

~ACTS~

Lesson 7- Call upon the Name of the Lord and be Saved

We are continuing our study through the book of Acts, and we are in chapter 2. So far, we have seen the disciples be filled with the Holy Spirit and they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. And last week we learned that as they spoke in tongues, these tongues were a sign to the unbeliever, 1 Cor 14:21-22. And that day we saw the gift of tongues used to expose the hearts of the people in the crowd. There were thousands of Jews there that day on Pentecost, and the tongues made it clear who had a hard heart versus those who had a believer's heart. Those who had a believer's heart, as verse 11 says, heard them speaking in their own languages the wonderful works of God. "*But others of a different kind*", ἕτεροι δὲ, these others who had a hard heart, "*mocking said you are full of new wine.*" And that was the purpose of the gift of tongues that Day. It was a sign to expose the hearts of unbelievers. So now, those who had a believer's heart, were then ready to hear the Word of God preached to them, **Acts 2:14-24**. And in verse 14, Peter stands up and begins speaking to everyone there...

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.

14 Σταθεὶς δὲ Πέτρος σὺν τοῖς ἑνδεκά, ἐπήρε τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἀπεφθέγγετο αὐτοῖς, Ἄνδρες Ἰουδαῖοι, καὶ οἱ κατοικοῦντες Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἅπαντες, τοῦτο ὑμῖν γνωστὸν ἔστω, καὶ ἐνωτίσασθε τὰ ῥήματά μου.

Peter preaches the first Christian sermon in history. And remember, both groups of people were still in the crowd, the hard hearted who rejected God's Word and those with a believer's heart who desired to know more. And notice the drastic difference and boldness that Peter has, now that he is empowered with the Spirit to preach the Gospel. Just 53 days ago, Peter couldn't even admit to a little girl that he was a follower of Jesus, Lk 22:54-57, and even shortly after the resurrection it seems there was still some trepidation because you remember in John 20:19 it says "*the doors were locked for fear of the Jews.*" These same hostile Jews are now standing in front of him mocking him, but Peter, being full of the Spirit, begins to speak boldly to the crowd and says, "*let this be known to you, and heed my words.*" And notice his response is first to these hard-hearted unbelievers. He says in verse 15...

15 For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.

15 οὐ γάρ, ὡς ὑμεῖς ὑπολαμβάνετε, οὗτοι μεθύουσιν· ἔστι γὰρ ὥρα τρίτη τῆς ἡμέρας.

Peter begins by refuting the claims of the hard-hearted unbelievers. He shuts that false accusation down immediately and then he goes on to explain the Truth in verse 16...

16 But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

16 ἀλλὰ τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ εἰρημένον διὰ τοῦ προφήτου Ἰωήλ.

Peter answers the question from verse 13, "*whatever does this mean?*" Peter answers this by expounding the Word of God from the prophet Joel and David. Peter begins preaching a fully articulated sermon, and he quotes from three different OT prophecies to explain what had just happened in Jerusalem. I believe these were some of the Scriptures that Jesus had expounded to them in the 40 days after His resurrection. But notice the working and power of the Holy Spirit here. Because even though Peter had this understanding of the Old Testament prophecies, it was the dunamis power of God working in and out through him that enabled Peter to preach the Word to those 3,000 people. This boldness is coming from the power of the Holy Spirit. This is Acts 1:8 in action, "*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me...*" And as we dive into Peter's sermon, that's exactly what he does, he preaches Jesus. Notice the focus is on Jesus, not the Spirit. Not to diminish what the Spirit is doing, but even the Holy Spirit would agree, it's not about Him, it's always about Jesus, Jn 16:13-15. This is the objective of the Holy Spirit; to bear witness of the risen Christ because Jesus is the only Way by

which we are saved, Acts 4:12. The entire book of Acts is this way. Time and time again, this was the Apostle's message: the risen Jesus Christ. Likewise, this is all we need to preach. Just like Paul, we preach Christ and Him crucified and that's it. Jesus Himself said, "if I be lifted up, I will draw all peoples to Myself." John 12:32. It's not our job to draw people to the Church. Our job is to preach Christ and Him crucified, lift up the name of Jesus, edify the body of Christ, and be witnesses to Him. That's the call of the Christian. He will draw people to Himself and add to the Church, Acts 2:47.

