

***“Paul’s Second Letter to Timothy —  
The Great Transition, The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace — Part 2”***

**Last Time: Part 1:**

- ***The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace: Its Outline***
- ***The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace — In the Gospels, the Kingdom Preached as “At Hand”***

**Today: Part 2:**

- ***The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace:***
  - ***The Preparation for the Kingdom Offer: The Promise Was Proclaimed***
  - ***The Preparation for the Kingdom Offer: The Promise Was Provided***
  - ***The Preparation for the Kingdom Offer: The Promise Was Even Prophesied***

**Next Week —**

**Part 3:**

- ***The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace: In the Early Acts Period, the Kingdom Offered***
- ***The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace: In the Early Acts Period, the Kingdom Rejected***

**Part 4:**

- ***The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace: In the Early Acts Period, The Apostle Paul Saved***
- ***The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace: Mid - Late Acts - Paul Sent Forth (Primarily to the Gentiles)***

**Part 5:**

- ***The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace: After Acts 28:28 - Paul’s “Prison” Ministry***
- ***The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace: The Transition from Pentecost to the Fullness of Grace — Its Completion***

**Review:**

- ***As we have said before a few times here, “Dispensations do not mix well - transitions are therefore necessary. If you think not, consider the transition from the Promise to the Mosaic Law... That was accomplished over a period of nearly 40 years as judgment fell on those rejecting Moses and the Law and the God-ordained transition***

***to Joshua's leadership. Or, going back further, how about the beginning of the Dispensation of Human Government with Noah. The transition there was accomplished with the Great Flood."***

- ***Judging from this, transitioning from the preaching of an earthly kingdom that was as it were "at hand" to that of a heavenly kingdom should be expected to take no less than the working of Almighty God to accomplish. It was and could never be merely a RELIGIOUS WORK OF MAN, though it may have so often seemed so for so many.***
- ***The book of Acts records that transition beginning with the Pentecostal dispensation and ending with Israel's setting aside in Acts 28. Paul is the central figure from chapter 9 onwards while Peter, James, and John and the others, so central in earlier chapters, are hardly present. That there is a transition underway is so very clear. But that it centers on Paul should never be ignored for that is critical for our understanding as we have often been reminded in our studies here on Sunday mornings. That will be increasingly our focus as we continue in this mini-series on the Transition Period in Acts.***

***Last time we went back not to Pentecost before that, to the preaching of Christ in his earthly ministry.***

- ***It all began with the end of the 400 years of silence from God as John was raised up. The preaching of the coming Kingdom as "at hand" began with John and that preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom was immediately continued by our Lord after John's identification of our Lord as Israel's Messiah.***

***Jesus then began his earthly ministry with the words following:***

***Matt. 4:23-24***

***23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.***

***24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.***

- ***Christ soon thereafter Christ chose his Twelve Disciples and sent them forth commissioned and empowered to work the miracles***

***associated with the coming Kingdom. The great prophet Isaiah had spoke of these days many centuries before with these words:***

***Is. 35:6, 10***

**3 Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.**

**4 Say to them [that are] of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come [with] vengeance, [even] God [with] a recompence; he will come and save you.**

**5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.**

**6 Then shall the lame [man] leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.**

**...**

**10 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.**

***Matt. 10:5-8. [With such promises, it is sure that the saints of God, whether prophets, our Lord himself, of his disciples, would boldly preach the coming Kingdom. And they did!]***

**5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into [any] city of the Samaritans enter ye not:**

**6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**

**7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.**

**8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.**

***Then our Lord sent out his disciples with he same message and the same signs and wonders.***

***Matt. 11:3-5***

**3 And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?**

**4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see:**

**5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.**

- ***So Israel's Messiah was announced, revealed, and authenticated by those Signs and Wonders. And they are critical and essential to the***

***preaching of the Kingdom as “at hand”. But, before we continue, let’s look at Christ’s final teachings before his crucifixion as found recorded in Matthew 24:***

***Matt. 24:3*** And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what [shall be] the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

