

Restoration



David Wilkerson May 1, 1982

The days of the Gentiles are almost over. God has given us plenty of warning that the Spirit will not forever strive with the rebellious. But before this generation comes under the retribution of almighty God - a great restoration is prophesied.

The prophets predicted the end could not come until first there was "A Great Day of The Lord." Joel cried, "The day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand" (Joel 2:1). The very heavens will quake at the sound of His voice, as our Lord awakens to pull down satanic strongholds. "Just once more," the Scriptures say, "He will shake not only the earth, but also heaven." No wonder the prophets wanted to sound the loud trumpets and call a solemn assembly.

The prophet Joel is the messenger of this great promise of restoration in the last days. He foresaw "floors full of wheat and the vats overflowing with wine and oil" (2:24). He saw, in his prophetic mind, God's famished people once again "eating in plenty, and fully satisfied - with God dealing wondrously with his people." The shame was to be lifted from God's house (2:26).

Before Joel outlined what God was going to do, he reminded the church that "the Lord's camp is very great, and he is strong that executed his word" (2:11). God is about to execute His "great and terrible day," and none shall be able to withstand it.

Here Is the Promise

"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..." (Joel 2:25).

The psalmist David said the righteous shall "be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth fruit... with leaves that do not wither... fruitful and prosperous..." (Psalm 1:1-3). But that promise is only to those who have totally separated themselves from the wicked, and who refuse to walk in the way of sinners. It is only for those who are devoted students of God's Word, meditating in it day and night.

"The ungodly are not so," said David. They become weak and withered, blown about by every wind and wave of doctrine. The compromisers are likened to withered trees, diseased and corrupted with every conceivable kind of worm.

This is a picture of many professing Christians in God's house today. They neglected their Bible reading; they became too preoccupied to pray and build themselves up in the faith; they became cozy with the ungodly and took their seat among the scornful.

Joel cried, "All the trees of the field are withered, for their joy has dried up..." (1:12). This weeping prophet was heartbroken over the sad condition of so many of God's chosen people. The enemy was destroying the vine. The harvest was perishing. The blessing and joy of the Lord were being stripped from Israel. The enemy had become very bold:

"...he hath the teeth of a great lion. He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig tree [chewed off the bark]; the

branches thereof are white..." (Joel 1:6-7).

Think of it - a forest debarked, clean bare, blanched white with disease. What vivid language Joel used - "languished... dried up... withered... wasted... desolate... broken down barns... rotten seed... trees aflame." He is describing the spiritual condition of the Laodicean church of the last days.

The Spreading Cankerworm

An army of cankerworms has been eating away at the lives of multitudes of backslidden Christians. Outwardly they appear as trees planted by living water - but inwardly they are corrupted, weak, diseased. They no longer bear fruit! They are drying up spiritually.

Divorce is a cankerworm. So is adultery. So are drinking and drugs. So is worldmindedness. So are dirty television and filthy movies. So is prayerlessness. So is neglect of the Bible. So are gossip, and rebellion, and fear, and doubt, and carrying grudges. And the cankerworms have been wreaking havoc in God's house, leaving so many Christians stripped and spiritually diseased.

The cankerworm did its destructive work within the bark of the tree. So it is with sin. It is eating away deep within those who have gotten away from the presence of the Lord. The cankerworm only attacked trees that were weak and unhealthy. Satan is having a heyday because he knows he can get at Christians who are spiritually weak and frail. This explains why there is so much depression and despair among Christians today. Prayerless, half-hearted Christians have become so weak, sin has overpowered them.

Joel became that the enemy should be getting the upper hand. "O Lord, give not thine heritage to reproach... that sin should rule them.... Why should people be saying, Where is their God?" (Joel 2:17).

That has become the prayer of my heart, too. It should be the prayer of all the holy people of God. We should be weeping, prostrated before the Lord and crying, "How long, O Lord, will you permit the sham, the worldliness, the divorcing, the cheating, the hypocrisy - to continue in the holy place? When will you move to wake up the entire congregation and bring them back to repentance and holiness? Why should the enemy run roughshod over so many of God's people? Do something now, Lord."