So lets look at Joel's prophecy...

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.

19 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.'

17 Καὶ ἔσται ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις, λέγει ὁ Θεός, ἐκχεῶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός μου ἐπὶ πᾶσαν σάρκα· καὶ προφητεῦσουσιν οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν καὶ αἱ θυγατέρες ὑμῶν, καὶ οἱ νεανίσκοι ὑμῶν ὄρασεις ὄψονται, καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ὑμῶν ἐνύπνια ἐνυπνιασθήσονται·

18 καὶ γε ἐπὶ τοὺς δούλους μου καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς δούλας μου ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις ἐκχεῶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός μου, καὶ προφητεῦσουσι.

19 καὶ δώσω τέρατα ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἄνω, καὶ σημεῖα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς κάτω, αἷμα καὶ πῦρ καὶ ἀτμίδα καπνοῦ·

20 ὁ ἥλιος μεταστραφήσεται εἰς σκότος, καὶ ἡ σελήνη εἰς αἷμα, πρὶν ἢ ἔλθειν τὴν ἡμέραν Κυρίου τὴν μεγάλην καὶ ἐπιφανῆ·

21 καὶ ἔσται, πᾶς ὃς ἂν ἐπικαλέσῃται τὸ ὄνομα Κυρίου σωθήσεται.

Peter is quoting Joel 2:28-32 LXX. When you read Joel's entire prophecy in Joel chapters 2-3, you will find that it spans from the outpouring of the Spirit all the way through the Millennial reign of Jesus. But Peter, being led of the Spirit, stops in the middle of verse 32, just before final Judgement and the Millennial Kingdom. And Peter does this, being led of the Spirit, because he is only focusing on the time of Salvation. The time when "**whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.**"

So Peter explains to them that they have just witnessed the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as Joel had prophesied, which now begins a period of time that spans from the Day of Pentecost, through the entire Age of the Church, up until the Second Coming of Jesus Christ at the end of the 7-year Tribulation. This time period is known as "the last days." Notice how Peter begins. He says, "**it shall come to pass in the last days...**" "The last days... the last times... the last hour," these are all Biblical expressions describing the last age of man before final judgement comes in the Day of the Lord, 1 Peter 1:20; Hebrews 1:2; 1 Tim 4:1; 1 John 2:18. And this final age of man will end when Jesus Christ, who is the Word of God, returns in final Judgement at the end of the 7-year Tribulation. Joel's original full prophecy extends into the Millennial reign of Jesus and the restoration of Israel, Joel 3:18, but Peter stops the prophecy just before this at "**the great and awesome day of the LORD,**" and is describing these "last days."

Verses **17-18** are describing the Age of Grace with the Spirit being continually poured out. He says, "**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.**" Notice twice he says I will pour out of My Spirit. This is the Spirit of God poured out from the Father and into us like rivers of living water and it will continue until the Day of the Lord. This is another proof that the gifts of the Spirit have not ceased.

And then verses **19-20** begin foretelling of the events in the 7-year Tribulation. **“¹⁹ 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.** In verses 19-20, Joel is describing the events of the 7-year Tribulation leading up to the revealing of Jesus Christ, **Revelation 6:12-17; Matthew 24:29-31** (at the end of the 7-year Tribulation, Jesus Christ returns in glory and gathers His elect from the four winds. Who is this speaking of? It is not the body of Christ, because all those who have been raptured, and all the Tribulation martyrs are riding down behind Jesus in white horses, Rev 19:14. When Jesus comes back at His Second Coming, the elect, the chosen ones whom He is gathering together are the Jews who are crying out, “Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord!” Matthew 23:39. These are the Jews who have just realized, during the Tribulation, that Jesus is the Messiah and Jesus is gathering them together to return them to their promised land, Ezekiel 37:21; 36:24; 28:25); **Luke 17:28-30.**

The Day when the Son of the Man is revealed is the exact point in time that Joel is speaking of when he says “the great and awesome Day of the Lord.” It is this final culmination of the Judgement in the Day of the Lord when Jesus comes back in Righteous wrath. This word “awesome” is *ἐπιφάνης*-to shine upon gloriously. Paul uses a very similar word, *ἐπιφάνεια*, in 2 Thess 2:8 when he describes Jesus destroying the antichrist when He returns. This is an awesome Day!

