

GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



GIG94 – Pentecost, Baptism Or Outpouring Of The Holy Spirit

I am very much looking forward to this Feast of Pentecost, which is quickly approaching. There is so much in my mind that we look forward to when we refer to the Feast of Pentecost. I know many people talk about the outpourings, or another outpouring of the Holy Spirit; and I really want to be careful that our perception or our focus about what God is going to do is really based upon Scripture, rather than just based upon looking back at what we have experienced in the past. I know there have been outpourings of the Spirit. In fact, I have been really spending time going back and reading and researching the different times of outpouring or renewal that have taken place over history. It is a great experience to read it; phenomenal things have happened, and we thank God for it. But I also know that it can limit our thinking and it can take us into a focus which may not exactly be what the Lord is looking to do for us in this day and in this time. One of the things that we see that took place during, or as the result of, these outpourings, or these revivals, whatever you choose to call them, is that movements were generally formed. We have the Pentecostal movement that was born, the Charismatic movement, different responses to these outpourings of His Spirit. And again, I don't think that is what we are looking for; that is not what I am looking for, let me put it that way, in this day and age. I think that there is something more that God is pointing to, that the Word is pointing to, that we should be reaching for, believing for, crying out to God for, to transpire and to take place in this day and age. And so, as much as we thank God and bless Him for the different revivals, the different experiences of the Holy Spirit, we know that all of these seem to be related to the church and to the church age, and they sort of end up in an expression that is church age. I believe, however, where we are poised at this point is at the beginnings of His Kingdom. And just as the Holy Spirit was the expression or the triggering of the church age in the book of Acts, at the time of the baptism the Holy Spirit, we also know that the Kingdom age likewise will be triggered, or "precursored" by this event of the Holy Spirit. And that is where, to me, there is a difference of expectation or faith that can be expressed. So let's go back and put some Scripture under all of this, and see if we can move into an understanding of where I think God wants to take us.

I'll start at Acts the first chapter, in verses 2-5. It says, "Until the day when He was taken up to heaven, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen. To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God. Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, 'Which,' He said, 'you heard from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'" Here we have Christ after the resurrection, and He is interfacing with the disciples as well as others over a period of forty days between the Passover and the Day of Pentecost, and He is speaking to them very clearly in these verses about the fact that the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which He has spoken of before, is going to happen for them. He uses this terminology that "John baptized in water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." And it is important for us to get the terminology that is being used, and the idea of what is transpiring, so that we can differentiate as we move forward into the prophecies of Joel.

I am going on to verse 6: "So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, 'Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?'" So we notice that the focus of the disciples still is upon this idea of the Kingdom. They are waiting for this promised Kingdom that has been spoken of. And Christ is speaking to them in verse 3 about the Kingdom; it says, "He presented himself alive by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days, speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God." We must recognize that Christ Himself, the disciples, being Jews as they were, had this idea or focus upon the ultimate manifestation of Christ's purpose as Messiah – which is to manifest the Kingdom of God on the earth, with Him seated on the throne of David, ruling and reigning from the earth over God's Kingdom, which is on the earth. So, again, this terminology of Kingdom is very important to them, this is a central aspect of their focus. At the same time, He is speaking about baptism, and we see what transpires here is the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which brings about the beginning of the church age.

In verse 7 it says, "He said to them, 'It is not for you to know the times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority.'" They had just asked Him, "Is it at this time the Kingdom is being restored?" Notice it says, "restored to Israel." So they are going back again to the times of David, when the Kingdom of Israel was in the hands of Israel, under the king, and all the land of Israel and the people of Israel were governed as a kingdom. This is what they were reaching for, this is what they are conversing with Him about. And He said, "Listen, it is not for you to know the times or the epochs." In other words, He is dealing with ages. They are getting ready to be baptized with the Holy Spirit, which opens up the age or the epoch of the Church, and they are talking to Him about the age of the Kingdom of God. So, in a sense there are two different things getting ready to happen. They, in a way, are jumping over the idea of the church age, and believing that, or understanding from their experience that, the Kingdom of God is what is getting ready to happen here – which we know after 2,000 years plus that that did not happen, that the church age was opened up, and we are still awaiting this time of the Kingdom being restored to Israel, which they are speaking to Him about, and He is speaking to them about. So, "It is not for you to know the times or the epochs which are fixed by the Father with His own authority."

He goes on in verses 8-11 to say, "'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.' And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. They also said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.'" Now, this gets very important, especially to ones who are talking about their Rapture theory, where at the coming of Christ they are caught up into heaven; and the angels are saying that is not what happens. Jesus, when He comes, will be just what you have witnessed here: He will come out of heaven and return to earth. In the Rapture concept, He doesn't come out of heaven and return to earth; He comes out of heaven, catches the Church away, and returns into heaven. Something is amiss; and you just have to, again, continue reading all that the Scripture says, so that you get the whole story and you put it together correctly. "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."

