

## ***Session 11: The End-Time Outpouring of the Spirit (Joel 2:28-32)***

<sup>28</sup> *It shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. <sup>29</sup> And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. <sup>30</sup> And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood and fire and pillars of smoke. <sup>31</sup> The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. <sup>32</sup> And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, as the LORD has said, among the remnant whom the LORD calls. (Joel 2:28-32)*

### **I. THE PROMISE OF AN OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT**

- A. ***Afterward***: After turning to God with prayer and fasting in corporate wholeheartedness (Joel 2:12-17), God manifests His zeal and compassion (Joel 2:18) in material blessings (agricultural and military victory; Joel 2:19-27) and spiritual blessings (pouring out His Spirit; Joel 2:28-32).  
<sup>28</sup> *It shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh... (Joel 2:28)*
- B. Jesus promised that if His disciples tarried in prayer, the Spirit would endue them with power.  
<sup>49</sup> *Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high. (Lk. 24:49)*  
<sup>8</sup> *You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you... (Acts 1:8)*
- C. In Acts 1-2, the disciples followed the pattern described by Joel as they sought the promise given by Jesus. Thus, they gathered to pray in the upper room. After ten days, on the Feast of Pentecost the Spirit came on them with power (Acts 1:14-2:4). They were probably expecting the Joel 2:28 breakthrough of the Spirit at that time, since Jesus had recently promised it (Lk. 24:49). Peter explained this visitation of the Spirit as being that which was prophesied by Joel (Acts 2:16).  
<sup>14</sup> *Peter ... said to them, “Men of Judea ... let this be known to you ... <sup>15</sup> these are not drunk, as you suppose ... <sup>16</sup> but this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel.” (Acts 2:14-16)*
- D. These ten days of prayer occurred in a strategic, prophetic timing. It was preceded first by the death and resurrection of Jesus and by a dynamic prayer history that included Israel’s greatest intercessors. Jesus and John the Baptist had prayed fervently for God’s blessing to be released as did Anna who prayed for sixty years (Lk. 2:37). In other words, the apostles stepped into a dynamic history of prayer that had been in developed before that Feast of Pentecost had come.
- E. What did Peter mean when he said this is what was spoken of by Joel? What did Joel speak of? Yes, he emphasized the fact that God would pour out the Spirit, but he also emphasized the conditions in which it would occur. Both are a part of the pattern seen in Joel 2. Peter was referring to the whole context of Joel 2, not just the end result of it. Thus, Peter was teaching us not only about the release of the Holy Spirit, but how we are to seek for it.

- F. The Joel 2:12-15 pattern of corporate prayer with fasting has been followed throughout church history resulting in many great revivals. In our day, we must also follow the Joel 2:12-15 pattern. More and more in the Church today are seeing the importance of gathering in corporate intercessory worship until God releases the fullness of His blessing.

## II. THE DOWN PAYMENT OF JOEL'S PROPHECY OCCURRED AT PENTECOST

<sup>28</sup> *I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and daughters shall prophesy... (Joel 2:28)*

- A. God's promise to pour out His Spirit is the most well-known passage in the Book of Joel.
- B. The prophetic promise of the outpouring of the Spirit that Joel prophesied was not completely fulfilled in Peter's generation. The fullness of what Joel prophesied has still not yet happened. This is evidenced by significant differences between Joel 2 and Acts 2. Only a portion of it was fulfilled in Peter's day. Joel said that the sun and the moon would grow dark and signs such as blood and smoke would be seen. The early church did not see these signs.
- C. Joel prophesied of a worldwide outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh or on all nations. In Acts 2, the Spirit only rested on 120 local Jewish believers in Jerusalem, and then on 3,000 who were saved that day. The fullness of Joel's prophecy requires a global dimension.
- D. Peter understood that Joel's prophecy would only be completely fulfilled when Jesus returned to earth to restore all things during the millennial kingdom.