***He then begins a long sermon in answer to their question. Some key verses are these:***

***Matt. 24:11-14***

11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

**14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.**

***Matt. 24:29-30 [and then, referencing the coming Tribulation and how Christ will return to earth to establish his Kingdom afterwards]***

29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

- ***Well, to summarize, after 3 1/2 years of public ministry attended by many, many signs, wonders, and miracles performed by our Lord and his disciples, Christ was crucified, buried, and then raised gloriously and bodily. 50 days later was the Pentecost event that our Lord, just before his ascension into heaven’s glory, had asked his disciples to await his Promise.***
- ***Today we will see how Pentecost signaled the coming of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit dwelling upon the believers, and who is called “the Promise” here. Through this and the signs, wonders, and miracles that attended that, there was a foreshadowing of the coming Kingdom. For there were abounding at that time through the apostles and believers in general as Mark 16 makes so clear.***
- ***The Kingdom was still, even after Christ’s resurrection, being Preached as “At Hand”, with Signs and wonders, for the Jews and***

**God's judgment that was coming. Yes, Christ was risen but the proclamation that he was coming again was as Peter preached on the day of Pentecost.**

- **The main theme of the book of Acts is not as so many have written and said, the establishing of the church. The main subject rather is the transition from the Pentecostal Church to the Church the Body of Christ. It is the transition from the Dispensational Administration of the Twelve Apostles to that of the Man Paul. It is the transition from Kingdom Law in its Pentecostal foreshadowing, to the Fullness of Grace. The Pentecostal Church was an assembly of Jews and Gentile proselytes waiting in Jerusalem for the soon hoped for Kingdom on earth to be established at the return of our Lord (See Acts . The Church which is his Body is a heavenly organism in which there is neither Jew nor Greek, male not female, bond nor free. What a difference.**

**The transition from the one to the other is the central focus of the book of the Acts.**

- **Today we will look at the Pentecostal offerings of the Kingdom to Israel after Christ's glorious resurrection.**

### **Today's Outline:**

#### **The Glorious Sweep of God's Abundant Grace:**

- **The Preparation for the Kingdom Offer: The Promise Was Proclaimed**
- **The Preparation for the Kingdom Offer: The Promise Was Provided**
- **The Preparation for the Kingdom Offer: The Promise Was Even Prophesied**

#### **I. The Preparation for the Kingdom Offer: The Promise Was Proclaimed**

- **In God's appointed timing, Christ's earthly ministry ended after 3 1/2 years of public ministry. His identity as God's anointed one and God's Very Son indeed, was accredited throughout his life and ministry by many, many signs, wonders, and miracles. Accordingly, his preaching of the Kingdom as "At Hand" was also thereby accredited. Finally, his disciples also performed these establishing their place as his true and authentic representatives.**

**But, rather than this Coming Kingdom being established at the appointed time, when Christ returns to this Earth in judgment,**

*Christ was crucified, buried, and then after three days raised gloriously and bodily. 50 days later was the Pentecost event that we will consider now. That event was foretold by our Lord, just before his ascension into heaven's glory, as he asked his disciples to await the giving of his "Promise".*

- *Pentecost therefore signaled the coming of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit's dwelling upon the believers. It provided a foreshadowing of the coming Kingdom and signs, wonders, and miracles were prevalent. Mark 16 makes that clear. But we should not be surprised at all as to what happened on that day. Let's remind ourselves of what Mark 16 says:*

**[READ ] Mark 16:17-20**

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with [them], and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

- *Yes, their's was a commission to go forth to the ends of the earth with this message regarding Christ's resurrection and his return in Judgment. That established the priority of the nation's repentance and faith in him. For otherwise, Judgment would surely follow.*
- *But, as we will see now in our next scripture reading from Luke 24, the Lord had also said, wait. And they did that though that is not recorded here in Mark's gospel.*

**[READ ] Luke 24:46-49 [On the Road to Damascus ...]**

46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48 And ye are witnesses of these things.

