

I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh

Pentecost Sunday 2010

Pastor Helen Turner
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INTRODUCTION

Saturday of last weekend I was on the 'welcome home Jessica' ferry with my eldest grandson – it was his birthday. Huge seas slowed down her approach, but the sixteen year old Aussie girl battled in through the heads – to a hero's welcome – she had a dream, to sail around the world solo at her age – and she did it.

Now, PICTURE SOMETHING AWESOMELY VAST WHICH CIRCLES THE EARTH - God's plan which will come to pass - is that, as surely as He lives, all the earth will be filled with the glory of God. **Num 14:21. Is. 11:9, Hab 2:14**...as the waters cover the sea. And we are part of His 'dream'. **Rev. 7:9** – a great multitude from every tribe, tongue, nation before His throne, in white robes, redeemed, saved. Can you imagine being part of God's 'dream', part of seeing it come to pass. That is what we are called to. Taking the Gospel of salvation to the nations.

Background to Pentecost: Jesus had been betrayed, crucified, once for all God Himself our substitute sacrifice for our sin. His followers had responded in (betrayal), denying Him, running away from Him, standing at a distance, not believing He was alive after He rose, feeling discouraged – then after He appeared, for 40 days taught them, and ascended into heaven...He told them just before He went up...

Acts 1:8 (last words): *you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

Jesus wanted His followers to have His dream – disciples from all nations, all flesh...all...young, old, men, women, the poor and oppressed, every tribe... and He promised the power to do that...and so 50 days after the cross, (Passover – Lamb sacrifice for deliverance) it was Harvest or in Greek Pentecost Feast – celebrating bringing in the harvest, let's read **Acts 2**. Everyone – servants, strangers from other lands, all the family – celebrated together....bringing in the first fruit of the harvest, and celebrating the harvest. But this was a real pentecost...God's plan, His dream the firstfruits of the harvest of the nations...Let's read it...

Acts 2:1-21 *When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? 8 And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,

Cretans and Arabs — we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God." So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?" Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine." But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord. And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the Lord Shall be saved.'

'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh'

1. WHEN?

"In the last days says God...I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh". Was what was happening that amazing day just for those days? When are the last days? Is such an outpouring available and what God wants to do today? Peter said that what they were seeing was what the prophet Joel referred to, and it was to happen in the last days. The last days are referred to in scripture as the era of Messiah....and in fact cover the whole church age...

Heb 1:1-2 *Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son.*

Peter quoted from the prophet Joel – and refers to the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord...in the final close of this era of time. These are the last days....the whole church era is the last days according to scripture. Peter ends the quote with 'whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved'. This is the era of 'whoever believes'. In case the hearers and we ourselves today could be confused about this, in **Acts 2:39** he reiterates: *for the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.* The promise of the Holy Spirit, the empowering that the 120 received on the Day of Pentecost – was always meant to be something that continually flowed through the church era, until the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord. The promise of the Holy Spirit is for us today! Amen.

2. WHO?

God promised from OT days that He would pour out of His Spirit on all flesh: simply put this means the Holy Spirit outpouring is available to all people...of course all who repent, and call on the name of the Lord (**Acts 2:21, 37-8**). All God's children; whoever calls on the Name of the Lord and is saved.

all flesh = all people, all humans, all peoples, all nations – the inclusive 'all nations' 'to the end of the earth' that Jesus proclaimed in the great commission and in His last words before He ascended (**Acts 1:8**). The Holy Spirit is not the special exclusive property of a select group – not the Jews, nor the western church. God has promised to move by His Spirit across the world – 'on all flesh'. The gathering in Jerusalem that day was quite an assembly – fervent Jews had come to Jerusalem from many cities, speaking a variety of languages. Yet it was not 'all flesh' that the Holy Spirit was poured out on that day – it was on Jews! Peter quoting Joel, does not stop at 'all flesh', as in all nations, all peoples ...but

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today, whatever part of the world you are from, the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh....*Our brother Brian Rensford emailed me yesterday:*

Just last year, a Nigerian couple from a Catholic background visited our church one Sunday night. Our Church is Pentecostal in theology and practice; and we endeavour to obey Paul on the exercise of praying in the Spirit / tongues (carefully, unchaotically, and mostly privately - not often in a public environment). However, that night I found myself praying a brief prayer out loud in tongues. After the service the couple mentioned to one of our ministers that the language was known to them and was glorifying God. It was a small "Pentecost sign" to our visitors.

My brother's Church in Victoria several years ago had an Australian-born lady from Wollongong visit their Church (she was known to me personally, a very quiet woman who rarely said anything in public). Suddenly she spoke a clear message in another language; someone else interpreted in English, and at the end of the service an elderly man came up to her and started speaking quickly in a foreign language. She said (in English), "I'm sorry, but I don't understand you", to which he replied in very broken English, "of course you do! You were speaking the dialect of my village in Calabria! and there are only seven villages that speak it. I was trying to work out which village you come from! And that man said in English what you said in my dialect".

I understand his daughter had started attending their Church and he had come along to check it out. He went home very moved.... it was a sign to him that God was "in the House" indeed...

praise God. The Holy Spirit is poured out today on all flesh....