<sup>19</sup> *Repent...that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,* <sup>20</sup> *and that He may send Jesus Christ [Jesus' second coming]...<sup>21</sup> whom heaven must receive [retain] until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-21)*

## III. THE TIMING IN JOEL'S PROPHECY: THE LAST DAYS

- A. Peter said that the outpouring of the Spirit would happen in the last days (Acts 2:17). The last days began with Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension and culminating with Jesus' return. The New Testament writers used the phrase "in the last days" five times and in two different ways. In Acts 2:17 and Hebrews 1:2, the last days began in the first century. In 2 Timothy 3:1 and 2 Peter 3:3, they refer to the generation that the Lord returns. James 5:3 could be used in either way.

<sup>14</sup> *Peter...said to them, "Men of Judea...<sup>15</sup> these are not drunk, as you suppose...<sup>16</sup> But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:<sup>17</sup> 'It shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit...'" (Acts 2:14-17)*

<sup>1</sup> *God ... in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup> has in these last days spoken to us by His Son... (Heb. 1:1-2)*

<sup>1</sup> *But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come... (2 Tim. 3:1)*

<sup>3</sup> *Knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days... (2 Pet. 3:3)*

<sup>3</sup> *Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. (Jas. 5:3)*

- B. Joel prophesied of a worldwide outpouring of the Spirit. When will the fullness of this occur? Joel tells us it will happen “afterwards” (Joel 2:28). The important question is: after what? It is after something specific. Some see the afterwards of v. 28 as a reference to the second coming. This is not possible because Joel makes clear in v. 31 that the prophetic spirit and signs in the heavens occur before the Day of the Lord or the second coming of Jesus.

<sup>28</sup> *And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh...<sup>29</sup> *I will pour out My Spirit in those days...<sup>31</sup> the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD... (Joel 2:28-31)**

- C. In studying the options for what afterwards refers to, it is best to understand it in the context of Joel’s call to fasting and prayer (Joel 2:12-17). In other words, after the times of corporate wholeheartedness, God will pour out His Spirit. It is as though Joel was saying, “When you cry out to the Lord with fasting and prayer, afterwards He will bless you by releasing His Spirit.”
- D. Some commentators link the word afterwards to the passage just prior (Joel 2:21-27), when Joel prophesied of the agricultural blessings and the defeat of northern enemy (Joel 2:20) that God promised Israel in the Millennium. It will be a time in which Israel is never put to shame again (Joel 2:26-27). This will only happen after Jesus returns. However, Joel said in v. 31 that the prophetic spirit with signs in the sky would occur before Jesus returns and the Millennium starts.
- E. Another timing indicator is given when Joel twice used the phrase “in those days” (Joel 2:29; 3:1). This phrase ties together the events prophesied in Joel 2:28-32 into the same time frame as the events prophesied in Joel 3:1-21. The repeated use of this phrase makes clear that the themes in Joel 2 and Joel 3 go together and should not be separated. In other words, there should be no chapter division. Joel spoke of the outpouring as being at the time when Israel is surrounded by the Antichrist’s armies and then is delivered from them. I will develop this in the next chapter.
- <sup>29</sup> *I will pour out My Spirit in those days...<sup>3:1</sup> For behold, in those days and at that time, when I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem,<sup>2</sup> *I will also gather all nations...I will enter into judgment with them there... (Joel 2:29-3:2)**
- F. Since Joel 2 and Joel 3, in the ultimate fulfillment of the prophecy, are in the same time frame, we know that the outpouring of the Spirit will happen in the same time period as when the Lord gathers the captives of Israel from all nations to bring them back to Jerusalem. It will also be in the same time frame in which the Lord assembles all nations to come against Jerusalem so that He might destroy them. In other words, these events occur in the generation the Lord returns.

#### IV. THE INHERITANCE OF THE BODY OF CHRIST: ALL WILL PROPHECY

<sup>28</sup> *I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. (Joel 2:28)*

<sup>31</sup> *For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged. (1 Cor. 14:31)*

A. In Joel's generation, the prophetic anointing had been only been released to a small group in the Old Testament era, usually older Jewish men who were kings, judges, or prophets. However, Joel prophesied that the Spirit would be poured out on all flesh—Jew and Gentile, men and women, young and old. In other words, every believer was to receive the anointing of the Spirit.

