

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

THE PROPHECY OF THE LAST DAYS

And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Acts 2:17

Some Bible scholars describe the last twelve books of the Old Testament as the "Minor Prophets". The implication is that these books were the product of those prophets which occupied a "second tier" of importance or were not quite as useful as the "major prophets" such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.

This same notion is quite popular in today's, man centered religious world as various "preachers" become "famous" because of their oratorical skills, and they take on the air of being "experts" and "indispensable" spokesmen for GOD, by the earthly success of their book sales, informative seminars, and burgeoning congregations. They are for the most part able to scratch the ears of their followers, but they seldom unequivocally preach and exalt the glory and purpose of GOD in the redemption of HIS elect bride. They prefer to apprise men of their duties and "ought-to's". They sometimes preach "grace", yet it is seldom without a "but" which segues into the sovereignty of man's supposed "free-will".

There are no "unimportant" or "minor" tellers of the truth of GOD. The declaration of the gospel is not committed into the hands of a favored "few" but rather is given to the favored multitude. There are no experts of Bible knowledge, nor are there any who have the answer to every question which can be raised by men. There is no class of men who occupy a favored position among the saints simply because they can dazzle their hearers with speechifying.

Paul declared as much when he declared his own weakness in the area of public speaking. (see II Cor.10:10), yet pointed out that the power of preaching lies not in the gift of gab, but rather in the power of the truth which is set forth as the SPIRIT moves upon the hearers. "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." (1Cor 2:4-5)

We can see this very principle demonstrated on the day of Pentecost, as the LORD caused the mixed multitude (of many languages and dialects) to "hear" in their own language or tongue. (see Acts 2:6-8) There is some indication that those followers of CHRIST who were gathered there that day actually "spoke" in languages which they had not heretofore learned or conversed in (see Acts 2:4); yet there is no doubt that many "heard" what was said in their own native tongues. There are some who tell us that men can "learn" to speak in these "tongues", yet there is no indication of such anywhere in the scriptures. This ability must be bestowed by the power of GOD, quite apart from the will and purpose of men.

I don't suppose it is any stranger for those, who revel in free will, to believe that men can learn to speak in tongues than it is for them to believe that men can "learn" to preach the gospel by going to Bible school or seminary. These are "gifts" bestowed by the SPIRIT, the power of which

cannot be enhanced by the will and ways of men. The husk of outward babbling or oration can certainly be produced by man, but that power which accompanies the true preaching of the gospel must come from a SOURCE quite outside the realm of man's learning or his gyrations of the flesh.

Peter declared that what was being manifested on the day of Pentecost was the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. This is no "minor prophecy" but is the foretelling of one of the most momentous events to occur in the course of human history. We have no scriptural indication that this exact event ever occurred before or since this particular day. This was the ushering in of the fullness of the "last days". There are many "johnny come lately" "prophets" (in their own mind at least) who tell us that the "last days" are coming, or perhaps they think this time we are living in are the "last days." The reality is that the "last days" were ushered in by the outpouring of GOD's SPIRIT on HIS people. John said, *"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time."* (1John 2:18) We are not waiting for the last days. These are the last days!

What Joel prophesied has been demonstrated. The scripture knows of but two times in the earth. "The former times" or "time past", and the "last days". Paul shows us the dividing line between that which went before and that which is now come in the "last days". *"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."* (Heb 1:1-3)

We are not waiting for some "new message" or "mystery" which is to be delivered to us by the mouth of some "anointed" prophet as the LORD was pleased to speak through in times past. The age of the Old Testament type prophet is past. The word of GOD is declared in quite a broader fashion by a greater host than it was in the olden days. *"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."* (2Pet 1:16-21)

This MESSAGE is "poured out" rather than coming, precept upon precept, or line upon line as HE was pleased to deliver the TRUTH to HIS people in times past in a drop here and there. The LATTER RAIN has fallen heavily upon those who have been given ears to hear. Jeremiah prophesied of this "pouring out" when he said; *"After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD."* (Jer 31:33-34)

This TRUTH and the impartation of it are broadly applied without regard to ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, or age. We see all of this occur on Pentecost in such a fashion that could not possibly be attributed to any ability or strength of the flesh. No singular prophet prophesied. No high powered preacher came to town with his name up in lights or singled out as a featured speaker. Rather GOD was pleased to cause HIS people both to hear and to declare the WORD of GOD as HE saw fit to send it. It never returns to HIM without the exact result which HE has sent it to accomplish. (Isa.56:11) *"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."* (Act 2:32-36) mam