see nothing else. The Father is the source of the concentration as Christ responds to His appearance. As the Son sees the Father, He loves Him. As Jesus loves the Father, He is driven to see Him. As Jesus sees the Father, He loves Him. This drives Jesus to see Him. The very presence of the Father perpetuates the concentration.

This produces a condition of **CELEBRATION** within the inner most person of Christ (Acts 2:26). There is a merriment which resembles a party flowing between the Father and Son.

It affects the entire being of Christ which enables Him to have hope. The very dwelling place of the Spirit filled Man is the presence of the Father. This fullness enables Him to hope in all situations, even His death and resurrection.

Then the Messiah breaks into an outburst of this celebration (Acts 2:27). It is an expression of worship as the Son actually speaks to the Father. The Messiah is giving details of the depth of the **COMMUNION** which takes place between them in the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Remember this is an explanation of Pentecost. Everything true of *Jesus of Nazareth, a Man* is taking place in the one hundred and twenty disciples. It is also promised to you.

The beginning statement of this worship is ***“For You will not leave my soul in Hades,”*** (Acts 2:27). This statement is so important and powerful that Peter restates it as he continues preaching. He interprets this statement in light of the promise of the Father to King David (Acts 2:30). It is a validation of the resurrection of the Messiah according to Peter: ***“he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption,”*** (Acts 2:31). This is an Old Testament statement of the New Testament reality proposed in verse twenty-four. God was proving Pentecost in *Jesus of Nazareth, a Man*. One of the proofs was found in the resurrection. *A Man* filled with the Spirit could not be contained in death. Death is pictured as long, gigantic fingers reaching to seize, capture, and imprison the individual. He gives the picture of a baby trapped in his mother’s womb. Death can no more hold the person filled with the Spirit than a pregnant woman can keep her baby in her womb. When one is filled with the Spirit, he can move into the midst of death with complete freedom from fear. Death is anything which is not sourced by the Spirit. All the aspects of death connected to daily living fall by the wayside. They try to entangle us, but it is not allowed because of the Spirit of Christ. The seizing fingers of death slide from the believer. This is also true for death as contained in physical and eternal death. Jesus told us, ***“And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”*** (John 11:26). The reason for the truth of this statement is the intimacy of the fullness of the Spirit. Death is no longer death. The sting has been removed. Evidently there is something so powerful and explosive within the relationship of the Spirit of Christ and the believer that death is no longer a threat!

The depth of the relationship producing this reality is expressed in the verb of the opening sentence of our passage. It is ***will (not) leave***. *Leave* is a combination of two Greek words. These two words can be translated “in” and “forsake, abandon, or desert.” It means to “leave behind in any state or place.” Jesus is obviously speaking of His Father who is in His eye.

The Messiah’s proclamation is strong; the Father will not abandon or leave Him. The intertwining of the Father and the Son is so tight that there is no possibility of separation. There is a complete unity between them. They cannot be divided even by death. It is the picture of the vine and the branch relationship (John 15). The two are distinct yet not the same; but they are so united you cannot see where one leaves off and the other begins. This is the man filled with the Spirit of Christ. Peter is explaining Pentecost. The fullness of the Holy Spirit is a state of intimacy with Christ. It is so tight and complete He cannot go off and leave you.

We must carefully investigate this key word. The Greek word translated *leave* (engkataleipo) is actually a compound word. The first Greek word is “en” which is used numerous times in the New Testament. The second Greek word is “kataleipo.” This word is

used twenty-four times in the New Testament. It means “to forsake, abandon, or leave behind.” One would think this word (kateleipo) would have been adequate to express the cry of the Messiah’s heart in our passage. But when Peter quoted this Psalm, he used the Greek word “engkataleipo.” This states the basic idea of forsaking or leaving behind, but strengthens the relational aspect of the statement.

Let us review the use of the Greek word “en.” You may remember from previous studies the role this word plays in comparison with “into” (eis) and “from” (ek). Both of these words indicate motion either away from or towards. But the word “in” has no motion. It bespeaks the fact of resting, remaining, or abiding. In the New Testament this word is used in regard to a person being filled with something. Sin is not a simple deed, but actually lives in a person (Romans 7:17-20). The opposite of this is God’s Spirit living within the believer (Romans 8:9-11; 1 Corinthians 3:16). Life, joy, faith, and the Word are said to be in people because of the presence of the Spirit of Christ (John 6:53, 15:11; 2 Timothy 1:5; John 5:38). *All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge* are found in Christ (Colossians 2:3). The mystery and the life are both hidden in God (Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 3:3).

