

“God’s Calendar”

Luke 24:44-53

Nowadays despite the use of smartphones that come with a digital calendar which we use more like a personal agenda than a calendar, most of us still have a calendar hanging from a kitchen wall where we mark with a red pen all the important events in the year, like birthdays, vacation time, doctors’ appointments, and so forth.

This makes me wonder if God keeps a calendar. I think He does, probably not like the one we have hanging on a kitchen wall, made up of twelve pages, one for each month of the year, with little squares for each day. No, because God in His wisdom and knowledge of everything has planned events in history according to a wonderful timetable for His creation, which we can call “God’s Calendar”.

What this helps us to understand is that there are things in life that we want to happen *when* we want it and *how* we want it. The truth is that we need to give God time to reveal His mysteries to us. Give yourself time to be silent and quiet before Him, waiting to receive, through the Spirit, the assurance of His presence with you, His power working in you, because his time, agenda and calendar for us may be different than ours.

Look, for example, at the Gospel story for this morning, how it happened and when it happened. The day of the Lord’s ascension was surely marked on that Calendar, it was exactly Forty days after his resurrection. Forty days is not a coincidence, forty days and forty nights in the wilderness for our Lord Jesus, forty days and forty nights of the great flood in the story of Noah, forty years in the wilderness for the Hebrew people after they left Egypt.

It seems that in God’s calendar there were some squares marked with a red pen. But there is more in this Gospel that was marked with a red pen on God’s Calendar. That is the Day of “Pentecost”. On that day, as we all know, the disciples received the Power of the Holy Spirit in the form of Wind and Tongues of fire that gave them the power of speaking and proclaiming the Good News of Jesus in different languages to all the foreigners that had come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Religious Festival of Pentecost.

A festival that commemorated God's gift of the Ten Commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai, a festival that also celebrated the offerings from the first Harvest of Wheat, all this is what Pentecost was about. That was the time chosen and set by God to clothe the disciples with Power as our Lord Jesus had promised. This shows that the prerogative of setting the time to fulfill God's promises rests on God alone, not on the disciples and neither on any of us.

Imagine how wonderful it would have been if at the same time that the Lord Jesus was lifted up in the air on his way to heaven, the disciples would have seen the Holy Spirit descending from Heaven, meeting and greeting the Lord Jesus in mid-air and then descending upon the disciples, clothing them with power as it happened on Pentecost. What a view that would have been, what a moment to contemplate and treasure forever in the memories and hearts of those disciples. But again, God's calendar is not our calendar, God's agenda is not our agenda, God's time is not our time.

God alone knows the perfect time, the perfect moment to manifest his power, to steer our lives in new directions, to bless us and to surprise us with his perfect plans.

The disciples learned this in a big way, at a time when all the streets of Jerusalem were crowded and buzzing with people from all over the ancient world and they were gathered in a small room and without the physical presence of the Resurrected Lord Jesus with them, the power of God appeared to them in the wind and fire transforming them into messengers of his Gospel. We see why forty days after his resurrection was the perfect time for the Lord to ascend to heaven and Pentecost was the right time, the perfect occasion for God to fulfill his promise.

We cannot read these Gospel stories without thinking about our own stories, our own life calendar. Perhaps there have been those crucial moments and events in our lives when it felt that the timing was not the perfect one, too early or too late, or why what we prayed or hoped for or expected didn't happen or hasn't happened yet? Did God forget his red pen? Did He lose your calendar? We all have asked these questions at one time or another.

Despite our doubts, we still believe and trust that God is in control, that God has a plan for us and that in the mystery of life, God's time and calendar is always right, even though we don't see it.

We have learned what the disciples learned, that is, that even though we are without Jesus' physical presence, we are never without the presence of his Spirit. The Spirit that guides us, protects us, helps us and teaches us to grow in faith and as God's loving and caring people. The Spirit teaches us to connect all the lines, the ups and downs, the twists and turns, trusting that God is always in control, trusting that God is still marking with a red pen on the little squares of our calendars, until the very day when we have to say our final goodbye.

On the day of the Lord's Ascension, He and the Disciples went different ways, Jesus went to heaven and the disciples went back to Jerusalem. Ten Days later, Jesus and the disciples, through the gift and power of the Holy Spirit, met again, his promised was fulfilled. Did the disciples want that power to come to them a day or two after the Lord Jesus made that promise? Probably they did. However, it happened not in their time but in God's time, because even though we don't always see it, God's time is always right, always perfect. Amen.