

Peter's Sermon (Part 1)

Acts 2:14—21

New wine

The King James Bible uses the term “new wine” in verse 13. A literal translation would read something like “these men are intoxicated with very sweet wine,” meaning new wine, but still intoxicating.

Reference is made to new wine in Luke 5 to make the point that no one puts new wine in old wine skins because the fermentation process would burst the already stretched out wine skins. This illustration was made to show how the teaching, by Jesus and His Disciples and accepted by the Little Flock of believing Israel, did not fit in with the teaching of the religious leaders. The old apostate nation would never fit in with the believing remnant, and the doctrine taught by the religious leaders did not fit with what Jesus was teaching. When new (unfermented) wine is put in new wineskins, the skins will stretch as the carbon dioxide gas builds up. This usage of the term “new wine” is probably referring to unfermented grape juice while the Acts 2:13 reference is about wine that is sweet and still fermenting.

In the Old Testament, new wine often speaks of abundance that is promised to Israel if they obey God (Deuteronomy 7:12—13), but retracted if they refuse to follow Him (Deuteronomy 28:47—51). New wine is unfermented grape juice or wine that has not completely fermentation. There is a specific Hebrew word to describe this. The best way to see where this word is used is by going into the Hebrew and search for H8492. It's unfortunate that the King James Bible translators were very inconsistent in making it clear that new wine is in view (compare Isaiah 24:7 with 36:17. Both use the Hebrew word *teroshe* [H8492], meaning new wine, but this is not evident in the translation. If you would prefer not to search words in Hebrew, the NASB is very consistent in translating this word properly).

In Joel 2, the Lord promises Israel that when He is done punishing them for their disobedience that He will cause their land to be abundantly productive, including the promise of new wine. He then promises them that He will pour out His Spirit upon all of believing Israel. They will be abundantly blessed both physically and spiritually.

In Acts 2:13, those receiving the Holy Spirit were in such a state of joy that those watching from the outside thought they were intoxicated with new wine. The joy of the Spirit was confused with the false joy given by alcohol. Our admonition from Paul is to be filled with the Spirit, not to be drunk with wine (Ephesians 5:18). This time of joy, as seen on this day of Pentecost, is contrasted with the darkness of the Tribulation in Joel 2 where they are shown going through the Tribulation before all of Israel is gone the Holy Spirit. The giving of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was a foretaste (or promise, or first fruits) of the greater blessing that will eventually come to Israel. This was only a taste, according to Hebrews 6:4. This fits in perfectly with what the feast of Pentecost represents, as the celebration of the first fruits of the wheat harvest. The full harvest of wheat will happen later, just as the giving of the Holy Spirit will be given to all of believing Israel at the end of the Tribulation, as Joel 2 indicates.

Peter's first sermon

This is the first of two recorded sermons Peter preached. The first one is addressed to individuals within Israel, and the second, found in chapter three, is addressed to Israel as a covenant nation.

Speaking to Jews (verses 14, 22)

Although many claim these events in early Acts mark the beginning of the Church, Gentiles are nowhere to be found. Peter specifically addresses the men of Judea (verse 14) and the men of Israel (verse 22). 800 years previous to this, the nation of Israel was divided into the two southern tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the remaining 10 tribes to the North. Solomon's son, Rehoboam, refused to lower their taxes and the 10 northern tribes revolted. Peter acknowledges this division as he addresses the crowd. When God finally gathers Israel to live in the land, at the end of the Tribulation, they will be one united nation once again (Isaiah 11:12—13).

The Mystery revealed to the Apostle Paul relates to the Church, the Body of Christ, and to the Gentiles (Ephesians 3:6—9), not to the nation of Israel. It's ludicrous to even claim that Peter introduced the Mystery Church, with a focus on the Gentiles, when it was perhaps 10 years before Peter was told to see Cornelius. Peter never claims to have had the Mystery revealed to him, while Paul does so often. Unfortunately, those who accept the beginning of the church at Acts 2 seem very willing to build Scripture on top of their theology, reading things into Scripture that just are not there.

Fulfilled prophecy (verses 16—21)

Peter clearly understood that the events that were happening on this day of Pentecost related to what was written by the prophet Joel. Joel predicted that the Holy Spirit would be given to Israel, and that's exactly what was beginning to happen. However, those who believe the church began on this day of Pentecost argue that since not everything Joel prophesied actually was fulfilled, therefore the coming of the Holy Spirit was not a fulfillment of prophecy. Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, does say that these events are in fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, while the Acts 2 believers say it isn't. I'll believe Scripture.

Peter once again points to the prophets as he addresses Israel in Acts 3 (verses 17, 21, 24). He is not speaking of the Mystery church, which had not yet been revealed, but he is speaking of Israel's prophetic program as revealed throughout the Old Testament. Acts 3:24 says that "these days" are the days spoken of by the prophets and were now being fulfilled. These events were a foretaste of what was to come, with the fulfillment being fully realized at the Second Coming.

What is often misunderstood is that these events were just beginning to happen in fulfillment of Scripture, but ceased when Israel rejected the offer of the Kingdom when they stoned Stephen. The Holy Spirit was given to a few as the first fruits, showing Israel would soon receive the complete fulfillment. It is after Israel's rejection that God raises up Paul and turns to the Gentiles. This marks the true beginning of the Church, the Body of Christ.

According to the Apostle Paul, the Church was a Mystery, meaning it was not foretold (Romans 16:25; Colossians 1:25—28). It is impossible to find even a trace of a hint that God was going to turn to the Gentiles by forming the Church, the Body of Christ until revealed to Paul. The unsearchable riches of Ephesians 3:8 means the riches of the Mystery are untraceable or beyond finding out. They cannot be found out by studying the Old Testament. They were finally revealed through Paul who went to the Hebrew church in Jerusalem to tell the leadership how God was working through him (Acts 15; Galatians 1—2). Paul told them of the Mystery, as revealed to him by Jesus Christ, and it was the Holy Spirit who revealed to the church leaders that Paul was truly speaking words that came from God (Ephesians 3:1—5).

For previous notes and additional mid-Acts materials please visit www.MidActsTruths.com