

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study guide is to facilitate the study of Acts 2:14-21 as a supplement to the sermon. It is based on my (Michael's) study and meditation on the passage. This handout can be used for personal study or community group conversation. (I hope you join a group!)

ACTS 2:14-21 ESV

14 But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. 15 For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. 16 But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: 17 "'And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; 18 even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. 19 And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; 20 the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. 21 And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

STRUCTURE

- I. Peter and the apostles are reliable witnesses:
 - a. Rather than being afraid, they obey Jesus' commission to bear witness to "Jerusalem" and "Judea" (2:14; cf. 1:8).
 - b. Rather than being drunk, they clearly interpret the Scripture (2:15-16).
- II. Peter and the apostles reliably interpret Pentecost in light of Joel's prophecy (2:17-21).
 - a. Pentecost fulfills Joel's prophecy about the *last days*: a universal outpouring of the Spirit for prophecy (2:17-18).
 - b. Pentecost foreshadows Joel's prophecy about the *last day*: signs and wonders in the heavens and on earth (2:19-20).
 - c. Pentecost demands that we call on Jesus to be saved on that *last day* (2:21).

GENERAL COMMENTARY:

In obedience to Jesus' command to be witnesses "in **Jerusalem... Judea... Samaria... and to the end of the earth**," (Acts 1:8), Peter and the apostles begin by addressing the "Men of **Judea** and all who dwell in **Jerusalem**" (2:14). The restoration of Israel begins with a miracle and with preaching. By the end, 3000 will be saved (2:41).

For the second time in these early chapters, Peter takes the lead, and yet he's still connected to the eleven who stand with him. The apostles are portrayed here as reliable witnesses, who not only obey Jesus' commission, but with a clear head are able to interpret Pentecost in light of the Scripture. That Peter's voice is prominent does not suggest that he was the first pope; rather, it shows that God loves to use leaders. He especially uses broken and recycled leaders. Peter—who just recently denied Christ—now boldly testifies before the very audience that crucified his Lord. Boldness is one of the hallmarks of the Spirit's infilling (cf. Acts 4:8, 13, 31). Broken vessels, filled with the Holy Spirit, become bold witnesses.

The majority of our present passage is a quotation from Joel 2. There, Joel interprets a devastating locust invasion as a judgment from God, which portends an even greater judgment to come—unless they repent. If they do repent, however, God will pour out His Spirit on Israel. This, in turn, will lead to widespread prophetic ministry—something unknown to Israel, except for a small and select group of people throughout Israel's history.

Joel's prophecy is set in the last days, which Peter emphasizes by interpreting the miracle of tongues as the prophetic phenomenon predicted by Joel. Joel predicted a "last days" outpouring of the Spirit, which would be marked by prophecy. Joel also predicted a "day of the Lord," which we might call, "the last day." Thus, Pentecost marks the beginning of a period called the last days; this period would extend between the first and second coming of Jesus; this period would be marked by an increased presence of the Spirit for God's people; this period would be marked by widespread prophecy; and this period would culminate with the "day of the Lord." Peter's appeal is to view the events of Pentecost in light of Joel's prophetic urgency. Jesus is "the Lord" to whom we must

call, lest the “day of the Lord”—the day of judgment—swallow us up. The good news is that everyone who calls on Jesus will be saved. The extra good news is that this promise, originally made to Israel, now applies to all of us.

VERSE-BY-VERSE COMMENTARY:

14 But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words.

—“But”: in contrast to the mockers of verse 13, who accused the believers of drunkenness, Peter reasons wisely.

—“standing with the eleven”: Peter’s prominent position among the apostles has already arisen in 1:13, where he is listed first, and in 1:15, where he leads the 120 in discussing the next apostle. Even when there is a plurality of leadership, God naturally raises up prominent voices. This could possibly be an argument for the “first among equals” approach of an elder board, where the Senior Pastor is the leader of the church, yet his vote is the same as everyone else. Peter’s voice was prominent, but he was nothing like a pope. He speaks for the twelve, but he shares equal authority with the twelve.

