

I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT

BY PASTOR ERIC A. LAMBERT, JR.

And it shall come to pass afterward, 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: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.” Joel 2:28-19

We are living in the last days my friends. I am sure that you have noticed the many prophecies that have been and are being fulfilled. Jesus tells us about all the terrible things that will precede his bodily appearance on the earth. Take a look at the things that are to come...

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? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold Matthew 24:3-12 (KJV).

It is as if Jesus was writing the headlines of our newspapers today. These words are scary for those who find themselves outside of the kingdom of God. If not careful, even Christians can find themselves in despair over Jesus' words.

As always, the Lord gives us a powerful positive in the face of so much negative. In the book of the prophet Joel, we see that the Lord will pour out His spirit upon all flesh. When does this happen? The prophet tells us that this happens after the devastation has occurred. The Lord always brings strong positive news to believers in the midst of bad news. I am happy that the Lord is sending a fresh outpouring of His spirit to us at the same time as the powers of darkness are moving. This appears paradoxical; however, the Lord knows what He is doing. The great outpouring that will come upon us will bring us into a new place in God. We will find ourselves wrapped in the Spirit of God and possessing supernatural abilities to perform miracles. Let us examine the occasion for our text and look for similarities to our world today.

The book of Joel is a delight for the Christian to study. In it we learn the plan and purpose of God towards His children. Joel begins by telling us the results of God's judgment on

the children of Israel. However, we should be grateful because whenever the Lord moves in judgment it is to bring the people to repentance. The judgment in Joel is no exception.

Let us see the result of God's wrath.

That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten. Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth. For a nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion. He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast it away; the branches thereof are made white. Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth. The meat offering and the drink offering is cut off from the house of the LORD; the priests, the LORD'S ministers, mourn. The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth. Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen; howl, O ye vinedressers, for the wheat and for the barley; because the harvest of the field is perished. The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men. Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl, ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God: for the meat offering and the drink offering is withholden from the house of your God (Joel 1:4-13).

Yes, my friend, it appears dismal. Can you imagine trees dried from the roots, no corn or wheat growing? All of the fig trees are barren and the entire ecosystem devastated. The people are without joy, their hearts in despair. One has to ask, why is this happening. The history of the text teaches us that the children of Israel had sinned. The result of sin is always national judgment. I can imagine the people felt completely hopeless. This is a bit disconcerting because this type of judgment can happen in America. In fact, if this nation does not change its ways and the church of the Lord Jesus begins to live like it should, we will see judgment in America like we have never seen before. Now I know many of the "prosperity teachers" are saying, "Wait a minute there friend. God is telling us to expect great times of blessing and wealth. In fact I am teaching the people to move in faith and claim their blessings." Now, I do believe in blessings and prosperity. Yet, I also believe they are predicated on holy living. In fact, our prosperity comes on the heels of our soul prospering (3 John 1:2) and the prospering of our soul is dependant upon living a life that is holy and pleasing to God.

How can we avoid the judgment and move into the blessing? Well, unfortunately we cannot. Judgment will come to our country. America has sinned against the Lord and we, the Church, have refused to take a stand against sin. We may as well prepare our hearts for the move of God to bring us to TRUE REPENTANCE and humility.

However, it is in the midst of these times that we see how truly merciful the Lord is to us.

Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD (Joel 1:14).

The Lord gives very clear directions for the revival to come:

- Sanctify a fast.
- Call a solemn assembly.
- Gather the elders and the people into the Lord's house.
- Cry unto the Lord.

SANCTIFY A FAST

I love this. God says we must sanctify a fast. There is just too much feasting in the church today. My Pastor and mentor, Dr. Benjamin Smith Sr., used to say, *We should spend less time feasting and playing and more time fasting and praying!* He was a very godly man who believed in the power of prayer and fasting.

God demands that we sanctify a fast. We must set aside a time for fasting for it to be effective. Fasting should always be purposeful and never done haphazardly.

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? (Isaiah 58:6).

The Word of God is clear: fasting must have the purpose of destroying the oppressive powers of darkness.

