

¹⁴ 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^a.
¹⁵ For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is *only* the third hour of the day; ¹⁶ but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel:
¹⁷ ‘AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS^b,’ God says,
‘THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND^c;
AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY^d,
AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS,
AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS;
¹⁸ EVEN ON MY BONDSLAVES, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN,
I WILL IN THOSE DAYS POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT
And they shall prophesy.
¹⁹ ‘AND I WILL GRANT WONDERS IN THE SKY ABOVE
AND SIGNS ON THE EARTH BELOW,
BLOOD, AND FIRE, AND VAPOR OF SMOKE.
²⁰ ‘THE SUN WILL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS
AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD,
BEFORE THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS DAY OF THE LORD SHALL COME^e.
²¹ ‘AND IT SHALL BE THAT EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED^f.’

^a 2:14 **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.”** In the New Testament, Luke alone uses the Greek phrase translated “raised his voice.” It is used each time of someone raising his voice to gain attention in a crowd (Luke 11:29; Acts 14:11; 22:22). Rather than the impulsive Peter of the gospels we are seeing the directive Peter, asserting the apostolic gifts with graceful tact.

Most times Peter preached, he was attempting to explain something great God had done as evidence of the resurrection of Christ (2:14 ff.; 3:12 ff.; 4:8 ff.; 5:29 ff.; 11:4 ff.). While he illustrated the power of the resurrected Christ by pointing to the signs, he directed his listeners to the Scriptures as the accurate source of authority. Our job today is still to simply explain the revelation God has left for us in the Scriptures and to apply it to current events that confirm the truth of God’s word.

^b 2:17 **AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS.** Peter is quoting from Joel 2:28-32. It can be said now that we are living in the “last days” (see also 1 John 2:18) because Peter says the last days began on—or perhaps had already begun by—Pentecost. Some other biblical references to the last days are: Genesis 49:1; Micah 4:1; Isaiah 2:2; Hebrews 1:2; 1 Peter 1:20; Jude 18.

^c 2:17 **THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND.** The word translated “pour forth” is also used of the Spirit in verse 18, and graphically in 1:20 of the contents of Judas spilling out in the Field of Blood. The Old Testament word is used of water, blood, tears, the heart of wisdom and anger (Isaiah 57:6; Psalm 42:4; 1 Samuel 1:15; Proverbs 1:23; Lamentations 2:4, 11; 4:11). In the New Testament it is used of God’s wrath, the Spirit, the blood of Christ and God’s love (Revelation 16:2; Titus 3:6; Matthew 26:28; Romans 5:5).

^d 2:17 **AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY.** The New Testament gift of prophecy as defined in 1 Corinthians 14 is not for predicting the future but for delivering God’s message. This gift is given to both men and women but must be exercised (as with all gifts) within the boundaries of God’s word (1 Corinthians 14:26-35).

^e 2:20 **THE SUN WILL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS DAY OF THE LORD SHALL COME.** Certainly the first signs did occur in the time of the early Church as recorded in Acts, but we are not given information here that tells us whether this is a naturally occurring total lunar eclipse or a supernatural phenomenon not predicted by the meteorological calendar. We are still living in these last days of which Peter speaks, so this part of Joel’s prophecy may yet find its fulfillment before the “great and glorious day of the Lord.”

^f 2:21 **AND IT SHALL BE THAT EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.** This quotation describes the “last days” as those which precede God’s judgment. The calling on the

²² “Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know — ²³ this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death^a. ²⁴ But God raised Him up again^b, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power^c. ²⁵ For David says of Him,
 ‘I SAW THE LORD ALWAYS IN MY PRESENCE;
 FOR HE IS AT MY RIGHT HAND, SO THAT I WILL NOT BE SHAKEN.
²⁶ ‘THEREFORE MY HEART WAS GLAD AND MY TONGUE EXULTED;
 MOREOVER MY FLESH ALSO WILL LIVE IN HOPE;
²⁷ BECAUSE YOU WILL NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES,
 NOR ALLOW YOUR HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY.
²⁸ ‘YOU HAVE MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE;
 YOU WILL MAKE ME FULL OF GLADNESS WITH YOUR PRESENCE^d.’