—“Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem”:

- Peter echoes Jesus’ commission in Acts 1:8. Beginning from Jerusalem and Judea, the Gospel would ultimately go to the ends of the earth. God’s restoration project for the globe has begun to spread through Peter.
- There is some debate about whether Peter addresses the pilgrims from around Jerusalem (2:9-11) or the permanent residents of Jerusalem. “all who dwell in Jerusalem” sounds like the latter. On the other hand, on a feast like Pentecost, it’s impossible to imagine that only long-term residents would be present. The answer is probably both-and. Both permanent and temporary residents heard Peter preach. The temporary residents are the pilgrims from around the world (2:9-11) and the permanent ones are inhabitants of Jerusalem/Judea.

—“let this be known to you, and give ear to my words”: Peter sounds like Solomon in the Proverbs, who says to make “your ear attentive to wisdom” (Pr. 2:2) and “to incline your ear to understanding” (5:1)—with many such exhortations. Far from being a senseless wine-bibber, Peter exhorts the people with Solomonian wisdom.

—Schreiner, quoting Polhill: “ ‘...even the most profound aspects of the good news are not self-confirming but can lead to skepticism and even rejection.’ The event of Jesus and the Spirit must be interpreted and explained.”

—Schreiner, quoting Spangenberg: “Before he could not stand up to the high priest Caiaphas’s servant girl; now he stands up to the entire world.”

15 For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.

—“For”: Why should they listen to Peter (2:14)? “For these people are not drunk” (2:15). In other words, the mockers have misjudged the situation, and Peter is about to bring right judgment. Supernatural signs, while exceedingly valuable, are worthless without the word of God preached. People are either confused (2:6-12) or skeptical (2:13), unless one with wisdom arises to explain the phenomenon. Word without Spirit is ineffective, but Spirit without Word is counterproductive. Both must work together.

—“third hour”: some find symbolic meaning in this, since the third hour was when Jesus was crucified (Mk. 15:25). It can be hard to discern in these matters, since the Book of Acts is a narrative, and it could just as well be that Luke is reporting the facts. On other occasions, however, such “facts” carry symbolic meaning. For instance, the lame man is healed at not just any location but at “the gate called Beautiful”; the Ethiopian eunuch is saved on a “desert road”; Paul is made right with God on “Straight street”. These details seem too special and frequent to be incidental. They speak about the glory of God’s work. As for the “third hour” detail, I am not convinced this is symbolic, however. If it is, it would symbolize how Christ’s crucifixion is what made Pentecost possible (cf. Acts 2:29-36). But “third hour” does not obviously point to Christ’s crucifixion, since Christ was crucified from the third to the ninth hour.

16 But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

—Peter resorts to Scripture for explaining the phenomenon before him. In order to understand the present, they must look to the past—the Scripture.

—Far from being drunk, these people are fulfilling biblical prophecy!

—Interestingly, these individuals are speaking in tongues, but Peter says they’re fulfilling a Scripture that centers on the pouring out of the Spirit for widespread prophetic utterance. This suggests that tongue-speech falls under the umbrella of prophecy. How? Because they heard in their “own tongue the mighty works of God” (2:11). If prophecy is conveying revelation from God to other people, then tongue-speech—in

declaring God's mighty works—is conveying these works as revelation. Not everyone is aware of God's mighty works. When Isaiah or Jeremiah or Ezekiel or Haggai spoke about God's future work among His people, or even His past work (for instance, when Haggai interpreted financial hardship as a discipline from God in Haggai 1), it was portrayed as prophetic oracle. We tend to think of prophecy as only predictive, but God can speak into situations that are past, present, and future. In Revelation (Rev. 19:10), testifying about the truth of Jesus is a form of prophecy. Tongue-speech probably falls into this category. Those who practice it testify about the truth of Jesus in other tongues.

—That Luke views prophecy and tongues as related can be seen not only in this passage, but also in Acts 19:6: *"And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying."*

—Now, let's assess the context of the prophecy from Joel that is fulfilled in Acts 2:

- In Joel 1, the prophet interprets a plague of locusts as judgment from God that portends an even greater judgment—the day of the Lord. Whether Joel's imagery depicts a human army or a locust army is hard to tell, and interpreters fall on both sides. To me, it seems to be a true locust "army." In Revelation 9, John sees a greater fulfillment of Joel 1-2. It is an invasion of demons in the last days. Regardless of what this "Day of the Lord" judgment entails, Israel is not exempt from judgment. Like anyone else, she must repent.
- In Joel 2:1-18, the theme of locust invasion and call for repentance continues. The Day of the Lord comes to the fore, but so does mercy. The shift toward mercy is communicated agriculturally in 2:19-27. The devastation they suffered will be redeemed. Then in verse 28, we come to the relevant verses.
- Peter quotes from Joel 2:28-32 in Acts 2:17-21. This means that Peter interprets the "day of the Lord" judgment against Israel as immanent. Soon, like Joel, he will call Israel to repentance (Acts 2:38-41). The "locust invasion" occurred in Joel's day, but Joel foresaw Peter's day. He foresaw a day in which Israel would reject her Messiah, and—except for the repentant remnant—suffer a greater sort of "locust invasion," a greater "Day of the Lord."
- Nevertheless, the Day of the Lord is never just judgment; it is also salvation. The repentant remnant will enjoy God's abundance (Joel 2:19-27), typified by an outpouring of the Holy Spirit (2:28-32). Just as Jesus intimated in Acts 1:4-8, this outpouring of the Spirit results in the restoration of Israel, which Joel expands upon in Joel 3:1: *"For behold, in those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem..."*
- So let's summarize Joel's message: The historic locust invasion was a judgment against Israel that spoke of a greater judgment in a day to come—the day of the Lord against His own people! But there was hope. Israel could repent. And if she did, she would experience abundance, typified by the outpouring of the Spirit. This outpouring on God's people would not only "democratize" prophecy to diverse peoples—and "everyone who calls on the name of the LORD" (a shout-out to Gentiles who will also be baptized in the Spirit)—but it would also portend an eschatological judgment against unrepentant sinners.
- Now, let's summarize Joel's message, as interpreted by Peter: The locust invasion Joel prophesied spoke of Israel's exile up until that very moment, when not only did she live under Rome's thumb, but worse, she missed her "day of visitation" (Lk. 19:44) and crucified her own Messiah. God was soon to turn away from Israel in judgment—a sort of "Day of the LORD" against the nation of Israel—unless she repented (see Jesus' prophecy about this, Lk. 21:20ff, which was fulfilled in AD 70 when armies surrounded Jerusalem and destroyed the temple). If she repented, however, Jesus would baptize Israel in the Holy Spirit, democratize the gift of prophecy, and restore Israel to Himself.
- Peter applies Joel's prophecy to Jerusalem and Judea, which makes sense. They are the ones to whom Joel originally prophesied when God promised through him an outpouring of the Spirit. Interestingly, however, the promised Holy Spirit is given not just to Jews (Joel's original audience and Peter's audience here) but also Gentiles. That this promise applies more broadly than to just a Jewish audience is intimated by the promise, "everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved" (Acts 2:21) and by the presence of Gentile "proselytes" (2:11). Then it is made crystal clear by Luke's application of this promise throughout the rest of Acts. Jews and Gentiles both experience an outpouring promised originally to Jews. How can this be? Because Gentiles who repent are "spiritual Israel" (Rom. 9:6). Jewish ethnicity does not by itself merit a right to God's promises. There are advantages to being a Jew (Rom. 3:1-2; 9:4-5), but ethnicity doesn't save; repentance does. Luke's broad application of promises—first made to Israel—to the entire church (including Gentiles), teaches us how to interpret the Old Testament. Promises made to the Jews are our promises if we repent. In contrast, Jews who do not repent will not enjoy God's promises.

Repentance, not ethnicity, determines our eternal joy. (Note: there is much that could be said about the role of Jews in the end times, including land promises, future salvation, a temple, etc. Exploring these topics would require much more than this study guide.)

17 "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; 18 even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

—"And in the last days it shall be": Joel does not say, "in the last days," but the setting of Joel's prophecy is obviously eschatological. Peter is thus conveying the sense of Joel's prophecy while heightening the expectation of his hearers: the last days are upon them.

—That the last days are upon us was the view of Jesus and the apostles, as indicated by the following texts (1 Cor. 10:11; Heb. 1:1-2; 9:36; 1 Pet. 1:20; etc.). This contradicts the belief of some preterists, who believe the last days ended in AD 70 with the destruction of the temple. It also contradicts that form of futurism suggesting that the "last days" equals the last seven years of this age. In contrast, Jesus and the apostles teach that the last days extend from Jesus' first to second coming.

