

**“Paul’s Second Letter to Timothy —
The Great Transition, The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace — Part 4”**

Review:

Pentecost was, as we have seen, a glorious event indeed. Those gathered that day were “Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.” The miracle as noted that was that they each heard in their ears everything spoken in their own native languages!

- ***The Promise of the Spirit had come with the required Miracles and Signs accompany the preaching of the Kingdom as they had surely expected. We saw last time how Peter on that much anticipated day preached from a text in the prophecy of Joel, given hundreds of years before. He explained by referring explicitly to that prophecy how what they had just been experiencing was therefore 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 that occurred foreshadowed what would be still to come.***
- ***You will remember that Peter on that day had applied Joel’s prophecy to the events that had just been experienced, stating boldly that those events that many had heard with their own ears and seen with their own eyes were a sign from the Lord God that the Day of the Lord with its many Judgments would be coming perhaps soon. Surely all therefore needed to take heed and prepare for that Day of Coming Judgment. For it was all about that Day, the Great and Terrible Day of the Lord, as Joel had foretold it there in Joel 2:31.***
- ***To seal that indictment indelibly in the hearts of those that heard, Peter then preached, again in the context of Joel’s great prophecy, Christ’s glorious resurrection!!***

He said that it is the very Resurrection of Jesus Christ itself that has led to and enabled these days with the fulfillment of that Promised Coming of the Holy Spirit. So Christ, whom they had crucified was alive again and was now soon returning in judgment for he had kept his promise to send the Spirit. How might these Jews in pilgrimage in Jerusalem who had gathered for the Holy Days respond to such a message?

[READ] Acts 2:37-41

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.

40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

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

- *But the Lord required so much more than the 3000 baptized on the day of Pentecost. For there to be “a people for his name” there must also be created “an Elect Nation”. The prophecies demand that, do they not? Acts 3 brings us to that point in the inspired narrative where the focus will now be especially on the Israel’s Leaders.*
- *Then, in the inspired narrative we move ahead some months later when, it seemed, another dramatic event in this great transition period so distinguished by dramatic events, occurred: An actual Offer of the God’s long planned earthly and Millennial Kingdom to Israel.*
- *This would have had special meaning to the leaders of Israel who had condemned the Lord to his crucifixion and death on Calvary’s cross. Many others there that day had also, you will recall, cried out when Pilate had offered Barabbas (see Matt. 15:13-14). So how would they respond to Peter’s preaching about coming judgment upon those responsible for the Lord’s cruel death?*
- *The Offer of the Kingdom to Israel: The Offer Was Made and Many Responded, But Many Did Not.*
 - *We have seen how the Preparation had been fully made and the Promised Holy Spirit had been given with Signs and Wonders that could not be ignored. A great many, about 3000 in fact, had believed on the Lord Jesus as their Messiah. It was time, or so it seemed, for the Kingdom to be established. Christ had said before his ascension that the Times and Seasons were under his Father’s control, BUT they had waited as they were commanded for the Promised Spirit*

and he had indeed been given. So had not the time finally come for the Kingdom to be established?

- ***Peter, on that special and chosen day, under the control of the Spirit of God, now along with many others entered into the Temple itself and preached a message the likes of which had never been preached before.***

Many, but INCLUDING THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF THE NATION, THE VERY ONES THAT HAD DELIVERED OUR LORD UP TO PILATE TO BE CRUCIFIED, were assembled here in the Temple on this special day. Notice that there is nothing here about the grace of God and Christ's finished work. Peter's message here is all about Christ risen from the dead and the only way to avoid the coming Judgment for their sins against their Lord Jesus, Israel's Messiah and Redeemer. In this message he in effect offers that Kingdom to those assembled. And take note that he is not preaching specifically to the believers but the focus is on the entire group God is giving a second chance to Israel! See also Lk. 23:34, "Father forgive them ...". But, as He so boldly preaches, they are guilty of the killing of their Messiah and Lord. The "ye's" here tell the story:

Acts 3:13-17

13 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let [him] go.

14 But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you;

15 And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.

16 And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

17 And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did [it], as [did] also your rulers.

We must see a valid offer of the Kingdom here and the actual offer of the Kingdom is seen in verses 18-21:

Acts 3:18-21

18 But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

And then, he finishes with this stark reminder that those that reject our Lord Jesus SHALL SUFFER THE JUDGMENT AT HIS RETURN according to that great Mosaic prophecy:

Acts 3:23 And it shall come to pass, [that] every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

- ***So many believed when Peter preached this Spirit-given sermon that day. They heard the offer of the Kingdom individually and many had believed. But was this an authentic offer of the Kingdom to and Elect Nation still unrepentant or only an offer of individual salvation as we today have received? And how can we be sure? We shall see as we look further into the chapters following.***

- ***The Offer of the Kingdom to Israel: The Offer Was Received (by Many)***

Now we will quickly look today at the proof that the offer of the Kingdom was received and that the Lord was in fact working as would have been expected at such a time.

Acts 4:1-4

1 And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them,

2 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide.

4 Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.

- ***Now, the number of believers mentioned is about 5000 added to the earlier 3000 that had believed at Pentecost).***

But would the leadership of the nation repent? For they are surely the center of focus here.

