

- A Study In Acts -

Chapter Two – Coming of Power and the First Gospel Sermon

ACTS 2:19-21:

In our last lesson, we began to look into the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel and that now the Spirit is being poured out on all flesh (2:17). We demonstrated that it was being poured out in the [last days]; which was a designation of the reign of the Messiah, and this coincides with His being on His throne, which will be part of this first Gospel sermon (2:36).

In our last lesson, we also looked at the outline of Joel's prophecy –

- Repentance demanded prior to the pouring out of the Spirit – **Joel 2:18-27**.
- The pouring out of the Spirit – **Joel 2:28-32**.
- After the pouring out of the Spirit, judgment would come on Israel and then the nations – **3:1-16a**.
- Finally, God would bless His people – **3:16b-21**.

This would be an effective demonstration of the lay out of the New Testaments format –

- John the Baptist and Jesus coming to the Jews demanding repentance in preparation for the coming of the kingdom – **Matthew 3:2; Mark 1:14-15**.
- After the death, resurrection, and the ascension of the Lord to His throne; the pouring out of the Spirit to all mankind would begin – **Acts 1:8; 2:17-47**.
- After the pouring out of the Spirit, judgment would come on Israel – **Acts 3:19-26**; and on the nations – **2 Thessalonians 1:6-10**.
- Finally, God will bless His people – **Revelation 21:1-3**.

As we now continue this lesson, additional language will be rendered concerning the judgments to come.

Text #1:

Acts 2:19-21 *“I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. 21 And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.”*

Also see: **Joel 2:28-32**.

Signs and Wonders: As we noted in the last lesson, the Holy Spirit would be poured out via human agency; which would come through the Apostles of Christ (**1 Corinthians 1:21; 2:10-16**). In addition, we learned in the first chapter that the Spirit would also testify of Christ – **John 15:26**. The Spirit would alongside of the word; confirm the word of the apostles by signs and wonders – **Mark 16:19-20**.

As everything God establishes there is order and purpose. This is true with the signs and wonders that would follow the pouring out of the Spirit of God; they would confirm that it was of God! The purpose of the signs and wonders spoken of through **Joel** would additionally introduce the judgments that would follow the pouring out of the Spirit on all mankind.

The language of **verses 19 and 20**, are all prophetic illustrations of judgments leading up to the coming of the [**Day of the Lord**].

We have discussed this language in our study of the **Gospel of Luke**; particularly in **chapter 21:25-28** (the Lord used this same prophetic language to illustrate the judgments to come upon Jerusalem). Here are some passages that demonstrate the use of this terminology in the context of coming judgments:

- God's judgment pronounced on Babylon.

Isaiah 13:9-10 “Behold, the day of the LORD comes, Cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, To lay the land desolate; And He will destroy its sinners from it. **10** For the stars of heaven and their constellations Will not give their light; The sun will be darkened in its going forth, And the moon will not cause its light to shine.”

- God's judgment on Judah.

Jeremiah 4:23-26 “I beheld the earth, and indeed *it was* without form, and void; And the heavens, they *had* no light. **24** I beheld the mountains, and indeed they trembled, And all the hills moved back and forth. **25** I beheld, and indeed *there was* no man, And all the birds of the heavens had fled. **26** I beheld, and indeed the fruitful land *was* a wilderness, And all its cities were broken down At the presence of the LORD, By His fierce anger.”

- God's judgment on Egypt.

Ezekiel 32:6-8 “I will also water the land with the flow of your blood, *Even to the mountains*; And the riverbeds will be full of you. **7** When *I* put out your light, I will cover the heavens, and make its stars dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, And the moon shall not give her light. **8** All the bright lights of the heavens I will make dark over you, And bring darkness upon your land,' Says the Lord GOD.”

Day of the Lord: These signs, as given, come prior to a specific event, “**The great and awesome day of the Lord**”. This is also specific prophetic language demonstrating that not only would the Spirit be poured out on all mankind for the purpose of revelation, but also for judgment! We find this descriptive term used in the Old Testament prophets often:

Isaiah 2:12 “For the day of the LORD of hosts *Shall come* upon everything proud and lofty, Upon everything lifted up— And it shall be brought low”

See also: **Isaiah 13:13; 34:8; Jeremiah 25:33; 30:7; 46:10; Ezekiel 7:19; Joel 2:11; Zephaniah 1:14; Malachi 4:1.**

As the Spirit would be poured out on all mankind, one of the primary functions of the revelation would be that of Judgment! The commission of the Apostles of Jesus was for them to preach the Gospel to every creature (**Mark 16:15**), one of the results of that preaching would be: **“He who does not believe will be condemned”** (**Mark 16:16b**).

Calls on the Name of the Lord: We will now be introduced, from **Joel's** prophecy being fulfilled, to the second function of the pouring out of the Spirit on all mankind – salvation!

First, there are at least thirteen Greek words used in scripture to describe, **call, called,** and **calling**. Only one of these words is a passive designation and describes what one might be called by (as in I am called David). The rest describe, almost universally, a vocation! They describe what the Greeks considered the middle voice. This was universally understood to be a demonstrated action in one's life. To literally be called to do something specific. It is here used in this specific sense. To call on the name of the Lord, is to make the name of the Lord one's vocation, profession, and complete existence. Ananias gave this same command to Paul as a post-baptism expectation, note:

Acts 22:16 **“And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”**

Second, we have to appreciate that the pouring out of the Spirit, which will be ultimately demonstrated in the Gospel's message to the world, in fact contains that which allows all men to **“Call on the name of the Lord”**. The Apostle Paul would recognize that God had chosen before-hand those who would come to Him by the [vehicle] of sanctification facilitated by belief in the truth (not a specific group of people but a specific method for people – **2 Thessalonians 2:13**), note:

2 Thessalonians 2:14 **“to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

This demonstrates the second part of the commissioned Gospel, which the Apostles were sent to preach to every creature (**Mark 16:15**); **“He who believes and is baptized will be saved”** (**Mark 16:16a**).

Joel, as a prophet of God was privileged to see the events unfolding now on this Day of Pentecost. He would be one of the prophets spoken of by the Apostle Peter, note:
1 Peter 1:10-12 **“Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you, 11 searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. 12 To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.”**