Most important for us is the use of this word for the inner relationship between God and a person. There are frequent statements that God actually works in a person (1 Corinthians 12:6; Philippians 1:6, 2:13; Colossians 1:29). Paul seems to present a formula which he emphatically states as *Christ in you* (Romans 8:10; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Colossians 1:27). This description was highlighted by Jesus in the upper room discourse on the promise of the Father (John 14, 15, and 16). In describing His own relationship with the Father He said, *“Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me,”* (John 14:11). He continued, *“I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you,”* (John 14:20). In describing the coming experience of the fullness of the Spirit, Jesus said, *“He dwells with you and will be in you,”* (John 14:17).

This gives us a good understanding of the use of “in” (en). Remember this is the first of two words combined together in the Greek word translated *leave* (engkataleipo) in our text (Acts 2:27). The second word (kateleipo) is really interesting for it is also a compound word. It is the Greek word which can be translated “down,” and the Greek word which can be translated “forsake” or “leave.” The first Greek word translated “down” can mean “down from,” “down upon,” or “down in.” It has the connotation of “deep throughout.” This second Greek word translated “forsake” or “leave” can mean “fail,” “wanting,” or “deficient.”

If this has become clear in your thinking, you are automatically asking a question. Why would they place the word “in” (en) at the beginning of the word “leave” (kateleipo) and form a whole new word (engkataleipo)? Clearly something distinctive is being stated by the use of this word. This is not about simply leaving something behind as in leaving a message, but has to do with relationship. This Greek word (engkataleipo) is used ten times in the New Testament. Each time it is used there is relationship involved. It is the word used in the statement of Christ on the cross when He cried out, *“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”* (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34). Paul also used this same term in referring to Demas. He said, *“Be diligent to come to me quickly; for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica”* (2 Timothy 4:9-10).

In this Messianic Psalm, the Messiah is giving us deep insight into the intimacy and oneness found in the fullness of the Spirit. The Father is in the eye of the Son. This is not an

acquaintance relationship. This is not a mutually beneficial relationship. This is not even a need based relationship. The unity is deep in the fullness of the Spirit; there is no possibility of separation. The security of the relationship is found in unity and oneness. There is no deficiency even in the realm of the dead. This relationship supersedes every circumstance of life and death.

This concept is even further expanded by the direct object of the verb. Jesus says, “**For you will not leave my soul in Hades.**” The focus of the action of the verb is on the direct object, *my soul*. This was startling to me. Perhaps I have had the wrong interpretation of *soul*. When *soul* is suggested, I immediately think of the part of my being which is in the image of God. It is the spiritual aspect of my life where God intends to indwell. This interpretation is not what Jesus is saying in our verse. The Greek word translated *soul* has to do with “the principle of life.” It is contrasted with physical death. This Greek word can be used for both man and animals.

An example can be found in the story of a man who fell asleep in church. Let this be a warning to all who might be tempted to do this. Paul is preaching. A man falls asleep while sitting in a window. He falls three stories to the ground and dies. **But Paul went down, fell on him, and embracing him said, “Do not trouble yourselves, for his life (soul) is in him”** (Acts 20:10). So this Greek word translated *soul* is used in the New Testament to refer to the natural life existence of men. It becomes a word which encompasses the essence of my existence. Thus, it is used in our passage. The Messiah is saying that the intimacy He has with the Father is so strong that who He is cannot be separated from the Father. The Father has become the heart of His DNA. The Father is not a warm jacket Jesus wears. The Father is the center ingredient of every cell of Christ’s being. There is no way to separate the Father from who He is. Any attempt of separation would destroy Him. It would be easier to remove the mother’s or father’s genetic makeup from their child than to separate the Father from the life principle of Jesus.