The entire age of the Day of the Lord begins when Jesus opens the first seal to the title deed to the earth. This will trigger the 7-year Tribulation period, Rev 6:1; 2 Thess 2:1-8; Dan 9:27. And the entire Day of the Lord time frame will span through the Millennial reign of Jesus, 2 Pet 3:10-13. But here Peter and Joel are speaking of a specific point within the Day of the Lord when Jesus Christ is revealed. When Jesus comes back in Righteous Judgement and wrath on all who do not believe in Him, Revelation 19:11-16.

Why does Peter end this prophecy of Joel with the Second Coming of Jesus? Its because Peter is describing this Day of Salvation. This is the time period in which mankind can **call upon the name of the Lord and be saved.** This is the age we are living in now. But I want to clarify something, because although this is the age of Salvation, this choice for Salvation is only available while a person is physically alive. Once a person dies physically, that person no longer has a choice, Luke 16:26. This is why Paul says **“now is the Day of Salvation.”** 2 Cor 6:2; Heb 3:7-15. Choose today, because we might not have tomorrow. This Day of Salvation is what Peter is describing in this prophecy. And this time of Salvation is from the Day of Pentecost up to the Second Coming of Jesus. But once Jesus is revealed at the end of the Tribulation, He is coming in wrath and final Judgement on all who do not believe. And at that point when He comes, there is no opportunity for living unbelievers to repent and be saved. This is why His Second Coming is described as a thief in the night, **1 Thess 5:1-6.** God has given us a provision to escape this Day entirely, and that provision is called the rapture, the harpazo, *ἄρπάζω*. But the rapture is only for faithful Christians. Jesus is only coming back for His faithful Bride. He is coming back for those who love Him and are expecting His return. Because at the rapture, He is only revealing Himself to those who love Him, **Rev 3:10; Heb 9:28; John 14:21-23; 2 Thess 2:7; Col 3:4.** Those who are focused on the world, and saying “peace and safety,” are not going to be rescued from the wrath to come, **Rev 2:22; 3:3; 1 Thess 5:3;** This is why Paul says, **“for those who are not watching, sudden destruction will come upon them and they shall not escape.”** You don’t want to have any part of this day coming upon you as a thief. but especially the day when Jesus comes in His Glory.

Therefore, now is the Day of Salvation. Now is the time to call upon the name of the Lord and be saved. And even through the 7-year Tribulation, (this is why Joel’s prophecy includes the Tribulation) because even through the terrible wrath and Judgement that will be poured out on unbelievers in that time, there is still opportunity for men to call upon the name of the Lord and be saved while they are still alive. This is made clear all through the book of Revelation. The Bible describes these “Tribulation Martyrs” as “a

great multitude which no one could number, standing before the throne.” Rev 7:9. There are myriads of believers that will come out of the Great Tribulation, but when Jesus Christ returns, anyone who has not accepted Jesus as their Savior, will be Judged by the Word of God, and sentenced to everlasting damnation, **John 12:48**; Rev 19:11; Matt 25:31-46; Dan 12:1-2; Is 11:4-5. Up until this point, it will still be possible to call upon the name of the Lord and be saved, but after this, when He appears, the Word of God will enact final Judgement and there will be no second chances. So if there were one Day out of any day that you would describe as Great and Awesome as Joel says, it would be the Day when Jesus Christ comes back in His glory. But there is good news to all those who believe in Jesus, because all those who have put their trust in Jesus before that Day, will not be condemned, but instead we will be riding down behind Him in glory, **Rev 19:11-16**; Jude 14-15; Is 13:4-5.