

SUNDAY SCHOOL NOTES May 23 2021 : An amazing gift from God

In the days of the Old Testament God chose special people who would act as ‘links’ between the people and himself. These included people like Abraham, Moses, and Joshua.. Then he sent his son, Jesus to represent him. And just before he died Jesus told his disciples the most exciting news ever: from that time on everyone would be able to link directly with God. No-one needed to rush around to find a special person to talk to God for them. Instead everyone would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Now when we get gifts they are usually wrapped up in some way (perhaps just with a ribbon (eg dog or car which one couldn’t actually make into a parcel). But how do you wrap up a Spirit and how will people know they have got a gift like that?

So God did something special so everyone for all time would know that the gift had been given. Hundreds of years ago on this very day, he showed the Spirit gift by sending flames and wind and an extra gift of languages. It was very dramatic – and the disciples knew the gift, the Spirit, was there. And as they accepted the gift, they were indicating that they were God’s people. I am sure whenever the wind blew in a gust or they saw a flame flicker they remembered God’s gift and their promise.

God wraps the present differently each time he gives it.

If you read the Bible you will see that God gave his present in different ways. But think of Abraham heard a voice telling him to pack up and go. Moses was called through a burning bush. God spoke to Joshua promising to be with him and telling him to be strong. Balaam was spoken to by a donkey! Jonah had an adventure in a big fish! Isaiah was in the temple and he says that he saw the Lord, high and lifted up, filling the temple. He knew he had been chosen because an angel touched his lips with a hot coal to purify them so they could carry God’s messages! He didn’t get burnt because this wasn’t ordinary fire. Maybe the prophet Ezekiel thought like an engineer for he was called in a way that was more mechanical. As he stood next to a river, he saw a storm cloud with a chariot throne with wheels turning in all directions – he fell flat on his face and then God told him to get up for God was sending him to warn the people to obey him. For little Samuel the call came through a voice in the darkness.

Each of these people was called to huge adventure. This was just like the disciples when they accept Jesus’ call to follow him. They too set out on an adventure. Some of it was nice and

some was horrid. But they found great joy in serving Jesus. God needs us to be his hands and feet, but the Holy Spirit is closer to us than breathing, nearer than hands and feet. He is our Comforter and Guide.

What about you? Maybe this is your special occasion? Maybe you are feeling ‘stirred up’ now. Is God calling you to follow him? Are you going to accept God’s gift?

Readings:

Monday: John 14: 18, 25-29

Tuesday: Acts 2:1-8

Wednesday: Acts 2: 14-17

Thursday: Acts 2: 37-39

Friday: Hebrews 8:10-12 (the ‘house of Israel’ means ‘God’s people’)