We must see this in the context of Peter’s explanation of Pentecost. The Father is sourcing Jesus. The spiritual condition of Jesus which allows this is the consistent concentration on the Father. The Father has gotten into the eye of the Messiah, and Jesus has responded to this vision. This has produced merriment (party) between these two with the undercurrent of the absolute confidence of hope. The communion is so strong between them; there is no possibility of separation. Not even *Hades* (the realm of the dead) can disturb this party of unity. If one can experience a party with the Spirit of the Father in *Hades*, what could be the circumstances which could separate us from Him? The Messiah is describing the depth of the communion found in the fullness of the Spirit!

The second phrase in our passage is just as intriguing. It says, “**Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption,**” (Acts 2:27). Here is a bold statement of confidence in relationship. The verb *will allow* is a Greek word which focuses on source. It comes from the Greek word “didomi” and means “to give or bestow upon.” This word is the most common expression for the procedure whereby a subject deliberately transfers something to someone or something so that it becomes available to the recipient. In our sentence, it is in the negative. The Father who is in the eye of the Messiah and with whom there is a depth of communion and unity WILL NOT GIVE corruption to the One who is filled with the Spirit.

Let us examine the logic of the total picture found here. Peter is explaining Pentecost to the Jews of the Dispersion. Jesus is the explanation. He is a man who is sourced by the Father. Everything He has is given to Him by the Father. His life with all of its aspects is sourced by the

Father. Even Jesus' death is given to Him by the Father. His resurrection is certainly a gift of the Father. Jesus is totally dependent upon the Father for every function. The spiritual condition within Jesus which allows this sourcing is His absolute concentration on the Father. The Father is in His eye. Jesus simply responds to the Father which strengthens the focus. This produces merriment (party) within the relationship. Hope and confidence flow from this intimacy. This relationship is so intimate separation is impossible without the destruction of who Jesus is. The Father has become the DNA of the essence of Christ. It is so strong it can exist even in the realm of death. The absolute certainty of this is found in the sourcing of the Father. The Father would never source the Son with corruption. The Father is life and light. The Father will never give the Son destruction, damnation, or corruption. If this is true in Jesus, it is true in us through the fullness of the same Spirit. Obviously the key is found in the total sourcing of the Spirit of God.

This is further highlighted by the Greek word translated *to see*. It is not simply to physically see. It means to perceive, grasp, understand, or know. It has an inward focus. This is especially important when we attempt to comprehend the meaning of *corruption*. Many Bible scholars interpret this word to refer to the physical body of Jesus. They specifically relate this to the decaying of the body of Christ during His three days in the grave. They are very strong in declaring that Jesus' body did not experience any form of returning to dust. When the blood stops circulating to the cells of the body, the decaying process begins in the body. Some believe this did not happen to Christ. I have not been able to embrace this concept! It violates the focus of Peter's sermon. Peter is explaining Pentecost. Jesus is the complete explanation or example of the content of Pentecost. What happened to Jesus is taking place in the one hundred and twenty disciples, and is promised to you. This would mean I would not need to be embalmed when I die for my body will never experience decay. But that is not true. Peter expresses that it was not even true for King David (Acts 2:29).

However, the main difficulty is basing this truth on this passage and especially the Greek word translated *corruption*. This same word is used by Luke in his Gospel account. Jesus is instructing His disciples not to worry. He said, "*Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys* (Luke 12:33). In the revelation of the second trumpet in the Book of the Revelation, we see the same word. *And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed* (Revelation 8:9). In our text in the Book of Acts, one must see this word in this same way. The focus is not on the body not decaying, but upon the entire destructive power of death (*Hades*). The focus is on the liberation from the destruction that is brought about by death. This is further verified in Paul's sermon when he said, "*And that He raised Him from the dead, no more to return to corruption,*" (Acts 13:34).

The Messiah is once again declaring the depth of intimacy found in the communion of the fullness of the Holy Spirit. There is no chance of destruction for the one who is filled with the Spirit of Christ. The core of every cell of his being is throbbing with the life of God. The intimacy is so deep He will not abandon the believer, nor give him destruction. Our total confidence and hope is found here. As this was experienced by Jesus, so this is now promised to us. The oneness Jesus had with the Father, we are now to experience with Him. Every circumstance of life must be faced with the awareness of His presence. He will not abandon us nor give us destruction!