

***“Paul’s Second Letter to Timothy —  
The Great Transition, The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace — Part 3  
The Offer of the Kingdom to Israel”***

**Review:**

- ***Continuing today our study we repeat again this clearly taught scriptural principle: “Dispensations do not mix well - transitions are therefore necessary”. But they may not be welcomed or appreciated by those believers living in those changing times. But they are needed for God’s dispensational programs to be implemented fully.***
- ***As I have pointed out here before, the book of Acts records the great transition beginning with the Pentecostal dispensation announced by Christ just before his Ascension 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 increasingly absent. 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.***

***We have seen here how the inspired narrative began with the end of that 400 years of silence when John was raised up. The preaching of the coming Kingdom as “at hand” had now begun and that preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom by our Lord after John’s identification of our Lord as Israel’s Messiah. Later our Lord then sent out his disciples with the same message. And always, accompanying that preaching were Signs and Wonders accrediting the preacher and his message.***

- ***Then we looked at Matthew 24 and saw how a time of tribulation and suffering would come before the judgment at the Lord’s return. This had been prophesied in many portions of the Old Testament, of course, but here again just before Christ’s passion and resurrection it is again being taught in details mostly taken from Daniel’s great revelation. I think this teaching is very important especially because it would have been so easy to think after Christ’s resurrection had occurred how the entire plan of God previously revealed might now have been changed. Many Bible teachers today surely do believe that in contrast to what Christ taught so clearly here in the end of Matthew’s gospel.***

- ***But there was that reference in the Matthew 24 commission to preach this message of a coming judgment and then the Kingdom so that “a people for his name” would be ready to inherit that long awaited Kingdom at his return. That established the priority of the nation’s repentance and faith in him. For otherwise, apart from that repentance and faith, the judgment would surely follow. Thus there was an imperative to all to repent and be converted.***
- ***Furthermore, in addition, in that other account found in Luke 24, the Lord had also said, “WAIT” — wait for the giving of the Spirit, power from on high. So the timing was not yet right for the establishing of the Lord’s long awaited Kingdom here on this earth.***
- ***The book of Acts begins with a similar account regarding the necessity to await the Spirit’s promised to come upon them with great power. But in addition they ask the excellent question of what would be occurring next: “When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” His answer seemed, I believe, strange to them:***

#### ***Acts 1:7-8***

***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.***

***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.***

***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 was implied strongly just before his ascension into heaven, the time was not yet right for all of prophecy to be fulfilled. For the Promise of the Spirit would occur “in place of” (or “instead of”), it seems, of the prophesied coming of the Lord himself. So, the Lord is coming again, but hard times will precede his coming, and the gospel of his resurrection and return in glory to judge his enemies — and his saints must be preached so that there is a people for his name to inherit the coming Kingdom. **FOR WHEN THE LORD RETURNS, ALL MUST BE READY FOR HIS COMING!*****

***One thing remained, however, as they were learning step by step as history progressed. What remained was the completed 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 something far more glorious in mind,***

***even “AN ELECT NATION”. 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.***

***However, those things were still unrevealed as Acts 2 begins with the record of the Spirit’s coming. We saw last time how “when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”***

***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!***

- ***So the Promise of the Spirit had come with the required Miracles and Signs as they had surely expected. Also 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 was.***

***So Peter, in applying that prophecy to the events they had just experienced, stated clearly that those events were a sign to all that the Day of the Lord would be coming perhaps soon and that all that heard needed to prepare for that Day of Judgment.***

- ***Then, to provide a final and compelling note to his exhortation, Peter preached 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 just as he had preached in verses 31-33. So Christ, whom they had crucified was alive again and was now soon returning in judgment! How might these Jews in pilgrimage in Jerusalem who had gathered for***

***the Holy Days respond to such a message? Note that this “gospel” was actually a message of condemnation and not of the abounding grace of God through Jesus Christ. Their response to Peter’s preaching [the second offer of the Kingdom, in fact] was dramatic!***

***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.***

***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 by Simeon and the OT Prophets. This was a message of repentance and water baptism considering all that Peter had just said. 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.***
- ***As we shall see today, 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?***

**Today’s Outline:**

***The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace:***

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

***I. The Offer of the Kingdom to Israel: The Offer Was Made:***

- ***We have seen how the Preparation had been fully made and the Promised Holy Spirit had been given with Signs and Wonders that***

*could no 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, under the control of the poured out Spirit of God now preaches a message the likes of which had never been preached before.*

*In this message he in effect offers that Kingdom to those assembled. Take note that he is not preaching specifically to the believers but the focus is on the entire group **INCLUDING THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF THE NATION, THE VERY ONES THAT HAD DELIVERED OUR LORD UP TO PILATE TO BE CRUCIFIED:***

