

- A Study in Acts -

Chapter Two – Coming of Power and the First Gospel Sermon

ACTS 2:16-18:

The Apostles of Jesus Christ, having waited in Jerusalem as they had been instructed; have received the promise of the Spirit. This was testified of by the great sound of a rushing mighty wind, which drew attention from all who stood by, and by these uneducated Galileans speaking accurately the twelve or more dialects of the devout Jews gathered for Pentecost.

In every aspect, Luke records these happenings from the hearer's point of view, as those who clearly understood the words of the Apostles in their own tongue, new them to speak of the “**Wonderful works of God**”. Those who heard and did not recognize some of the dialects being spoken then became scoffers and accused them of being full of strong wine.

Peter stood with the eleven before the gathered crowds and dispelled the scoffer's accusations, as it was only “**the third hour of the day**” (about 9 AM). He is now going to identify exactly what is happening before them this day, and this is where we will pick up in this lesson.

Text #1:

Acts 2:16-18 “But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

17 ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. 18 And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.

See also: **Joel 2:28-32.**

New Testament Prophets:

As Peter and the eleven stand up and begin to acknowledge the crowd, the first thing they want to make perfectly clear is that all that is happening right this moment in their presence, is the fulfillment of prophecy.

Peter and the eleven, as New Testament prophets are stamping a clear signature on these events as having been testified to prior, “**But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel**”

As everything else that Peter and the eleven will state this day, which is being established by the Lord, we should clearly understand just as Peter is telling the Jews this day, whatever else that Joel was sent to say to God's people then; this part was specifically for this very day!

In The Last Days:

Upon comparing this text with that of the prophet Joel's, we see that as Peter quotes from Joel, he adds a uniquely different time stamp. Joel's account states that “**It shall come to pass afterward**” – **Joel 2:28.**

Joel's work as a mouthpiece for God had two very specific topics:

- A demonstration of God's righteous judgments if repentance is not made (the Locusts are a sign of a greater judgment to come if repentance is not made). So, **chapters 1-2:17** call for the rending of their hearts to God – **2:13.**
- The second point or topic is the glories of God's causes to come, **2:18-3:21.**

- Repentance will be demanded before the pouring out of the Spirit on mankind – **2:18- 27**; this will coincide with the repentance that both John and Jesus preached prior to the coming of the kingdom and in preparation for it – **Matthew 3:2; Mark 1:14-15**.
- **“It shall come to pass afterward”** in **2:28**, signifies that after the repentance that will be demanded, the pouring out of the Spirit will come – **2:28-32**. This signified that this hope was to come at a later time to those Joel spoke to, and after repentance would be demanded in preparation. Much of the hope that was given to Israel was given in a future tense by the coming of the Messiah and His kingdom (see: **Isaiah 49:6**).
- After the pouring out of the Spirit on all mankind, judgment would come to Israel and the nations – **3:1-16a**; and God would glorify and bless His people – **3:16b-21**. This would be the effective work of the Spirit being poured out, note:
Mark 16:15-16 “And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”

All this helps us understand that Joel's prophecy was spoken towards events to come. Peter begins to quote Joel in fulfillment by using a different designation, **“It shall come to pass in the last days, says God”**.

The **“Last Days”** used by Peter is an Old Testament designation for the coming reign of the Messiah (see: **Isaiah 2:2; Micah 4:1**). We would see other New Testament writers also use this same designation for the days of the reign of the Messiah, note:

2 Timothy 3:1 “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come”

Hebrews 1:2 “has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds”

Peter is establishing in the fulfillment of the prophecies of Joel that the reign of the Messiah has come, and its beginning is now!

On All Flesh:

