The LORD's Spirit to Be Poured Out on All People (Joel 2:28–32) **24 May 2026 KRCN**

1. Chapter 2 of the New Testament book of Acts contains the account of the coming of the Holy Spirit. Explaining when, where, to whom, and what happened, it records: "This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel."

2. The day Jesus was crucified was the Day of Preparation for the Passover. Three days later, He rose again. The risen Jesus remained on earth for forty days, and forty days after His resurrection, He ascended into heaven. Ten days after His ascension, the Holy Spirit came down like tongues of fire.

3. The Jews call that day Pentecost. "Pentecost" means the fiftieth day—namely, the fiftieth day after the Passover. Because the Holy Spirit descended on that day, it is called "Pentecost Sunday" or "the Day of Pentecost." Since it comes ten days after the Ascension, with Ascension Day falling on a Thursday, Pentecost always falls on a Sunday.

4. Luke, describing the events of that day, reveals the meaning of the coming of the Holy Spirit through the sermon of Peter the fisherman. As mentioned already, he says, "This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel." This means that the event was not a sudden accident that arose one day, but the fulfillment of God's promise—something He had planned, purposed, and ordained beforehand in His covenant.

5. If we look for that blueprint, we find it in Joel chapter 2. Yet reading it as Peter quoted it, Acts 2:17 says: "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people." God had planned to pour out His Spirit—that is, the Holy Spirit.

6. Then, having determined to fulfill that promise, God also prophesies what those who receive the anointing of His Spirit will consequently become. The description of those who receive the Spirit of the LORD appears in the latter half of v. 17: "Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams."

7. There is a similar style of writing in 1 John. When the apostle John speaks of the "new commandment" in his letter, he says, "Dear children, I write to you…" Then he continues, "Fathers, I write to you…" Then again he addresses "young men," and again "fathers."

8. In the same way, when God describes those who will receive the Holy Spirit after He pours Him out, He separately mentions children, young people, and old people. To

apply this pattern, when the new commandment is given, the children prophesy, the fathers see visions, and even the old men dream dreams.

9. The reason for comparing this passage with 1 John is to show that there can be a difference between what actually happened and the way it is described. In the Old Testament book of Joel, it says, “Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams.” Yet in Jerusalem at Pentecost, what actually occurred was speaking in tongues.

10. According to the record of Acts, on the Day of Pentecost in the upper room of Mark, when the Holy Spirit descended, they “began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” What the prophet Joel in the Old Testament had prophesied as “prophecy, visions, and dreams” was this very event.

11. In other words, the things that happen to us through the coming of the Holy Spirit may appear outwardly like speaking in tongues, but in reality they are the prophecy, visions, and dreams given to children, adults, and the elderly alike. These are not different things, but two ways of describing the same reality.

12. Continuing with the words of Joel, listen to this: “I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke” (Joel 2:30). Peter, who knew this prophecy, quoted it in his sermon as follows: “I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke” (Acts 2:19).

13. There is a slight difference between the original text of Joel and Peter’s wording, is there not? “Blood and fire and smoke” are the same, but in Joel it is called “wonders,” whereas Peter interprets it as “wonders in heaven and signs on earth.” This is the distinction that appears between the original text, Peter who quoted it, and Luke who recorded his sermon.

14. What we learn from this is that the meaning of the blood, fire, and smoke is connected to the wonders and signs of our receiving the Holy Spirit. What, then, do blood, fire, and smoke signify? Although God calls them “wonders” and Peter calls them “wonders and signs,” they are pointing to the sacrifices of the Old Testament.

15. Some time ago, when I visited Jerusalem, I had the opportunity to enter an area still under excavation. We walked up the road leading to the City of David. It was a road leading up to the temple, nearly three thousand years old. Beneath that road ran a

massive drainage system, and there is a tradition that when the temple was destroyed, people hid in those sewers in an attempt to escape.

16. During the festivals, Jews scattered throughout the world came up to offer sacrifices, and it is said that roughly two million lambs were slaughtered. That drainage system was the channel through which the blood of those animals was washed away and carried off.

17. Therefore, whether at Pentecost or Passover, if one were asked to describe the sacrifices that took place three times a year, sacrifice was marked by immense streams of blood, blazing fire consuming the flesh of animals, and towering columns of smoke from burning their entrails and skins. Blood, fire, and smoke are, in other words, sacrifice.

18. But whose sacrifice is this, after all? It is the once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus Christ—the event of the cross. In other words, when those anointed with the Spirit of the LORD at Pentecost speak in tongues, when children prophesy, young people see visions, and old people dream dreams, what makes all of this possible is the peace offering of the cross.

19. To put it again, through the work of Jesus Christ—His death, resurrection, and ascension—God declares that He will fulfill His promise to pour out His Spirit upon all people.

20. Now look at the next v.: “Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD, the sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood…” (Joel 2:31).

21. What is this prophecy pointing to? As the hymn says, “When our Lord was nailed upon the cross, the sun withheld its light, its brightness hidden, and darkness covered all” (Hymn 143, v. 3). This too describes what will take place on the great and dreadful day of the LORD, the day of final judgment. It is through that very day that God says He will fulfill His promise.

22. Therefore, the meaning of Pentecost is this: God’s covenant has been fulfilled through Jesus Christ. It is the day that proclaims that God has kept His promise. In history, He sent Jesus Christ to offer the once-for-all sacrifice, and through the merit of His blood, God sent His own Spirit—the Spirit of the LORD—which He had promised to give.

23. Then what does it mean that we have come to speak in tongues? It means that we have come to dream dreams, prophesy, and see visions. Therefore, if someone speaks in

tongues, and like the 120 disciples gathered in the upper room at Pentecost, speaks not of something else but of the mighty works of God in various languages, it declares that God's promise has been fulfilled in that person.

24. But was it fulfilled only for them? Certainly not. It was fulfilled for all who received the Spirit of the LORD on that day. What promise? The promise that they would be anointed with the Spirit of the LORD—none other than the promise of salvation.

25. Look at the final verse of today's passage: "And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved" (Joel 2:32). Now look also at the verse Peter quotes in Acts: "And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Acts 2:21).

26. In other words, a door has been opened before us. The opportunity for salvation has arrived. To use the language of Revelation, the Son of Man has come and is standing at the door of our house, knocking. Whoever opens the door will find Him entering in, eating with them, and they with Him.

27. The event of Pentecost means that what God promised to us has been fulfilled. Through the cross of Jesus Christ, God has opened to us the gates of heaven that had been shut. Thus, everyone who calls upon the name of the LORD may enter by that way into the new heaven and the new earth.

28. There is one part Peter did not quote to the very end in his sermon—the final portion of Joel 2:32: "For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the LORD has said, among the survivors whom the LORD calls."

29. This means that although it appears as though everyone has been given the freedom to call upon the name of the LORD, in reality that is not so. Everyone who calls upon the name of the LORD will indeed be saved. Yet those who are able to call upon that name are limited. They are those who escape in Jerusalem; they are the remnant.

30. Therefore, on this Pentecost Sunday, I dare to proclaim before you: if the LORD causes some to escape His judgment on His great and dreadful day, if there are any left as His remnant amid that judgment, then call upon the name of the LORD and receive this salvation that God has prepared. Amen.