We know that following this event, the disciples, as they had been instructed by the Lord, went back to Jerusalem, they went into the upper room and they waited until the Day of Pentecost had come upon them. We go to Acts the second chapter, starting with verses 1-7. It says, "When the day of Pentecost

had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance. Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language. They were amazed and astonished, saying, 'Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?'"

We see the Day of Pentecost comes, and we find the outpouring, or the baptism, rather, of the Holy Spirit, that Christ had promised to them did come upon them. We understand as we read through the rest of these verses, and I'll go down to verse 14, that Peter gets up and addresses the crowd at this particular event. We begin at verses 14-21: "But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: 'Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give heed to my words. For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel: "And it shall be in the last days," God says, "That I will pour forth of My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; even on My bondslaves, both men and women, I will in those days pour forth of My Spirit and they shall prophesy. And I will grant wonders in the sky above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the great and glorious day of the Lord shall come. And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'" We see this amazing event take place, which is being spoken of by the prophet Joel; and Peter now goes, in this prophetic utterance that he is giving to the crowd, and connects what is taking place at the baptism of the Holy Spirit with this prophecy of Joel. But when we read these prophecies of Joel, we realize that they are reaching far beyond what Peter and the disciples, the one hundred and twenty, were experiencing in that given moment. And what we want to recognize, then, is that there is yet something that Joel is touching on or speaking about that is greater in its expression and fulfillment than what transpires in the baptism of the Holy Spirit on this Day of Pentecost, which opens up the age of the Church.

We know we are still in that age, and we are still experiencing this type of baptism of the Holy Spirit. Generally, when we talk about the outpourings of the Spirit or the revivals that have taken place, they are very much within this context of the church age and the church experience. What we need to recognize is that Joel is speaking of something that is beyond this experience. And what Peter did was he linked a prophecy of the Hebrew Scriptures to an event in the church expression of the New Testament, which, again, is a fulfillment, but not necessarily the complete fulfillment, of what was being prophesied. And in fact, the disciples had just asked the Lord the question, "Is it at this time that You will restore the Kingdom to Israel?" And the Lord says, "It is not for you to know the times and the epochs." But obviously we know, from where we stand today, you know, two-thousand years later, that it was not the time of the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel; because we are just in the early stages of witnessing those events taking place. So there is no way in which those complete prophecies of Joel were being fulfilled.

What I would like to do is jump back into Joel, the book of Joel, and we will go to chapter two and start with verse 18. You really need to go and read all of the book of Joel to really get the context of what is taking place. And I know there are many verses we are going to read here, but it is very necessary that

you get this idea of the context in order to recognize that Joel was speaking of something beyond what transpired at the Day of Pentecost. Therefore, what Peter was doing is linking the baptism of the Holy Spirit to something that would transpire in the days of the Kingdom being restored to Israel. We know that was his focus, because that is what they had been, at the Ascension of Christ, speaking to Christ about.

So let's go to Joel, the second chapter, and we will begin at verses 18-25. It says, "Then the Lord will be zealous for His land and will have pity on His people. The Lord will answer and say to His people, 'Behold, I am going to send you grain, new wine and oil, and you will be satisfied in full with them; and I will never again make you a reproach among the nations. But I will remove the northern army far from you, and I will drive it into a parched and desolate land, and its vanguard into the eastern sea, and its rear guard into the western sea. And its stench will arise and its foul smell will come up, for it has done great things. Do not fear, O land, rejoice and be glad, for the Lord has done great things. Do not fear, beasts of the field, for the pastures of the wilderness have turned green, for the tree has borne its fruit, the fig tree and the vine have yielded in full. So rejoice, O sons of Zion, and be glad in the Lord your God; for He has given you the early rain for your vindication. And He has poured down for you the rain, the early and latter rain as before. The threshing floors will be full of grain, and the vats will overflow with new wine and oil. Then I will make up to you for the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the creeping locust, the stripping locust and the gnawing locust, My great army which I sent among you.'" We are seeing the restoration of Israel here. We are seeing that God is ending the days of their discipline. He is ending the days of them being conscripted into living in other lands, being taken out of the land of Israel. We are seeing the end of the days when the land of Israel dries up and is a desolate wilderness because the children of Israel are no longer living on the land. So we are seeing this tremendous time of restoration that God promises He will bring, both to the people, and to the land. This is what is being spoken of here, and we know we are in the time of actually witnessing this.