B. The only qualifier that Joel made to this all-inclusive promise to "all flesh," is the phrase, "My servants" (Joel 2:29). Thus, the "all flesh" are those who are servants of God.

<sup>29</sup> *On My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit... (Joel 2:29)*

C. Paul quoted Joel 2:32 and then applied it universally to all believers (Rom. 10:12-13).

<sup>12</sup> *There is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord...is rich to all who call on Him. <sup>13</sup> For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved." (Rom. 10:12-13)*

## V. THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

<sup>10</sup> *Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. (Rev. 19:10)*

A. When we interpret Joel's prophecy of the outpouring of the spirit of prophecy in context to the end-time drama then we can see its value in equipping the saints in the end-time harvest and to expose the deception of the Antichrist.

B. Functioning in the prophetic anointing is very important for today but it will an issue of life and death in the Great Tribulation. God's people are to contend for it now with sustained prayer with fasting. Paul exhorts us to seek the greater gifts, especially to prophesy (1 Cor. 12:31; 14:1).

<sup>31</sup> *But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way. (1 Cor. 12:31)*

<sup>1</sup> *Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. (1 Cor. 14:1)*

C. We seek to prophesy because it opens us up to the other gifts of the Spirit. Prophesying encompasses all that is involved in operating in the revelation of the Spirit. The spirit of prophesy is an expression of the spirit of Elijah (Lk. 1:15-17).

D. Prophetic dreams will equip the saints to discern false signs and wonders (Mt. 24:4-5, 11, 24). Dreams will give direction when life and death decisions need to be made in the end times. Jeremiah spoke of God's people receiving prophetic direction to find water or to walk in a straight way instead of walking into calamity

<sup>9</sup> *They shall come with weeping, and with supplications I will lead them. I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters, in a straight way in which they shall not stumble... (Jer. 31:9)*

## VI. PROPHETIC MINISTRY: SIGNS IN THE HEAVEN

<sup>30</sup> *I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood and fire and pillars of smoke.*

<sup>31</sup> *The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. (Joel 2:30-31)*

<sup>10</sup> *The heavens tremble; the sun and moon grow dark, and the stars diminish their brightness. (Joel 2:10)*

<sup>15</sup> *The sun and moon will grow dark, and the stars will diminish their brightness. (Joel 3:15)*

- A. In describing the outpouring of the Spirit in the end times, Joel gave three prophecies to Israel that the sun, moon, and stars would be dramatically altered as supernatural proof that the Messiah was in their midst to rule the nations (Joel 2:10, 30-31; 3:15). Joel also prophesied that there would be signs on the earth.
- B. The wonders in the earth will include manifestations of blood, fire, and pillars of smoke. Blood is one of the major signs. It will flow in unprecedented amounts. Blood is seen in the first three trumpets and the second and third bowl judgments (Rev. 8:7-10; 16:3-4). The two witnesses will have authority to turn water into blood.
- C. Jesus said there would be great earthquakes and many fearful signs that would cause the nations to be perplexed and fearful as the powers of the sky are shaken.
- <sup>25</sup> *There will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; <sup>26</sup> men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of things ... for the powers of heaven will be shaken. (Lk. 21:25-26)*
- <sup>11</sup> *There will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven. (Lk. 21:11)*
- D. God will release dramatic prophetic signs to help the end-time Church and to warn the lost. These signs will be given at strategic times and will bring vital understanding to those who interpret them rightly.
- E. There will often be a connection between the signs in the heavens and on earth to the prophetic dreams and visions. How astounding it will be when multitudes in the nations watch as God's prophets proclaim a prophetic vision and then give details of when a comet or an earthquake will occur to confirm the vision. The signs in the heavens and on earth will not appear in a vacuum, but at the precise timing that God determines as His servants declare them ahead of time.
- F. Some interpret the promise of signs in Joel 2:30-31 as being purely symbolic. In doing this, they see Joel's prophecy as being completely fulfilled in the past events of history. Regarding the phrase "the heavens tremble," they say that the heavens did not actually tremble because it is only meant to be understood as prophetic poetry.