CALL A SOLEMN ASSEMBLY

The next step is to call a solemn assembly. This speaks to the need to bring the people together for the purpose of prayer. We often gather for the work of the Lord, yet we seldom gather for the Lord of the work. The word "solemn" means *sacred* or *strictly for a purpose*. We need to gather with seriousness, as we are called of God for a serious task.

GATHER THE PEOPLE

Here comes the good part. Gather the people and the elders. It is time that we work together. So often we see the clergy being exalted above the laity; it is clear that this practice must stop. The Lord is calling the people together for this move. I challenge the ministers to pray with the church membership for the next move of God. I remember during one of our prayer revivals, when the Lord challenged me to move from my normal location of prayer in the chancel area and move to the floor with the people. He said, *I want you to pray with the people as well as for the people*. It was truly a rewarding experience. I felt so close to the lamb and the sheep. Now, I understand why the Lord calls both the elders and the people together for the next move of God. UNITY IS THE KEY FOR THIS REVIVAL!

CRY UNTO THE LORD

Finally, the Lord says we must cry unto him. In our world, we cry to so many different people that it is becoming normal to expect people to rescue us. I am convinced that we must return to crying unto the Lord. We have become so dependant on the government and religious leaders to bail us out of our situations that we have forgotten to call on the Lord.

I am very concerned about this. The Lord invites us to call upon Him, yet we neglect to do so when it becomes necessary. Let's take a look at a couple of verses that invite this action:

Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you (Jeremiah 29:12 KJV).

Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not (Jeremiah 33:3 KJV).

We need to call upon the Lord regularly. I believe that it is great to call on the Lord and hear His voice. We are in a very unique position today. The world is in darkness; we possess the light to bring them into the path of God. We should call on the Lord to bring His truth to the world. Call on the Lord and He will answer.

REVIVAL

Now we come to the revival. Remember our opening scriptures,

And it shall come to pass afterward, 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: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit Joel 2:28-29 (KJV).

The conditions have been met and the Lord is ready to pour his Spirit out on all flesh. His vessels are in place and the glory of the Lord is in the House.

Look at the things God promises. Sons and daughters begin to speak for the Lord. I am always amazed when I see the anointing of God fall on my daughter. I watch her become another person as she ministers in song and the power of God comes from her voice. I am sure that every Spirit filled parent feels a sense of joy when they see their children being used of God. Well, hold onto your seats. When this revival comes, we will see our sons and daughters begin to prophesy. They will begin to speak for God. God has an army of young people who are in the wings waiting to be used by Him. They will have the anointing of God in their lives and the Spirit of God on their lives as they move in the gifts of the Spirit. I await this move with joy!

There will also be a season of supernatural revelations; visions and dreams will explode in our arena. I believe God will move in the prophetic in unusual ways and we must be open to the move of the Spirit of God. When this outpouring starts, there will be opposition from Satan, yet as it continues the powers of darkness will give in to the move of the Spirit and become weaker as this great rain of the Spirit of God comes full circle. I can't wait to see the fullness of the Spirit's outpouring and the results of the move of God. It will be a time of great healing and prosperity. We will see the effects of the power of God, as the kingdom of darkness begins to lose its grip on the people. Sickness will be moved away as the healing power of God flows like rain. Saints of the Most High God will experience supernatural increase of health and finance. That's right! We will see the supernatural provision of the Kingdom of Heaven during this revival.

The Gospel will be carried into all the world as we take our rightful places as ambassadors for Christ. Remember when the Gospel is preached, the power of God brings salvation to all who believe. I believe it will be a time of great outpouring.

Well, that is something to look forward to. The promise of God is that He will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh and there will be real manifestations of the Spirit.

It will be a time of truth and love, as we see the Father and the Son showering their love upon us.

And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil. 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. 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. 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 (Joel 2:24-27).

This is the true purpose of the outpouring: Restoration, Revival, and Relationship.

As we await this revival, let us do our part: fast, pray, and call upon the Lord. We are at the dawn of a new day and we must not lose the momentum we have gained. I pray you will continue to be blessed in the Presence of our Lord, Jesus. †