

THE EPHESUS EXPRESS

JOTTINGS OF JOEL ben JOSES, roving correspondent. Anyone who read the Galilean Gazette after Passover in Jerusalem, will know that amazing events took place there, regarding a young Rabbi called Jesus. After Crucifixion, he rose from the dead!!!

Even some of us cynical journalists turned into believers, although the authorities did their best to cover up with other stories. My reporting caused offence to some, and I retreated to a village home where some of Jesus' friends made me very welcome. Apparently, before Jesus left them, to return to his Heavenly Father, he had told them to wait in Jerusalem for the gift promised to them by his Father. They wondered if this meant restoring Israel to the glorious kingdom it had been centuries before. Good question when you think about it. But, no, the gift would be the power of the Holy Spirit, and they would witness to Jesus in Jerusalem, the provinces and to the ends of the Earth. The last bit will no doubt be left to future generations. If some clever person discovers how to build ships out of metal and finds how to control them in storms and dead calm, and steer them when you cannot see the sky for fog, then the good news of Jesus should travel fast. There might be alien lands and peoples out there, over the horizons, but communication would present serious problems.

Keep reading. There's more! Every day, we quietly joined the 11 in the upstairs room in Jerusalem.

I must explain that Jesus originally chose 12 eleven disciples, as Rabbis do, but one called Judas got his lines twisted. He tried to force Jesus into his own idea of a Messiah, by betraying his whereabouts to the authorities. When to his horror, he saw everything had gone wrong, he threw back the blood money and hanged himself. I understand the money was used to buy the field involved, as that is now ceremonially unclean. The others were so hurt by Judas that they detest even the sound of the name. The other Judas now uses his other name, Thaddeus, I think. After that, the 11 cast lots to make up the numbers to 12. I think that the Lord God does not allow that method any more, and that he has his own replacement in mind, but we shall see. Watch this column for further developments.....

Well, about six weeks after Jesus' restoration to life, there were about one hundred believers crammed into the room in Jerusalem. I was a bit late that day so do not know what was going, on but I certainly remember what happened next. Going up the stairs I was nearly knocked backwards by what seemed to be a hurricane shaking the house. Good job they were all sitting down in the room! There seemed to be a great blaze of light, even brighter than the great minora in the Temple Courts, yet no one was hurt. The blaze separated into what I can only call tongues of fire, and settled on each man

and woman there, old and young. I do not expect ever to see anything like it again, but who knows? God moves in mysterious ways these days. Come to think of it, He always did. We have forgotten. And then..... as the Holy Spirit filled them, all spoke in different languages. And if that was not enough, the languages matched the crowds who quickly gathered to experience the amazing sights and sounds. These were mainly God fearing Jews, coming from all the nations we know about, and staying on for Pentecost. Now, that explains how one day, Jesus' followers will be able to take the good news to the aliens who might be over the horizon.

Then to my astonishment, Peter of all people stood up to preach. Whatever had happened to him, the one who denied all knowledge of Jesus, when put to the test? The cynics laughed, saying he was drunk. I might have joined in at one time, but not now I have met Jesus. Peter now has a sense of humour. "At this time of the day?", he laughed. The Jews have a late breakfast! This Holy Spirit must be very powerful. I wonder if he could do that for me? That day, more than 3,000 people were baptised. I was one of them! Now, I intend to ask the Holy Spirit to inspire me as a journalist so that my reports will be high in integrity and ones that Jesus would approve.

Joel ben Joses.

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