## VII. ISRAEL ASKS FOR PROPHETIC SIGNS

- A. Joel gave three prophecies that God would give Israel signs in the sun, moon, and stars to confirm that the Messiah was among them (Joel 2:10, 30-31; 3:15). They expected the Messiah to demonstrate His power with God by having power over the sun, moon, and stars! Therefore, the Pharisees asked Jesus for a heavenly sign as proof of His messiahship.

<sup>1</sup> *The Pharisees ... testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven. (Mt. 16:1)*

- B. They reasoned that if Jesus was from God, He should prove it with signs. They wanted more proof than seeing Him heal the sick; they wanted signs in the sky that could not be explained away. Even today in Israel, some who look for the Messiah expect Him to fulfill Joel's prophecies in demonstrating His power over the sun, moon, and stars. Jews expect God to reveal Himself to them in signs. Many of them will get saved as the Church releases prophetic signs.

<sup>22</sup> *For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after [philosophical] wisdom... (1 Cor. 1:22)*

## VIII. END-TIME DELIVERANCE AND THE HARVEST

<sup>32</sup> *It shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance... (Joel 2:32)*

<sup>26</sup> *So all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion..." (Rom. 11:26)*

- A. Joel prophesied that whoever calls upon Jesus' name will be saved. Being saved has several distinct dimensions to it in the Scripture.
- B. First, we are saved in the initial sense of receiving forgiveness and being born again.
- C. Second, we are saved, delivered, or protected, from physical death in the context of end-time disasters. Psalm 91 promises us physical protection in the end times (Ps. 91:3-10).
- D. Third, we are saved in the sense that God will provide the things necessary for life such as food and water. Israel experienced provision and protection in Goshen (Ex. 8:22-23; 9:4, 6, 26).
- E. Fourth, we are saved as we walk in God's saving power that we might enter into our full destiny. In other words, we are delivered from spiritual barrenness and powerlessness.
- F. Fifth, we are saved or protected from deception and from falling away from our faith.

<sup>1</sup> *The Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons...<sup>2</sup> having their conscience seared... (1 Tim. 4:1-2)*

## IX. THE DELIVERANCE OF THE REMNANT OF ISRAEL

<sup>32</sup> *For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, as the LORD has said, among the remnant whom the LORD calls. (Joel 2:32)*

- A. Many will die in Jerusalem during the Great Tribulation (Zech. 13:8). However, God will save a remnant physically by sparing their life and spiritually as they are born again (Rom. 11:26).
- B. Jerusalem will be one of the most violent cities on earth in the Great Tribulation. Yet, those who call on His name will receive His protection and deliverance.
- C. This promise will be very important to some unbelieving Jews in Jerusalem. The Church will prophesy this passage to them saying, “God will deliver all who call upon His name. His name is Yeshua! He is Jesus! He is your salvation!” This prophecy also comforts believers who live outside of Jerusalem.

#### **X. COSMIC SIGNS IN THE END-TIMES – EXTRA STUDIES**

- A. In Israel’s salvation history, God often gave them signs to verify a prophet’s word. They do not have the paradigm of a true prophet who does not show signs and wonders. They want earthly signs like healings and they want heavenly signs in the atmosphere above. The God of Abraham, Isaac, David, Moses, and Elijah does miracles when His prophets speak!
- B. Haggai prophesied that God would shake heaven (sky), earth, sea, dry land, and all nations.  
*<sup>6</sup> “I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; <sup>7</sup> and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of all nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,” says the LORD of hosts ... <sup>22</sup> “I will shake heaven and earth. <sup>22</sup> I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms; I will destroy the strength of the Gentile kingdoms.” (Hag. 2:6-7, 21-22)*
- C. Jesus prophesied that there would be cosmic signs in the end times.  
*<sup>11</sup> “There will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.” (Lk. 21:11)*  
*<sup>25</sup> “There will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; <sup>26</sup> men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken.” (Lk. 21:25-26)*  
*<sup>29</sup> “Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.” (Mt. 24:29-30)*
- D. There are cosmic signs in the book of Revelation.  
*<sup>12</sup> The sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. <sup>13</sup> And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs... (Rev. 6:12-13)*

<sup>7</sup> *The first angel sounded: hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up ...* <sup>8</sup> *The second angel sounded: And something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea ...* <sup>10</sup> *Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers ...* <sup>12</sup> *Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night. (Rev. 8:7-12)*

E. There are cosmic signs in the book of Isaiah.

<sup>10</sup> *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. (Isa. 13:10)*

F. Wonders in the heavens (Joel 2:30) will be seen as the heavens tremble (Joel 2:10) and shake (Joel 3:15; Isa. 13:10; 24:23; 60:1; Ezek. 32:7-8).