Restoration Power Is Coming

God is going to do something about spiritual deterioration. He is going to build again the house of David that has fallen down. He is going to destroy the locusts and the cankerworms - and restore the damage done by sin. What a glorious promise has been given to every child of God! On His own, by His own decree, the Lord has promised to pour out restoration power upon the church.

"I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, and the cankerworm..." (Joel 2:25).

God cannot undo all the damage done by our modern-day apostasy and wickedness, but He can - and will - make a new beginning. I tell you, in the Spirit - we are even now beginning to witness this predicted New Beginning. Let the ministers of the Lord fast and weep - repenting of their sins - and cry aloud that our Lord is again coming to His temple to cleanse and purify - and restore!

I have never believed that our Lord would sit idly by and permit a flood of adultery, alcohol, drugs and wickedness to break up our homes and claim an entire generation of young people. Don't you understand, saints - that without this sovereign act of God in restoring and healing, this generation is lost. You had better believe it! Your children face an angry devil out to drown them in a flood of promiscuous sex, alcohol, drugs, and rebellion. It's a supernatural, demonic last ditch stand by Satan because he knows his time is short. I tell you, God will not permit Satan to destroy our youth. God is about to do a new thing.

God is about to do something about the pandemic divorce rate, even among ministers. God is about to do something about the fear, depression, and loneliness spreading throughout His kingdom. Our all-powerful God is even now shaking Himself as one who awakens, and He is beginning to roar against the enemy. It is as if He is putting Satan, the world, and all humanity on notice - "I will arise - I will bless Zion - I will shake everything - I will restore!"

Restoration Through Bible Truth

God has told us how He is going to bring about this great restoration. First, He will pour out His Holy Spirit in such

copious ways, it will bring health and strength back to all the trees in His forest. The worm of sin will begin to lose its power as God's people get back to Bible reading. A powerful revelation of the Lord's new covenant will make God's people as bold as lions. Yes - believe it - a revival of spiritual strength and divine health is going to be poured out from on high. A new emphasis on in-depth Bible study is already at work in the land. This renewed thirst for God's Word is destined by God to be the river of power and strength that will bring about a restoration of faith and spiritual power.

God has declared He will once again put His Sword in the hand of His beloved. The church is going to turn wholeheartedly back to the Word of God - back to honest Bible preaching - and God's people are going to once again discover the power available to them to cast down every satanic stronghold. Away with the light, frivolous preaching of God's Word now! Away with the cliches, the stories, the headlines - and back to preaching only the Holy Word.

Saints - get into the Word! Restoration power has been promised to you! Your home can be healed. God can restore to you joy, peace, and glorious victory - through the power of His Word.
The Spirit and Power of Elijah!

We have been given another great and precious promise, whereby God will restore. The prophet Malachi bore the good news. The Old Testament closes out with this glorious prophecy -

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord! And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse..." (Malachi 4:5-6).

It is true Jesus said of John, "If you will receive it, this is Elijah, which was spoken of..." (Matthew 11:14). What Christ was saying is this: "John the Baptist has upon him the spirit and power of Elijah - if you could just see it." We are told the angel of the Lord prophesied to Zechariah that his son John would "go forth before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to their fathers... to make ready a people prepared for the Lord..." (Luke 1:17).

I believe Malachi's prophecy is for today also. I believe that once again God is going to put upon many of His chosen servants, the spirit and power of Elijah. And these men and women of God are going to be mightily used to bring about a restoration of families. Divorces will be canceled! Children will be convicted of their rebellion and be restored in love to their parents. Healing for our families is clearly predicted.

This prophecy is being fulfilled before our eyes - right now. Recently, in a Texas town, an unassuming young pastor began to pray for the salvation of the youth in his local schools. God put on him that dynamic spirit and power of Elijah. Not only have hundreds in his local school been saved - the restoration is spreading to schools wherever he goes. Not hundreds - but thousands of high school students are being convicted of their drugs, alcohol, sex and rebellion. In my own meetings, it has been something to behold. Young people are hurrying home from our outreaches to "make-up" with their parents. They have been confessing deep hatred. But now they weep! They repent! And, it will spread all through the land! Because God has promised to restore parents and children. Drug pushers - beware! Pot-heads and boozers - beware! The Holy Ghost is taking over - and an army of Elijah-type teenagers are going to claim their schools for God!