—We are in "the last days", but "the last day" (singular) arrives only when Jesus does (1:11).

—"pour out":

- This is the same verb as in 1:18, which describes Judas' guts, gushing out. It is a contrast in fates. The apostles (and their company) remain faithful to Jesus and experience the outpouring of the Spirit; Judas betrays Jesus and experiences the outpouring of his intestines.
- Stott: "The whole messianic era, which stretches between the two comings of Christ, is the age of the Spirit in which his ministry is one of abundance. Is not this the significance of the verb 'pour out'? The picture is probably of a heavy tropical rainstorm, and seems to illustrate the generosity of God's gift of the Spirit (neither a drizzle nor even a shower but a downpour), its finality (for what has been 'poured out' cannot be gathered again) and its universality (widely distributed among the different groupings of human kind.)"

—"on all flesh":

- This does not speak of every human, but of every Christian. This is clarified by Acts 2:21, where salvation (and implicitly, the baptism of the Spirit) requires one to call on the name of the LORD—Jesus.
- Schreiner: "In the OT only prophets, priests, and kings were given the Spirit for a designated time. Now all the people were prophets, priests, and kings."
- The pouring out of the Spirit "on all flesh" marked a shift in redemptive history.
 - Before this moment, the Holy Spirit was given TEMPORARILY to SOME of God's people.
 - The king received the Spirit to rule, but Saul lost the Spirit (1 Sam. 16:12-14), and David—after sinning with Bathsheba—feared losing the Spirit (Ps. 51:11).
 - Certain judges received the Spirit to rule (Jdg. 13:25; 16:20), but He would come and go.
 - The elders of Israel received the Spirit temporarily, and prophesied, but "they did not do so again" (Num. 11:25).
 - After this moment, the Holy Spirit was given PERMANENTLY to ALL of God's people.
 - Isaiah prophesied a permanent experience of the Spirit's prophetic ministry once a new covenant was established (Isa. 59:20-21).
 - Moses' longing was fulfilled on Pentecost: "Would that all the LORD's people were prophets, that the LORD would put His Spirit on them?" (Num. 11:29).
 - The Holy Spirit permanently seals and indwells every believer (Eph. 1:13-14; 4:29-30; 2 Cor. 1:22).
 - Jesus expresses the marked change in history in multiple ways. One that is particularly informative is Jhn. 14:16 *And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, 17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.*
 - Here, we learn that the Spirit moves from being "with you" to being "in you" (14:17).
 - We also see that His ministry in us lasts "forever" (14:16).
- Unlike the gift of teaching, which is relatively uncommon (Jam. 3:1), the gift of prophecy is widely distributed as part of our New Covenant inheritance (Acts 2:17-18). Churches tend to have many teachers but few prophets. This reversal of the biblical order owes not to the Holy Spirit changing

His mind about the distribution of gifts, but rather the false prioritization of teaching over prophecy. While it's true that prophets without teachers descend into charismatic chaos, teachers without prophets revert to an Old Covenant model, where prophets are few and teachers—the priests of Old Covenant times—are many.