If you go to Israel today, you will see with your own eyes the fulfillment of these prophecies, the fact that everything that has been stripped away and destroyed and desolate is coming back to life. The land itself is blooming. The trees are yielding their fruit once again. The people are being returned to the land, even now as we speak, in greater and greater numbers. All of these prophecies that we see in Joel are now in our time happening. And we know that if you go into the book of Acts, where Peter was speaking from, these things were not happening. It was not a time of restoration; and in fact, Jerusalem was getting ready to see its greatest desolation and destruction under the Roman army, and the removing of the Temple from the Temple Mount, the removal of the children of Israel out of the land, being cast into the Diaspora. There is no way Peter could have been talking about these prophecies of the book of Joel, because they were not happening in his time. They did not happen in his time. There was the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which again, Peter connected to these prophecies; and it is very important that he did that, because now we are able to go here, standing where we are in this timeframe, where the beginnings – and in some ways, we are very well into the fulfillment of these prophecies – where Israel is a state, where the people are returning, where the land is once again blooming, as it was promised for them. So God is in the process now, as we speak, of restoring the years to the children of Israel and to the land of Israel, restoring the devastation that they have been through, the destruction that they have been through, and the Diaspora that they have been through.

Joel 2:26—3:3 says, "'You will have plenty to eat and be satisfied and praise the name of the Lord your God, who has dealt wondrously with you; then My people will never be put to shame.'" We are coming to the day when the children of Israel, the Jewish people, will never again be put to shame. "'Thus you

will know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and there is no other; and My people will never be put to shame. It will come about after this....” So after we begin to see these things of restoration take place, then another event happens. “It will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.” When we talk about this idea of a Day of Pentecost, we are not talking about these days of the restoration of Israel; now Peter connects these events, but in fact, these events were not happening at the moment that Peter says that “this is the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel” – something greater is taking place. Yet Peter was looking to that day, as were all of the apostles and all of the disciples, because at the Ascension of Christ, they are asking that question, “Is it now that You bring about this great restoration of the Kingdom to Israel?” It is interesting, because this is their ultimate goal and ultimate focus, that Peter does focus upon this and prophecies to the day that they were concerned about, saying that it will happen; and recognizing that as the baptism of the Holy Spirit was the opening up of the epoch or the age of the Church, so, through the prophecy of Joel, will the Holy Spirit’s outpouring be the opening of the epoch or the age or the day of the Kingdom of God. Therefore he is prophesying to that in and of himself, and he said that it will come. And there is a definite difference: it says that He will, after this, pour out His Spirit on all mankind – not to one hundred and twenty on the Day of Pentecost. But there comes a Pentecost in which He pours out, and that is why we call it the outpouring of the Spirit, versus just the baptism of the Holy Spirit upon believers. He is going to pour out of His Spirit on all mankind – whether you want it or not, He pours out His Spirit on the end time. Because His Spirit not only comes as a blessing, bringing the gifts and the anointings of the Holy Spirit that we recognize; but it also comes upon those who are not necessarily wanting it, because it also brings the manifestation of the judgments of God that come in order to see the bringing forth of the Kingdom of God on the earth, as he spoke of.

So, He brings His Spirit on all mankind. And yes, “Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, blood, fire and columns of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be delivered; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those who escape, as the Lord has said, even among the survivors whom the Lord calls. For behold, in those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat.”

So again, we are seeing something. Notice Peter stopped. He did not bring this and include this into his prophecy and proclamation on the Day of Pentecost, at the outpouring or the baptism, of the Holy Spirit; but Joel says also, at this time, at the restoration of the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, He is going to gather all the nations and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. “Then I will enter into judgment with them there on behalf of My people and My inheritance, Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; and they have divided up My land. They have also cast lots for My people, traded a boy for a harlot and sold a girl for wine that they may drink.” And this is a caution to the nations, because this will happen. Part of this outpouring of the Spirit that comes, according to the prophecy of Joel, comes during the days of the restoration of Judah, and Jerusalem, and Israel; but He calls the nations to account. It is a good warning for America, and other nations that we love, because He calls them into account because they have divided up His land. People who are in favor of what they call “trading land for peace” – you better be careful, because you are dividing His land, and He is very

clear in verse 2 about that. He says, He will bring them to judgment ““on behalf of My people and My inheritance, Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; and they have divided up My land.”” You better not be dividing up the land of Israel. It is God's land, and He is giving it as a gift to His people.

So we know that there is yet to transpire an outpouring of His Spirit that comes upon all flesh – not just so there can be a church manifestation of power and tongues and gifts and fruit of the Spirit – but it comes on all the nations, and it includes the judgments that God will bring at the time He is restoring the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem. There is much more we could say about this, but I want to emphasize a few points here; and a lot of the study from this part of the Scriptures on, you can do on your own.

Remember, the baptism of the Spirit in the book of Acts opened up the age of the Church and was the fulfillment of what Yeshua had promised to His disciples. Peter, on that Day of Pentecost, connected the baptism of the Spirit for believers with the outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh which would open up the age of the Kingdom. We can see by reading those Scriptures in the prophecies of Joel that the baptism of the Holy Spirit was not the fulfillment of the outpouring of the Spirit which Joel was prophesying about; so we believe for the outpouring of His Holy Spirit in this day. We know that it will usher in the era of the Kingdom. For this we pray. We ask, and we keep on asking, because we know He will give the outpouring of the Spirit to those who ask. And we bless this. We bless your faith for it, and your believing for it, that it manifests for you.

Amen.