I am so excited I can hardly write these words - because of what I see coming! Unknown, unassuming, humble young men and women of God are being miraculously touched, anointed - and they have been given a supernatural mission. They have been told - "Go forth - and restore! For the day of the Lord has come. The cankerworms of drugs and alcohol are no longer permitted to eat away at the life of the youth. God will destroy the cankerworms."

The Last Outpouring

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit follows restoration, according to Joel. God has to heal and restore His people to prepare them for the miracles and wonders about to come.

I know many will not receive what I am about to say - yet many will. I do not believe we have yet seen the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in all its glory and fullness, as prophesied by Joel. What we have seen are just a few sprinkles! We have been given just a foretaste. We have had a worldwide charismatic renewal. Protestants and Catholics alike now testify to having been baptized in the Holy Spirit. Love has brought many together. It has been an experience shared worldwide. Yet it is just a foretaste.

God will permit nothing to hinder what He plans to do! The enemy is in for a surprise. Just as it appears the church will be inundated by a satanic flood - the Spirit will raise up a standard. Understand what that standard is, and you will understand what God is about to do! The standard is a holy people, pure, undefiled, delivered from the corruption that is in the world. That standard is a new breed of sanctified Christians, who will shine forth as lights in the midst of a wicked and perverse generations. It will not be just a renewal of love and praise. It will be a restoration of holiness unto the Lord!

The charismatic renewal must now flow into this restoration stream of holiness and purity - or be left out of what God is going to do.

There will still be shouting and praise - but it will be the shout of victory over sin and compromise. This fulfills to the letter the purpose of the last outpouring - "that all who call on his name shall be delivered..." (Joel 2:32). Delivered from what? From sin! From the spirit of the world!

We have not had the fullness of the Spirit's outpouring until we see baptized people separating themselves completely from the world. There must come an emphasis on separation and purity of heart. The purpose of the Spirit's coming is to sanctify and prepare a people for the Lord's return. He is coming for those without spot or wrinkle.

What kind of baptism is it that allows such coziness with the world - such as we have been witnessing among those who claim to be filled with the Spirit? Where is the heart searching, the weeping, the fasting, the burden for lost souls, the broken-hearted cry for holiness and purity?

When the fullness of the Spirit's outpouring comes upon all flesh - we shall see conviction for sin everywhere. "He will convict the world of sin... judgment and righteousness - that is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Tragically, too many speak with tongues, then live like the devil. Sin was never uprooted. All they received was an experience of ecstasy. God blessed them just enough to call them into a deeper life of yieldedness and holiness. But they stopped and went about saying - "I got the Holy Ghost."

Oh - there is so much more. I thank God for the privilege of praying in an unknown tongue - it is my way of releasing all the pent-up praises to God in a communication beyond my understanding. But you can speak with the tongues of men and even angels - and have received nothing - without charity. But I say it goes even deeper. You are not truly baptized with the Holy Spirit until every hidden part of your soul has been exposed - and every sin confessed and forsaken.

I don't listen to men who go around telling people how to receive the Holy Ghost - while all the time they leave their wives and pick up with someone else. Others speak in tongues, then soak themselves in beer, wine, and even whiskey. That's all coming down, folks!

God is going to clean up His church. He is going to pour out a spirit of conviction for sin unlike anything the world has witnessed. It will touch not only our churches, but high schools, colleges, and everywhere people congregate. The spirit outpoured on all flesh means - conviction for sin and a hunger for righteousness - upon all.

Spend just one full day in praying and fasting - shut in with God and your Bible - and you will understand this message. You too will begin to experience the restoration of your soul, spirit, marriage, and family.

Ask Him to destroy all your cankerworms.

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