- In Acts 13:1-3, prophets and teachers come together, and it results in the first intentional missionary venture of a local church in history. When we unite the power of God's Word and the power of God's Spirit, powerful things happen!
- Stott: "The universal gift (the Spirit) will lead to a universal ministry (prophecy).
- How can prophetic ministry be universal if not everyone is a gifted prophet?
 - 1 Corinthians 12:29 teaches that not everyone is a gifted prophet. This means that not everyone is proficient in prophecy; not everyone hears God consistently and accurately for other people.
 - But it is not a contradiction to say that prophecy becomes a universal ministry in the church. Consider the other gifts: all can evangelize, but not all are gifted evangelists; all can serve, but not all have the spiritual gift of "helps" or serving others. The same can be said for any gift. All can prophesy on any occasion, but not all are gifted prophets.
 - Another way in which prophecy is universal is in the broader sense that all of us have a deep knowledge of Jesus, about which we can testify. "The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19:10). In its broadest sense, prophecy is just telling people about Jesus. Because of the gift of the Spirit, all of us are empowered to testify—prophesy—about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.
 - Another way in which prophecy is universal is the sense in which we can all hear God for ourselves in a way that was not possible in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, those seeking guidance would cast lots or visit a prophet (and there weren't many of them). Now God can give dreams or visions to anyone seeking direction. Gifted prophets will routinely hear God for other people, but all of us can hear God for ourselves. As Jesus says, "My sheep hear my voice..." (John 10:27).
 - In this light, it can be helpful to differentiate between the gift of prophecy and the age of the prophecy. Diverse gifts are bestowed by the Holy Spirit as He determines (1 Cor. 12:11), but not every Christian has every gift; not every Christian is a gifted prophet. Nevertheless, every Christian does belong to what we might call, the age of prophecy. Pentecost marked the dawn of a new age. The Spirit who was enjoyed intimately only by some, and only for a time, now indwells every believer permanently. From this place—inside our hearts!—the Spirit performs His works. The major work highlighted by Joel 2/Acts 2 is that of bestowing revelation. Because of the era in which we live, Christians have greater access to God's ongoing revelation than at any period in history.
 - Because of this increase in revelation, Christians should expect to hear from God regularly for themselves. Those who are prophetically gifted will hear Him more commonly for others, but even those who are not prophetically gifted can hear Him commonly for themselves.

—"your sons and your daughters... your young men... your old men... even on my male servants and female servants":

- "all flesh" is portrayed as inclusive of both young and old, male and female, and the poor (servants). In short, it includes everyone. Where God pours out His Spirit, diversity ensues.
- Rather than just being elders, kings, leaders, or judges, as we see in the Old Testament, the Spirit is poured out, irrespective of age, gender, or social class.
- We saw such diversity also in Acts 2:9-11, where multi-cultural Jews and Gentile proselytes witnessed the work of the Spirit, many of whom soon received it for themselves (2:41).
- We also saw such diversity in history. At the Azusa Street Revival, which was led by an African American man, William Seymour, people of every race pressed together in a crowded room, shoulder to sweaty shoulder, because each craved the same Spirit. Journalist Frank Bartleman reported at that time, "The color line was washed away in the blood."

—"prophesy... see visions... dream dreams":

- Peter sees a connection between prophecy and tongues. Both involve receiving input from heaven, being carried along by the Spirit, and testifying about God.
- The visionary realm will no longer be constrained to special prophets like Isaiah and Ezekiel, but rather will now be opened to "all flesh"—all Christians.

19 And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; 20 the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day.

—There is debate about whether these verses were fulfilled in Peter's day, or whether they will be fulfilled on the last day.

- Those who argue that the verses were fulfilled in Peter's day point to the surrounding context and (usually) to Old Testament parallels.
 - The surrounding context is that Peter is trying to explain the phenomenon they just witnessed. It would seem strange for Peter to quote a verse from Joel that remained to be fulfilled for 2000+ years in order to explain a phenomenon contemporary to his own day.
 - More specifically, these two verses that depict signs, wonders, and celestial disturbances are surrounded by vv. 17-18 and 21, all of which directly address their current experience. On this basis, it is argued that vv. 19-20 (about cosmic disturbances) must also pertain to their current experience, not thousands of years down the road.
 - With regard to Old Testament parallels, it is argued that celestial disturbances were a common form of "prophetic symbolism" for alterations of the power structures on earth. In other words, they are not literal, but symbolic for "the powers that be"—being shaken. Examples (on this view) include Isa. 13:9ff; 34:1ff; Ezek. 32:7ff; Amos 8:9.
 - Those who don't point to OT parallels, but instead take these verses literally, suggest that the aforementioned signs and wonders occurred in conjunction with Christ's crucifixion (when the sun turned dark and He shed His blood) and Pentecost (where there were flames and a rushing wind from heaven).
 - It is also notable that Peter says in v. 22 that the people are familiar with Christ's "wonders and signs," possibly suggesting a connection between Christ's earthly ministry and the quotation of Joel about signs and wonders before the day of the Lord.
- Those who argue that these verses do not occur until just before Christ's return point to the inadequacy of the arguments that these are symbolic and to other portrayals of the Lord's return in Scripture.
 - On the inadequacy of these signs being symbolic: it is only an assumption that the celestial disturbances described by OT prophets did not actually happen. Just because they were symbolic does not mean they were not also literal. For instance, when Christ was crucified the sun turned dark; this was both literal and symbolic of spiritual darkness.
 - On other portrayals of the Lord's return in Scripture: we are repeatedly told that cosmic signs will accompany His arrival, and it seems like a stretch to take these all symbolically. If cosmic signs accompanied His crucifixion, how much more should we expect them at His glorious return in the sky?