- ***But now the rulers of Israel, including Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, the elders and all in that ruling group rather than receiving this message by faith compelled Peter and the others to explain how they had accomplished this great miracle that no one could deny. They explained that it was by the name of Jesus that this man crippled from birth had been healed and that “... Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12)”. So salvation from the Judgment at the Lord’s perhaps soon return was the offer here to the nation and its leaders.***

This brings us to our message for today:

Today: The Kingdom Foreshadowed in Power But Nevertheless Rejected

- ***Signs and Wonders Given with the Sharing of Both Property and Hearts***
- ***A Rebellious Spirit Continues With Kingdom Judgments Foreshadowed***
- ***The Kingdom Foreshadowed in Power But Nevertheless Rejected***

I. Signs and Wonders Given with the Sharing of Both Property and Hearts:

- ***The foreshadowing of the Kingdom in power is seen so clearly here in chapter 4 of the book of Acts. We quickly looked at this last time, but let’s examine it again with a special focus on verse 32:***

[READ] Acts 4:29-32

29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,

30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought [or, “anything”] of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

- ***“... neither said any of them that ought [or “any”] of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common”. The***

Holy Spirit had come upon them, “filling” them with desires to share all that they had for the good of all:

[READ] Acts 4:34-37

34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

35 And laid *them* down at the apostles' feet: **and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.**

36 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, *and* of the country of Cyprus,

37 Having land, sold *it*, and brought the money, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

- ***This was a powerful demonstration of a true “communal spirit” where everything was shared “in common”. And the apostles ruled over all including the daily distribution of foods so that every need was met. This was surely a foreshadowing of the Kingdom as prophesied. Remember our Lord’s words:***

Matt. 19:28-30

28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

30 But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last *shall be* first.

- ***So signs and wonders were given with the sharing of both property and hearts, and what a work of the Spirit it was. We see here not the fulfillment of the Kingdom promises, but surely a foreshadowing. And, again, note that this is not what we experience today. In no way is God working like this in the churches today.***

But not all was well there in those days as we shall see ...

II. A Rebellious Spirit Continues With Kingdom Judgments Foreshadowed:

- ***Indeed, there was a spirit of rebellion in the nation that would lead to its downfall, if it were not quenched.***

[READ] Acts 5:1-4

1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

2 And kept back *part* of the price, his wife also being privy to *it*, and brought a certain part, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land?

4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

- *The Holy Spirit of God is, as we see here, motivating Ananias and his wife to sell all and to give the proceeds to the apostles for the benefit of all. But a spirit of hypocrisy was in their midst and they hold back some of what they had gained in selling their property. And the Judgment of God fell and it was immediate, conclusive and final. Peter spoke the fateful words to Ananias.*

Acts 5:5 And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

- *Does the punishment seem too harsh? Does this correspond to our experience today? Should it? Who has such a pureness of heart in giving? Do you? And what is motivating our responses since we have never lived in a time such as this.*
- *Seems to me that the future Millennial Kingdom blessings were being foreshadowed there at that time. But what about the Kingdom Judgments? They are also prophesied. Remember, to get the full context of this, what Christ taught his disciples in his Sermon on the Mount. Just after the Beatitudes, we read these words:*

Matt. 5:27-30

27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

- ***For, even the desires of the heart are counted in Kingdom Law as Christ had taught. Not only evil acts but also evil desires are counted as sin. Sin is rebellion and under the intensified Kingdom Law (as distinguished from Moses Law here in verse 27), desires and intentions must be counted, in this case, for the sin of adultery.***

This reminds me very much of Zech. 5 which is about the prophesied coming Millennial Kingdom.

[READ] Zech. 5:1-4

1 Then I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a flying roll.

2 And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I answered, I see a flying [sc]roll; the length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits.

3 Then said he unto me, This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth: for every one that stealeth shall be cut off as on this side according to it; and every one that sweareth shall be cut off as on that side according to it.

4 I will bring it forth, saith the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name: and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof.

- ***But not only Ananias was subject to this judgment but also Sapphira, his wife, for they were in agreement in this sin. The signs are given here that the Kingdom powers were to some extent already in effect then including judgments for rebellion and sin.***

Acts 5:9-10

9 Then Peter said unto her [his wife], How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.

10 Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.

- ***Then, verse 12 summarizes what was occurring here in just a few words:***

[READ] Acts 5:12. ... by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch).

- ***Miracles, Signs, and “one accord” are marks of this Pentecostal Dispensation of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God has come upon all those there in that community and he is working his work dramatically. Those that stand opposed will suffer judgment. All who rebel against his working will be “cut off” as Peter has previously said as he applied the Mosaic prophecy to those days in which they were then living.***
- ***But, many were also being saved according to the preaching of the Kingdom Gospel with Signs following — to great effect:***

Acts 5:14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)

- ***And still, the enemies of God and of his truth were actively opposing his work, and, as we shall see, that also will have its consequences:***

Acts 5:28 ... [with Israel's leaders] Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us...

- ***Then a man named Gamaliel stands up and speaks. His words are so unexpected, I assume, and how different it would have been if the rulers of Israel had received fully his teaching on that fateful day.***

Acts 5:34, 38-40

34 Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space;

...

38 And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought:

39 But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.

40 And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten *them*, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

- ***This brings us to chapter 6 where in our next meeting, Lord willing, we will see how Israel as a nation, in God's sight, formally rejects their Risen Messiah and Savior.***

Conclusions and Application:

- ***In conclusion, even the Holy Spirit's coming in power with Signs and Wonders and a great working in the hearts such as perhaps had never been seen before was not enough to establish that long awaited Elect Nation, even that prophesied "people for his name".***
- ***That would now have to await. For God is now about to draw the curtain on this great Act of his glorious sweep of abundant grace, as he moves away step by step from the focus on Israel and turns to the Gentiles. Kingdom Law with its foreshadowing will give way to God's unlimited grace through Christ's glorious sacrifice for sin and sins and then his resurrection unto justification of life. Amen.***