

## 5. Peter Showed How the Ministry of the Holy Spirit Was Promised

In our last topic, we saw that Christ sent the Holy Spirit into the life of each of the followers of Christ on the Day of Pentecost. Christ had promised the disciples that when He went back to heaven He would send the Holy Spirit. He also told the disciples that they were to wait until He sent the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit would give them power from on high. In our topic today, we will see that Peter explained to the Jews that God had promised to send the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament.

In Acts 2:15-21, we read, ““For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is *only* the third hour of the day. But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: “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. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord. And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”” Here, we see that Peter began his message to those who had gathered by reminding them that Joel had prophesied that God would send the Holy Spirit in the last days.

The “last days” includes the period from the first coming of Christ until He returns to rule on the earth for one thousand years. The full fulfillment of this prophecy will come when Christ returns to rule on the earth because at that time Christ will pour out the Holy Spirit on all flesh. However, the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost was a picture of this greater fulfillment that will come in the future. Since everyone who will enter into the kingdom in that day will have their faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit will be poured out on all people. On the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was poured out on all who believed. Later, this same thing happened at the house of Cornelius when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Gentiles. Acts 10:45 says, “And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.” The Jews with Peter were astonished to see that all of the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius had the Holy Spirit poured out on them because they all believed as Peter explained the Gospel.

In the time of the tribulation, just before Christ returns to set up His kingdom, God will do the things that are recorded in these verses. Visions and dreams were used more often in the Old Testament, especially in the prophets when they were writing about the future. God will cause this to happen again during the tribulation. During the tribulation, God is also going to show signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth. Revelation records the presence of blood, fire and vapor of smoke. The Gospels, especially Matthew, also record the fact that these things will happen. God will offer salvation to all who will call on the name of the Lord during the tribulation. When Christ comes to rule, He will pour out His Spirit on all flesh because only believers will be left on the earth. Then, in the kingdom, both men and women will prophesy by speaking the Word of God.

Growing Godly Family Series – Helping Our Children Develop a Vision for the World 5. “Peter Showed How the Ministry of the Holy Spirit Was Promised”

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In Acts 2:22-24, we read, “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know--Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.” After using the passage from Joel to illustrate the fact that what was happening that day was a small picture of what would happen when Christ returned to rule in the future, Peter immediately began to focus on Christ.

Peter began his main message by speaking of the fact that most of those who were listening that day were descendants of Israel (Jacob), the younger son of Isaac. Although they had come from many different nations, they were Jews because they were descendants of Israel. To introduce Christ, Peter chose to use his earthly name, Jesus of Nazareth. When Jesus had come riding into Jerusalem on a donkey eight weeks earlier, Matthew 21:10-11 says, “And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, ‘Who is this?’ So the multitudes said, ‘This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee.’” Since most of the people who were at the Feast of Pentecost had also been in Jerusalem for the Passover, everyone there had probably heard Jesus called Jesus of Nazareth. As a result, they all knew about whom Peter was talking.

The word translated “approved” means *to exhibit or make clearly seen*. Here, we see that God had clearly shown that He wanted everyone to know that Christ was His Son and showed His approval by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did through Him. Just a few weeks before His crucifixion, Christ said in John 11:43-44, “Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come forth!’ And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, ‘Loose him, and let him go.’” The Father had also verified His approval of Christ by many other miracles, wonders and signs.

We also see that Peter focused both on the plan of God and the rebellion of mankind. Jesus was delivered for crucifixion by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God. In 2 Timothy 1:9, we read, “Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.” Here, we see that the Father planned that He would show His grace to us through Christ. This purpose was determined before the world was ever created because God knew that all would sin. The word translated “foreknowledge” means *forethought or arranged in advance*. The Father and Christ planned in advance how Christ would pay for sin before creation.

Although the death of Christ to pay for sin was planned by the Father and Christ before the world began, at the same time, we also see the rebellion of mankind. Peter pointed out that the Jewish religious leaders had taken Christ and by wicked hands had put Christ to death. In Matthew 27:24-25, we read, “When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, ‘I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it.’ And all the people answered and said, ‘His blood be on us and on

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our children.” Here, we see that the Jewish religious leaders showed their wickedness by saying that the blood of Christ was on their hands and the hands of their children. They were the ones who had pressured Pilate to crucify Christ and put Him to death.

Then, Peter came to the real heart of his message as He spoke of the fact that the Father had raised Christ from the dead. The founder of every religion has died. However, none of those founders of various religions have risen from the dead. Many of their followers go to visit the tomb where their founder is buried. Dead men can offer no help to anyone. However, the Father raised Christ from the dead. Satan had the power of death and only Christ could deliver us from that power. Hebrews 2:14-15 says, “Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” The Father loosed Christ from the pains of death.

We see that death could not hold Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:20-21 says, “But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead.” Christ defeated death by His resurrection. This is exactly what Christ promised in John 2:19 where we read, “Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’” Then John 2:22 adds, “Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.” The disciples remembered what Christ had promised and we see that the resurrection was the theme of the message of Peter as the words that he spoke on the Day of Pentecost are recorded here.

Peter backed up what he said by quoting from what David wrote in Psalm 16:8-11. Those verses say, “I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” Here, Peter made it very clear to all the Jews that the resurrection of Christ had been prophesied by David nearly one thousand years earlier.

The soul of Christ did not remain in the grave. The Father did not allow the body of Christ to decay and rot. Instead, David had prophesied that Christ would have victory over death. Christ would be raised back to life. Christ would experience joy in the presence of the Father forever. Christ would also be at the right hand of the Father. Here, we are reminded of the fact that our message is also the resurrection of Christ. He has defeated death and is alive. We want to help our physical and spiritual children understand the importance of sharing the message of the resurrection with others. Without that message, people have no hope for the future. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to present the message of the resurrection with boldness.