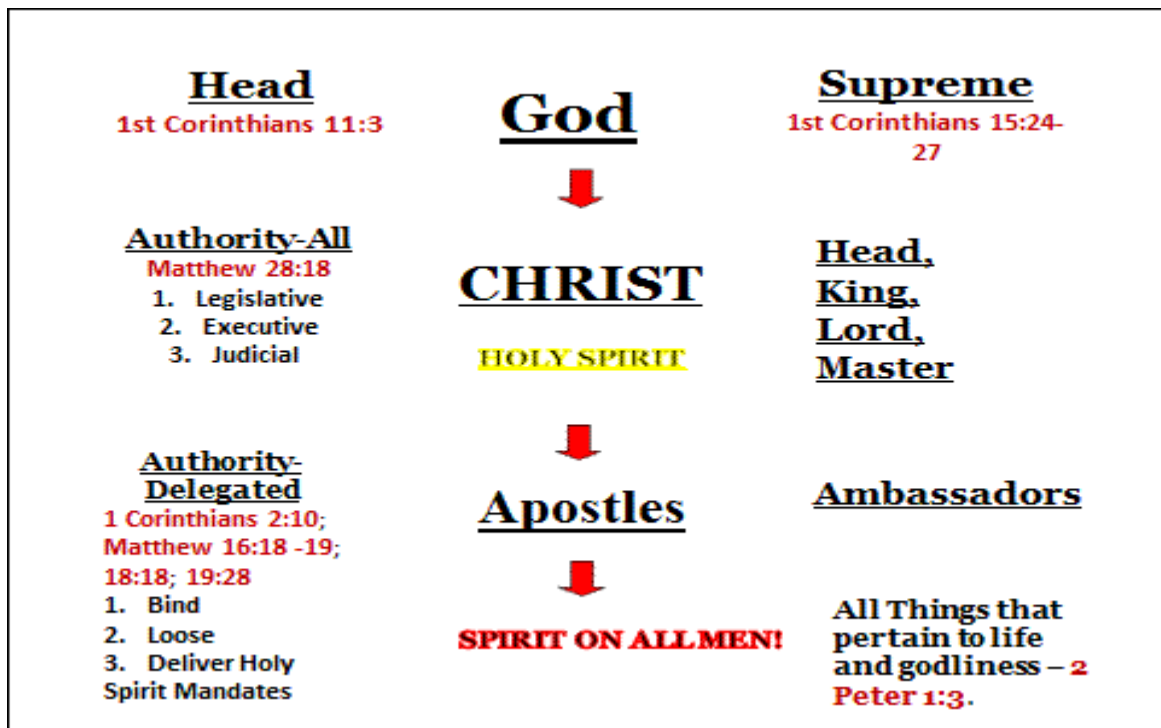
This establishes first that not only the Jews would be the recipients of the pouring out of the Spirit, but **“All flesh”**. This would be referred to again by Peter in his answer to their question of **“What must we do?”** (**2:37**). Peter would state that the promise was to them (the Jews) and to all who would be **“afar off”** (the Gentiles – **2:39**). The promise was the great promise made first to Abraham, **“And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed”** (**Genesis 12:3**), fulfilled in Christ (**Galatians 3:15-18, 29**). This would be the receipt of the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Gospel of Jesus Christ that would be **“the power of God to salvation”**; and commanded to be preached to every creature – **Mark 16:15-16**.

The remainder of **verses 17-18** demonstrates two very important issues:

First, there will be no distinction of age, gender, or special order or class, as God will use everyone capable of being taught to further the pouring out of the Spirit (all saints being royal priests through Christ – **1 Peter 2:9**). This is not to say that God wouldn't establish an order for the body of Christ (the church); **1 Corinthians 11:3**. This is saying the same thing that Jesus said, **“And they will all be taught by God”** – **John 6:45; Isaiah 54:13**.

Men, women, young, and old would be commanded to go and make disciples of all nations (**Matthew 28:19-20**), as well as continue to reveal the good news, starting with the Apostles, then continue through the laying on of their hands (**Acts 8:17; 19:6; Romans 1:11**) and flowing from their instructed doctrine (**Acts 2:42**). We see this in the unfolding of the book of Acts – **5:14; 6:7-8; 8:4-5; 11:34-36; 11:27-28; 15:32; 16:1-2; 21:8-10**.

Second, every vehicle of revelation would additionally be used; prophecy, dreams, and visions (all part of the gifts that would be bestowed by the laying on of the Apostles hands – **1 Corinthians 12:7-11**). All of these tools would be unified to speak by a singular source (**Hebrews 1:2**), and to reveal a singular faith (**Ephesians 4:5**). This pouring out of the Spirit would provide for all that received its instruction, the mind of Christ – **1 Corinthians 2:10-16** (once again, starting with the Apostles of Christ); His doctrine – **2 John 9**.



This chart demonstrates the pouring out of the Spirit on all men and the universal purpose (the instruction of the Gospel of Jesus Christ till all came to the same “**Unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God**” **Ephesians 4:13**; which would be what would be achieved in the completion of the written word). It will be in this clear understanding that Paul will instruct Timothy that through “**All scripture**” the man of God will be made “**Complete**” – **2 Timothy 3:16-17**. **Joel 2:29** “**And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.**”

All the tools that would be brought to bear, would complete the “**How**”, God would “**Put My laws into their mind and write them on their hearts**” – **Hebrews 8:10**.

1 Corinthians 1:21 “For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.”