

DUDLEY'S MONTHLY MESSAGE

MAY 2026 | Acts 2:19-21

*I will display wonders
in the heaven above and
signs on the earth below:
blood and fire and a cloud
of smoke. The sun will be
turned to darkness and
the moon to blood before
the great and glorious day
of the Lord comes. Then
everyone who calls on the
name of the Lord
will be saved.
Acts 2:19-21, CSB*

THE DAY OF THE LORD

For centuries the Jews had looked forward to the day in history when God would move heaven into earth in judgment, vindicating His people and condemning His enemies. They had expected the event to be mostly political, civil, geographical, and regime-changing. The Messianic hope included the defeat of the enemy, the release of oppressed people of God (Jews), re-establishment of the temple, and the rule of justice. Many had hoped that day had dawned when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. It was reminiscent of Judas Maccabaeus who rode into

Jerusalem in similar fashion generations before to cleanse the temple from the desecration of Antiochus Epiphanes, who had slaughtered a pig on the altar.

After the resurrection and ascension of Jesus at the feast of Pentecost, Peter declared that the “Day of the Lord” prophecy of Joel was being fulfilled. His hearers were shocked. You see, they had expected too little. They would have been satisfied with a military victory over Rome by a zealous Jewish warrior, but what Joel had described was a cosmic upheaval:

I will display wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below: blood and fire and a cloud of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the great and glorious day of the Lord comes. Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

Acts 2:19-21, CSB

Actually it was even more radical than that. God brought heaven and earth together in the person of His incarnate Son. Through His death and resurrection, He defeated the combined powers of hell. The ramifications of that event impacted the whole world—and still does. Peter is preaching the gospel. From this point on in history, this message will carry the mission of God on earth through the church. It is time for us, in our day, to rediscover the uniqueness of this message and separate it from the tangled religious jargon that often is perceived as the gospel of the New Testament.

Jesus was not only the subject of the gospel. He preached the gospel of God:

After John was arrested, Jesus went to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Mark 1:14-15, CSB

Peter was following His model. The message was that the story of Israel was completed in Jesus, therefore the hopes of the former prophets and patriarchs were also fulfilled in Him. He is the climax of the story that had begun in the Garden, continued in Abraham's family, was shaped in the Exodus, expanded in the monarchy under David, and fulfilled when Jesus came as the ultimate Israel who kept covenant and received the blessings of full obedience. None of the New Testament preachers tried declaring the gospel without referring to the story of the Old Testament. He also brought in the dynamic of the Kingdom of God, by quoting from David, Israel's greatest king:

For David says of Him: 'I saw the Lord ever before me; because he is at my righthand, I will not be shaken.'

Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices. Moreover, my flesh will rest in hope, because you will not abandon me in Hades or allow your holy one to see decay. You have revealed the paths of life to me; you will fill me with gladness in your presence.'

Acts 2:25-28, CSB

For it was not David who ascended into the heavens, but he himself says: The Lord declared to my Lord, 'Sit at my righthand until I make your enemies your footstool.'

Acts 2:34-35, CSB

From the time of Daniel in the 6th century BC, the leaders of Israel had anticipated a day when the Son of Man would ride the clouds of glory to the throne of God and receive a kingdom superior to all kingdoms of the earth. It would be eternal in its nature and everlasting in its duration. Of course they perceived it as a kingdom like Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. When it instead came in the person of Jesus, most of them rejected it. But make no mis-

take, it is real. Jesus ascended to the throne and rules over all. His life achieved the blessings of the covenant. His death destroyed the guilt and shame of sin. His resurrection defeated death. His ascension assured His sovereign rule over everything that His blood redeemed:

Therefore let all the house of Israel know with certainty that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.

Acts 2:36, CSB

When the crowd heard the explanation of the completion of the story, they were convicted by the Spirit and begged to know how to respond. "Brothers, what should we do?" They cried. And just as Jesus had done, Peter gave them the only answer that is viable: "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." All those Jews from all over the known world had been baptized into the covenant of Moses. But a new day had dawned - The Day of the Lord! It was time to declare allegiance to the Lord and Messiah. From now on, their identity would be "in Christ," not "in Israel." They

would receive the Holy Spirit along with forgiveness of sins. As firstfruits of the new creation, they would form the gospelized community called the church. It was different from the "corrupt generation" that Peter exhorted them to separate from. That generation was holding on to their identity as Jews who denied Jesus as Messiah. They were deceived by the Devil and actively participated in the idolatry of worshipping Judaism rather the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and Jesus.

This new gospelized community not only was born from the "apostle's gospel" but it was nourished by it:

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer.

Acts 2:42, CSB

This form of proclaiming the new covenant message was carried on by the other preachers in the early church. Peter's preaching was consistent with this sermon. So were Stephen's and Paul's. It is the milk of the word of God that causes growth in the Christian and rebirth in the

convert. Sadly, as the church expanded through centuries, and the strategies of hell conspired against it, the message was often maligned. It is so today as well. But there is a wind of recovery stirring in the mulberry trees. Saints are hungry for the pure gospel that nourishes their souls. Sinners are wanting to hear and see a reality that gives a stable foundation for hope and joy. Moralism, inclusivism, consumerism, and escapism are boring and bland. As the gospel of the apostle's sermons is recovered, the life that energized the early church will again be demonstrated. Light from the day of the Lord will shine again in the darkness of moral corruption. Salt will season and preserve that which is necessary for flourishing. It is a good day to be alive.

**KERYGMA VENTURES**

P.O. Box 2022
Colleyville, TX 76034
(817)267-9224
Email: Contact@kerygmaventures.com
www.KerygmaVentures.com