49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. [ ... tarry ye in Jerusalem until ... so there was a delay in the Commission]

- ***This brings us directly to the record of the book of Acts itself. Let's read of how the Lord again appears to his disciples just before his ascension into heaven's glory:***

***[READ ] Acts 1:4-8***

**4** And, being assembled together with [them], commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, [saith he], ye have heard of me.

**5** For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

**6** When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

**7** And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.[... so a delay is at hand, ***BUT the great question is, WHAT WILL OCCUR NEXT IN GOD'S PLANNING CONSIDERING THAT SO MUCH HAD ALREADY BEEN PROMISED, AND EVEN, AS WE SHALL SEE, PROPHESED? The time will soon tell ... and the next verse leaves open a "prospect"***]

**8** But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

***Acts 1:9-11***

**9** And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

**10** And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

**11** Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

***So, the Acts of the Apostles begins with this clear statement as to the return of the Lord. But question abides, how will he return? In judgment or in mercy, and to whom will the judgments be given?***

***But, as we shall see, and as was implied strongly just before his ascension into heaven, the time was not yet right for all of prophecy to be fulfilled. The Promise of the Spirit would occur "in place of", it seems, of the prophesied coming of the Lord himself. That would be***

***in itself a strong hint that the timing was not yet right for the Return of the Lord and then the establishment of his earthly Kingdom.***

***But one thing did remain, the preparation of a people for his name as had been also prophesied. The Twelve and the others did constitute a people but the Lord had in mind something far more glorious, even “AN ELECT NATION”. But that was for these saints to learn still.***

***As we shall now see, the focus here is on how the Preparation for the Formal Offering of the Kingdom would be accomplished. The stage would be then set for the formal offering of the Earthly (and Millennial) Kingdom. That will occur as recorded in the book of Acts as we shall see shortly in this study.***

***And what they did not yet know and could not have known was that this preparation of the people for his name, the Elect Nation, would not be accomplished soon. Rather, A Great Transition would begin culminating in Israel being set aside from the Kingdom plan for a time (now almost 2000 years) to make way for the full revelation of God’s abundant grace! This will be our focus in the studies yet ahead.***

***So the Preparation was itself the giving forth of that Promised Spirit, the Promise of the Father, as had been Proclaimed! We now shall see how this occurred on the Day of Pentecost and how the Promise was given as the Lord had Prophesied: For the Promise Was Provided!***

## ***II. The Preparation for the Kingdom Offer: The Promise Was Provided:***

- ***As we examine the chapter before us now, notice that the preaching here was not “good news” concerning God’s abundant grace through the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. But rather it is concerning the coming judgment on those who do not receive the message preached concerning the fulfillment of prophecies found in both the Old Testament as we have seen, and also in the Gospel accounts of our Lord’s earthly ministry and that of his disciples.***
- ***Also, for it is so important, we must never forget Christ’s words on the Cross: “Father forgive them for they know not what they do” (See Lk. 23:34). The nation is being given one more opportunity, it seems, to gladly receive the Lord as their long awaited Messiah, now dead and risen from that death of all deaths. Keep that in mind as we look at this chapter.***



- ***Acts 2 provides the fulfillment of the Promise the Lord spoke of after his resurrection, Signs and Wonders for the Jews and “Israel increases”!. These Signs and Wonders are surely to be expected with a great growth in the number of believers. This is Israel’s “rising” as had been foretold.***

***Luke 2:34*** And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this [child] is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against ...

***I would guess that these words were on the hearts of many here in Jerusalem that day? How would God work? So many were awaiting Peter’s words as the word surely had spread quickly that Jesus Christ had been crucified, buried, and had risen again. Many if not all of those that had witnessed this great series of appearances of our risen Lord were no doubt there that day in Jerusalem.***

***[READ ] Acts 2:1-4***

- 1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.
  - 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.
  - 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.
  - 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.
- ***What is the point here? It IS that the Holy Spirit had come as promised. Yes, but more it is what his presence and power has now made known. Through a miraculous sign and wonder “every man heard in their own language the wonderful works of God preached.***