Lord in its Old Testament context prophesies physical deliverance of God’s people from his physical judgments on the world (compare this with Romans 10:13). Here Peter makes the application that the people of God will also enjoy a spiritual salvation.

^a 2:23 **this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death.** Peter says the “predetermined plan” and “foreknowledge” of God brought Jesus to the cross. Translated “predetermined plan” here, he uses the stronger of two words often translated “will” in “will of God.” The weaker word usually indicates God’s desire. This word indicates His decree. Peter preaches the sovereignty of God: that neither the betrayal of Judas nor the trial of the Jews pushed history outside of His purposeful plan. Not only did the Father *know* what would happen, He *planned* it.

Both sides of God’s work are clear here, even if we cannot reconcile them:

1. God used evil-doers to work His plan.
2. Evil-doers are justly judged for doing evil.

The truth Peter reveals here only disturbs those who have not yet come to terms with the depravity of man. The amazing part of this story is not that God planned to use His enemies to crucify His Son. They had a choice and chose what comes naturally to rebels. The amazing part of this story is that God planned to have His Son executed to save some of his enemies. Judas and the other tormentors of Jesus were completely and justly accountable for what they did.

^b 2:24 **But God raised Him up again.** Peter’s skillful preaching in Acts is always careful to leave unbelievers with the clear picture that they are in fact at odds with God. The target of evangelistic preaching has always been the repentance of lost souls, who have no reason to repent until they learn why they are lost.

A clear message sounds distastefully militant in our day of accommodation and pluralism. For the Christian with a message to tell in the spirit of Elijah and Peter, however, what is the alternative? To refuse to be militant about eternal matters is to be a spiritual pacifist.

^c 2:24 **putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.** The word translated “agony” was commonly used of birth pangs. Peter literally says Jesus was “loosed” from the pangs of death.

^d 2:28 **YOU HAVE MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE; YOU WILL MAKE ME FULL OF GLADNESS WITH YOUR PRESENCE.** This is a quotation from Psalm 16:8-11 and is taken nearly word-for-word from the Septuagint (LXX, with the exception of one letter), a translation of the Old Testament into Greek (the common language of the Roman Empire).

²⁹ “Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day^a. ³⁰ And so, because he was a prophet and knew that GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT *one* OF HIS DESCENDANTS ON HIS THRONE, ³¹ he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY. ³² This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. ³³ Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear^b. ³⁴ For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says:

‘THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD,

“SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND,

³⁵ UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET^c.”

³⁶ Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.”^d

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^a 2:29 **Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.** The tomb of David was a well-known landmark to Peter’s audience.

^b 2:33 **Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.** The disciples saw fire and heard a wind. The crowd saw uneducated Galileans and heard an articulate message.

^c 2:34-35 **THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, “SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET.”** This is a precise quotation of the LXX (see the note on 2:28) from Psalm 110:1.

^d 2:14-36 This message is a testament to the change wrought in Peter by the coming of the Spirit. His boldness is an example to believers of the importance of presenting a clear message to the world. The prophet Elijah used a similar technique in a similar time (1 Kings 18:16-39, especially verse 21). Observe what Peter did so that there could be no misunderstanding his message:

1. He presented a God who is sovereign. Peter did not lay the foundation of the Church with a man-centered theology. He presented a door opened by God and did not place the “keys of the kingdom” (see Matthew 16:13-20) into the hands of the depraved.
2. He pictured people as ones who have chosen evil.
3. He warned of the imminent judgment of that sovereign God on the ones who have chosen evil. The quotation from Joel was only good news to those on the right side and Peter made it clear that the Jews were on the wrong side.
4. He pointed the people to the only way out.
5. He forced the people to take sides.