—I agree with those who take these as literal cosmic disturbances accompanying the return of Jesus on the Day of the Lord. While it's a strong argument that the surrounding context focuses on explaining the events of their own day, it would not have been irrelevant that at the Lord's return there would be cosmic disturbances. It is anachronistic to say, "Peter would never describe the Lord's return as being relevant in his day, since it was 2000 years in the future." As far as Peter was concerned, Christ could return very soon. He and the disciples had just asked Jesus if He would consummate His reign "at this time" (Acts 1:6). Peter expected a near-term arrival of Jesus. Thus, he sees the prophetic phenomena of tongues and fire and a mighty rushing wind as signs that the greatest exhibition of all was soon to occur—the Day of our Lord Jesus. In light of this, he exhorts the people to repent. Like John the Baptist before him, who said, "The axe is already at the root of the trees," Peter leverages this moment to exhort the people that the Day is near. It is only in retrospect that we learn that—even if a "Day of the Lord" for Israel occurred in AD 70 with the temple's destruction—the final "Day of the Lord" for the world was not near.

—I also think the "wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below" was fulfilled in part on Pentecost. The "mighty rushing wind" came from heaven and the tongues of fire occurred on earth. With that said, some of the signs had not yet occurred. There was no "blood," and if the tongues of fire created "smoke," it was not mentioned. Nor did we read of any eclipse of either sun or moon. And to suggest Peter was talking about the darkening of the sun at Christ's crucifixion feels like a stretch.

—Putting it all together, Peter is BOTH explaining the signs and wonders in heaven ("there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind") and on earth ("divided tongues of fire appeared") AND AT THE SAME TIME warning them of the greater signs and wonders to be displayed at Christ's return. The explanation of present signs and wonders is intended to show them that Jesus is the Christ. The warning about future signs and wonders (displayed at Christ's return) is intended to appeal to them with urgency. In short, there is an "already/not yet" dimension to these signs and wonders. In the incarnation and

Pentecost, some of these signs had already appeared; at the end of the age, when Christ returns, the fullness of these signs will appear.

21 And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

—As I mentioned earlier, this promise was originally made to Israel. However, Paul expands the promise in Romans 10:13 to apply specifically to Gentiles who live in distant lands. Again, this tells us something about the Old Testament. We should not read promises made to Israel about the last days as though they don't also apply to the church. Promises made to Israel are now made available to "everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord."

—"everyone" really means EVERYONE! Regardless of our history, our poor choices, our sin, our shame, our stigmas, our status, or our ethnicity.

—Interestingly, Joel 2:32 qualifies "everyone" as "those whom the LORD calls." This is an example of what some call the "effectual" calling of God. Although God generally extends a gospel call to everyone on earth, we unfortunately resist His call—unless we are awakened first from spiritual death. For this reason, God "effectually" calls His elect to salvation. This call, they will not resist.

—Other examples of the "effectual" call to salvation:

- *[Jhn 6:44, 65 ESV] 44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. ... 65 And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."*
- *[Rom 8:30 ESV] 30 And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.*
- *[Rom 9:11-12 ESV] 11 though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls— 12 she was told, "The older will serve the younger."*
- *[1Co 1:23-24 ESV] 23 but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

—In context, what will we be saved from? The wrath of God, made manifest on the Day of the Lord. When the celestial bodies are disturbed, we will not be. Rather we will be among "those who escape" (Joel 2:32).

—Peter quotes a verse about calling on the name of the LORD—Yahweh. But in the following exhortation, he proclaims the name of Jesus ("Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus"—Acts 2:38). Jesus is Yahweh!

—Schreiner: "In Acts repeated references to the 'name of Jesus' occur (3:6, 16; 4:7, 10, 12, 17, 18, 30; 5:28, 40), compelling Tannehill to claim that chaps/ 2-5 exposit the promise that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."