***[READ ] 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.

***[READ ] 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.

**[READ ] Acts 3:22-25**

**22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.**

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

**24 Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.**

**25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.**

- ***These are amazing verses indeed. What are they saying? The key verses & phrases are these:***
  - ***Verses 13 & 14: You are the guilty parties. “Ye” and “you” make that clear. You crucified, you killed, you murdered, the Son of God!***
  - ***Verses 15 & 16: But God gloriously raised him from the dead and these many miracles prove that conclusively.***
  - ***Verse 17-19: But you did it ignorantly and the same is true of your rulers!! BUT, we are living in a time when God is fulfilling what he has promised as you have now seen openly displayed through many signs and wonders. “... Therefore, considering all of that] repent therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord”. These events will transpire if and when you [the group representing the Nation] repent and are converted.***
  - ***Verses 20 & 21: “... [at which time] he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: 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.”***
  - ***Verses 22 - 26: So this is intended to be a logical sequence. The time had come for the prophecies to be fulfilled that go back to the times of Abraham, Moses, Samuel and the***

prophets. *"You are the children of the prophets and of the covenant".*

- *BUT the key verse is number 23: " ... And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people." You might expect that upon hearing this there might be considerable anguish of heart and fear in most everyone. And these surely also included were those who were in the temple, the high priest, the rulers of the nation of Israel, religiously speaking, even the assembled priesthood working that day, no doubt.*
- *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.*

## **II. 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.*

***[READ ] 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 formal offer of the Kingdom itself had occurred as Peter preached that great message we have just examined as recorded in Acts 3. The Holy Spirit of God, the promised "power from on high", had been poured out on Pentecost and now the preaching of the coming Kingdom of God had been received by repentance and baptism by far more with the total number of believers mentioned here being about 5000 (perhaps in addition to those 3000 believing*

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

- ***But now (in conflict with the revealed prophetic plan as these that day had understood it at least) the rulers of Israel, including Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, the elders and all in that ruling group 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:***

**Acts 4:12** ... Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

***There is more here than perhaps meets the eye. We are accustomed to think of only a spiritual salvation when we hear these words, but in this context more is involved. In fact, for those hearing this, the leaders of the nation of Israel, it is their deliverance from the coming judgment when the Lord brings to completion his plan of establishing a Kingdom. They will surely be judged if they do not submit to these offers as delivered from God to them by Peter. The risen Lord is returning soon and all not receiving him and his message will be judged, even “cut off from among their people” as Moses had written so long before.***

***But, though the signs and wonders are being manifest everywhere, things will not go as planned or expected and the elders and priests first detained and then commanded that the apostles be silenced and that they preach no more in the name of Jesus. However, Peter and the others boldly confess Christ and promise to continue their preaching. They are then released.***

- ***It should really go without saying it that if this is was a valid offer of the Kingdom and if a foreshadowing of that coming Kingdom was now underway, that there should be many clearly seen and undeniable manifestations of that work of God evident. These would be the Signs and Wonders of the Kingdom, of course. Did they occur? Yes, of course, and not only for this one cripple who was healed as we have read here. There is much evidence here in these chapters of the Lord’s working with Signs and Miracles as should have been expected.***

**Acts 4:29-31**



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.

- ***The scene now changes and we will finish here today. The evidences of the working of God were powerfully described in these verses in a number of ways.***
  - ***There was a Spirit imposed unity among all believers including even communal, shared ownership of all property***
  - ***And, of course, the Signs and Wonders abounded***

***[READ ] Acts 4:32, 34-37.***

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

...

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.

- ***Many comments could be made about this and I will give only a couple, but we will soon see a specific example of how God was working with Ananias and Sapphira. BUT THE CLEARLY MANIFESTED POWER OF GOD AS FORESHADOWED IN KINGDOM GLORY WITH ABUNDANT SIGNS AND WONDERS CERTIFIES THIS PERIOD OF TIME AS A SPECIAL WORKING OF GOD. I WILL CALL IT THE "PENTECOSTAL DISPENSATION" ACCORDINGLY.***

***We will see next time Lord willing how it will go with two of those caught up in the events of the time. But their hardness of heart and***

***conflict of spirit will be reflected in many including the leaders of the nation. How sad it is to see the nation in the crucible of their times with the opportunity to repent and be saved. For “there is none other name under heaven whereby one must be saved”.***

**Conclusions and Application:**

- ***In conclusion, as the numbers of believers increased by the thousands on Pentecost Peter and the rest of the Twelve 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. Surely all the believers in general at that time were caught up in the glory of God being revealed there. That that would not be in fact the plan of God would soon be revealed one step at a time.***
- ***But there are evidences that the apostles knew something about how God’s elect nation was still to be created and not yet ready for the rest of the story, as it were. But the time was not yet ripe for the previously given “Commissions” (including the so-called “great” commission) to be carried out. For even the God’s chosen nation was not yet ready for that.***
- ***As we will see in our coming studies they were not even going forth to the Gentiles but were preaching only to the Jews though Christ had commanded otherwise. 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.***
  - ***Key explanatory words include these: “to the Jews first and then to the Greeks” and “because of the Jews” and Israel is surely still in the primary focus here in early Acts (and we will see more as we proceed next time).***

***NEXT TIME: The Offer of the Kingdom: The Kingdom Was Finally Rejected!***