1. **Sun** – will turn to darkness (Joel 2:31); it will grow dark (Joel 3:15); one third of the sun, moon, and stars will be darkened (Rev. 8:12); the sun will go down at noon as the earth is darkened (Amos 8:9); there will be deep darkness on the earth (Isa. 60:1).

2. **Moon** – will be turned into blood (Joel 2:31; 3:15) and will grow dark (Joel 2:10; 3:15).

3. **Stars** – will diminish their brightness (Joel 2:10; 3:15) and not give light (Isa. 13:10) and will fall to the earth (Rev. 6:13; Mt. 24:29).

4. **Sky** – will have strange weather patterns (Lk. 21:11) and scorching heat (Rev. 16:8; 7:16) with hail (Rev. 8:7; 11:19; 16:21) and lightning and thunder (Mt. 24:27; Rev. 8:5; 16:18).

## XI. WONDERS IN THE EARTH: BLOOD, FIRE, SMOKE, EARTHQUAKES

A. **Blood** – (Joel 2:30) includes the blood of the martyrs (Rev. 6:10; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2); blood in the sea and rivers (Rev. 8:7-9) with the power to turn the waters to blood (Rev. 11:6) as blood flows in the nations (Rev. 14:20; 19:13; Isa. 63:3).

<sup>3</sup> *Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became blood as of a dead man; and every living creature in the sea died.* <sup>4</sup> *Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. (Rev. 16:3-4)*

B. **Fire** – (Joel 2:30) will be thrown to earth from heaven (Rev. 8:5) as it burns 1/3 of the trees (Rev. 8:7); a great star like burning fire will fall from heaven (Rev. 8:10); fire will kill multitudes (Rev. 9:18); the two witnesses will have power to call fire on their enemies (Rev. 11:5-6); the False Prophet will also call fire come from heaven (Rev. 13:13), power to scorch men with fire from the sun (Rev. 16:8; 7:16). God's judgment fires will destroy cities as it destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. Fire will descend from heaven by the command of the two witnesses.

<sup>5</sup> *If anyone wants to harm them [two witnesses], fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. If anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. (Rev. 11:5)*

<sup>13</sup> *He [False Prophet] performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. (Rev. 13:13)*

C. *Pillars of smoke* – (Joel 2:30) the sun and air will be darkened by the smoke of the bottomless pit as it is opened (Rev. 9:2); smoke will kill many people (Rev. 9:18); smoke will be seen by many as Babylon burns (Rev. 18:9, 18). Smoke from cities that are destroyed by fire from terrorism, military conflict, the False Prophet, and God's judgment will fill the skies.

D. There are several categories of fire and smoke. When the saints gather in prayer, God's fire will fall as it did in the early church (Acts 2:1-4). The Lord will release the smoke of His glory.

<sup>8</sup> *The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed. (Rev. 15:8)*

<sup>5</sup> *Then the LORD will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night. (Isa. 4:5)*

E. *Earthquakes* – (Lk. 21:11; Mt. 24:7; Mk. 13:8; Rev. 6:12; 11:19; 16:18; Isa. 29:6); a great earthquake will occur in Israel (Ezek. 38:19; Zech. 14:5; Joel 2:10; 3:15)

F. *False signs/wonders* – Rev. 13:13; 16:14; 18:23; 19:20; Mt. 24:24; 2 Thes. 2:8-9

G. *True signs/wonders* – Acts 2:17-21; Mk. 16:7; Jn. 14:12; Rev. 11:3-6

H. *End-time prophets* – Acts 2:17-21; Eph. 4:11-13; Rev. 11:10, 18; 16:6; 18:20, 24