'your sons and your daughters shall prophesy' – young age is no barrier. The Holy Spirit outpouring is for the young as well. God is doing a work across the earth and it includes children. In Southside, children are being filled with the Holy Spirit. On Tuesday, I took the train to the city, and met a family from Southside. I had a chat to their nine year old who told me that she has been filled with the Holy Spirit and speaks in tongues. I spoke during the last weeks with Vera, our children's ministry co-ordinator – and she tells me that there are children in kids church who have seen visions from the Lord. I couldn't get any of them to share today, but talk to Vera – it is happening! God has promised to pour out His Spirit on our sons and our daughters. Don't be surprised if they prophesy! Our children will prophesy – we have a mindset that only the really mature saints can use the prophecy mike – but it is for words from the Lord – let's expect the Holy Spirit to move on our children! He wants to. Let's hold onto the Word of God and expect it. Get involved ministering with children.

'your sons and your daughters shall prophesy' 'men and women servants' – this was radical for Joel's era, and for the NT era. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit is **inclusive of gender**.

It includes all ages – young men and old men. Something in our society today says that old is 'past its use by date'. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit is for active use by God for us at all ages. So, our old men will dream dreams. A dream is a 'vision in a dream'. Our young men will see visions. Does this happen today? We can read books about it happening – it happens in Indonesia and other Muslim countries. But it happens among us. I have had dreams from the Lord. Gladwyn sometimes has dreams from the Lord. We began full time ministry after a very clear dream he had from the Lord. Visions happen among us: one of our men a few years ago had a vision of how to make a water purifying system – this vision came in church, during communion time. Today people are drinking

water from his system in many villages in Burma, and the vision is growing. Why visions and dreams, you may ask. Sometimes, if God showed us everything, wrote it out clearly, we might not believe it, or we might pull back in fear

And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy... the Holy Spirit outpouring is for all classes – this part is talking about slaves...different social classes. God is no respecter of persons. God will use **the weak, the enslaved, the oppressed, those society may see as lower class** – what God has cleansed, is not common, unclean, unacceptable. God will use, and wants to use, all sorts of vessels to show His glory and to do His kingdom work. **Don't think you are not good enough** – it's not about that – it is about being a vessel for the Holy Spirit to fill and to use. 'and they shall prophesy'.

The outpouring of **the Holy Spirit is for you** – child, young man, older person, whatever country you are from, whatever part of society describes you. God wants to use you...

3. HOW AND WHERE?

How to be filled with the Holy Spirit... wait on God – that's what the first century church did – they **waited and prayed (Acts 1:14)** in Jerusalem as Jesus has instructed, for the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit. 11 days later, when the Day had fully come – He swept in like the rushing of a mighty wind, and with tongues of fire, sat on them and filled each of them. We don't like waiting – but **we must wait before the Lord**.

Our **old men** will dream dreams – **there is still future that God has for you** – 'I have a dream' – a dream is not necessarily what you will fulfil, but you will pray and build towards it. Don't say 'it is over, I will leave it to others'.

What to do with the vision – share it, talk to your leaders about it, wait for it, nurture it, don't let it go, think it will never happen, take some advice from men of God – get alongside someone who will grow and develop you. Though the vision tarries, delays – wait for it.

A dream from God usually involves **something we will or should do**, that the Lord wants to do through us. We had a vision in 1974 to have a teaching centre in the south of Sydney to bring some balance where there was extremes – it took work, running with the vision, and many times the enemy's attack was so fierce, we could have given up, if we didn't know that it was God's vision.

God uses the language of dreams and visions because our human minds might not cope with what 'eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things that God has prepared for those who love Him' Spurgeon said of this:

All divine things, when they first come to men from the Lord, are as visions, because man is so little prepared to believe God's thoughts and ways, that he cannot think them to be real. We are so gross and carnal, even when most clarified and made fit to receive divine impressions, that God's spiritual messages and directions to us must usually at the first float dimly before the sense, and only in after thoughts become solid and clear...

There are all sorts of dreams – dreams born from human desire, daydreams, delusional dreams, dreams that drain the life-blood out of those who are involved with them. But a dream that comes from the imparting of the Holy Spirit is a God-thing. Just like the prophetic word that speaks of things we can only imagine.

Where? – the early church used this empowering in the streets, in their homes and in the gathering; the overflowing of the Holy Spirit came with great generosity (they sold goods,

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had a corporate 'purse'; gave to the poor, daily help to the widows); there was great healing; signs and wonders; deliverance from demonization. We should be expecting the church to be without walls – we need to use the empowering of the Holy Spirit in our daily life.

The Holy Spirit in action:

***Acts 2:42-47** And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. 43 And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. 44 And all who believed were **together and had all things in common**. 45 And they were **selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need**. 46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food **with glad and generous hearts**, 47 praising God and having **favor with all the people**. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. ESV*

CONCLUSION: God didn't save you to clean you up and make you sit on a shelf, or a church pew. He wants to use you every day, for His glory. He has promised '**I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh**' – today, that is you! Jesus said we would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon us' – power to be witnesses to Him with our whole life – in our home place, our country, and to the ends of the earth. Young, old, from every nation, man, woman, child, all classes – the Holy Spirit is poured out for you, and you can be filled today. Seek the Lord, wait on Him. He will give you His vision, His dream, His word. Don't leave it to someone else – open your heart, come as an empty vessel. And let's expect the Lord to do fresh, unusual things among us, using each one who surrenders to Him. And may the Lord be honoured and glorified as we live for Him, with His vision and His empowerment.