***Acts 2:5-11***

- 5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.
- 6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.
- 7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?
- 8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, 10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

- *Many were gathered in Jerusalem on pilgrimage from their homelands — but they were all Jews and Gentile proselytes. Peter's sermon here was being heard in all of their individual languages!! That is the miracle. So they had waited for the Promise of the Spirit and he had come with miracles and signs as had the had expected.*
- *Note that this was all in the context of the preaching of the Kingdom as "at hand"! It is so important to remember that. Now as we continue we see that even Prophecy was being fulfilled!*

### **III. The Preparation for the Kingdom Offer: The Promise Was Even Prophesied:**

- *In the preaching of Peter on that much anticipated day, the apostle preached from a text in the prophecy of Joel, given hundreds of years before:*
- *Please follow on with me in this text before us today. It is an important one indeed. And Peter quotes many verses from Joel here and that is significant.*

#### **Acts 2:14-21**

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is *but* the third hour of the day.

**16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;**

17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:

20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

21 And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

- ***For completeness, we should look at Joel just for a moment:***

***Joel 2:23-32***

23 Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first *month*.

24 And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil.

25 And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you.

26 And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed.

27 And ye shall know that I *am* in the midst of Israel, and *that* I *am* the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed.

***[... time break ...]***

***28 And it shall come to pass afterward [or in those days, or when], that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:***

***29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.***

***30 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.***

***31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.***

***32 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.***

- ***These things shall be a “sign” that the other events so prophesied will follow. And, though much of this prophecy was NOT FULFILLED on the day of Pentecost, much was. Those things Peter is saying are a sign to all that the Day of the Lord will come and all need to be prepared for that Day, for it will be a day of great judgment indeed.***

- ***Peter now preaches in this context of Joel's great prophecy Christ and his glorious resurrection!! It is the Resurrection of Christ that has led to these days with the Promise of the Holy Spirit having been given, he preaches:***

***Acts 2:31-33***

29 Men [and] brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.  
30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

**31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption (See Psalm 16:10).**

**32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.**

**33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.**

***And now his final words, his exhortation!***

***Acts 2:37-39***

37 Now when they heard [this], they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men [and] brethren, what shall we do?

**38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.**

**39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, [even] as many as the Lord our God shall call.**

***[READ ] Acts 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added [unto them] about three thousand souls.***

- ***Here we read of "Israel's rising" indeed through the preaching of a message of repentance and water baptism. Much could be said about that, but we will leave that for another time. For us now the focus is on these words, "Israel's Rising", a phrase of great meaning and importance if we would understand God's Word Rightly Divided.***
- ***But the Fall, "Israel's fall", had already occurred, or had it? Or was there intended by God to be a formal offering of the Kingdom to***

***Israel — before the fulfillment of prophecy and our Lord's inspired words. Considering what the Lord had said, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do", we might expect another opportunity would need to be provided.***

- ***Well, that brings us to the end of our studies in God's Word of Truth today. The stage is now set and ready for the next chapter in the unveiling of God's purpose for his people, the Jews ...***

**Conclusions and Application:**

- ***In conclusion, as the numbers of believers increased by the thousands here on Pentecost they might have thought that the elect nation the prophets of old had predicted might very well soon be finally established in preparation for the Return of the Lord of glory to establish his Millennial Kingdom rule here on this planet.***
- ***But instead, as we will see, the apostles proceed as if God's elect nation is still to be created and not yet ready for the rest of the story, as it were. For not yet was the time ripe for the previously given "Commission" (see Marks, Luke, and Matthews gospel accounts) to be carried out.***
- ***What was holding back that preaching? Why were they not obeying the clear commandment of the Lord? Did they know something that preachers and teachers today do not know? Was the church we know even in existence then? These are good questions and will be answered in due time as we continue in the Book of Acts, Lord willing.***
- ***So the Preparation for the Offer of the Kingdom with its needed Promise of the Spirit, was Prophesied as well. This completes our study for today. Next Time, the Kingdom Will Be Offered to Israel as we look at chapter 3 of the Acts!***