

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

THE PROMISE OF THE FATHER

I. INTRODUCTION

The last words of the Lord Jesus Christ, before He ascended to Heaven, are recorded in Acts 1:4-5.

Act 1:4 And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me.

Act 1:5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

In these verses, those listening to Him were commanded to wait in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father, of which He had earlier spoken. He refers back to the words of John the Baptist, regarding the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, and He promises them power to witness for Him in Jerusalem, in Judea and Samaria and extending to the farthest points of the earth." (v8)

Act 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

After the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) the Apostle Peter begins his sermon with, "this is that which is spoken of by the prophet Joel". (Joel 2:28-29)

Yet many believers today still will not accept the biblical experience of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. This is the experience that changed those early disciples from fearful followers, hiding behind locked doors (John 20:19) to bold anointed ministers (Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists) ministering the Word of God in great power.

Act 17:6 ..., crying, **These that have turned the world upside down...**

II. WHAT IS THE PROMISE OF THE FATHER?

Joel 2:28-29 foretells in 835 BC the pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh. In the book of Acts, the fulfillment of this scripture is recorded. At that time both Jews and Gentiles received the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the speaking of unknown tongues.

Joel prophesied, "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; **and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.**" (Joel 2:29-30)

What an incredible promise (Jn 14:16,26) to all believers, of any age group, both men and women of any culture, creed or cast. The promised gift of the Holy Spirit was to be given freely to all who desired it. The Apostle Peter announced the fulfillment of Christ's promise in Acts 2. The promise of the Father prophesied by Christ was indeed fulfilled by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit ten days after Christ ascended to His Father in Heaven.

III. THE PROMISE OF THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Each gospel mentions the ministry and preaching of John the Baptist; who called for repentance towards God. This new spiritual lifestyle of faith towards God was confirmed by water baptism in the river Jordan where John the Baptist baptized by immersion.

Those who were not prepared to change their lives, (particularly the Pharisees and the Sadducees and other religious leaders who were looking to outward forms of works to verify their righteousness) were publicly chastised by John the Baptist:

Mat 3:7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

Mat 3:8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

Note John's strong words "O generation of vipers ... bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance" (Matthew 3:7-8). He encouraged repentant believers to look out for the ministry a "Greater" One to come (Jesus Christ). He prophesied, "**He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire**". Matthew 3:11, Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, John 1:33

According to these scriptures the promise of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost was very much in the ministry vision of John the Baptist. **Repentance and a changed life, together with the baptism in water, was simply a preparation for the coming Messiah and His greater baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire.** John did not look at the baptism in water as an end in itself.

IV. JESUS REFERS TO THE COMING BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. The Holy Spirit as "Living Water"

In John 7:37-39, Jesus Christ identifies the Feast (when the water was poured out), as a type of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Christ stated that the living water of the Holy Spirit would pour forth from the belly of the believer.

Joh 7:38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

Jesus Himself identifies this flowing forth as the Holy Spirit, which those that believed on Him would receive. This was prophesied as a future experience, because **the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was dependent on the ascension of Jesus to the Father.**

Many of the people who listened to the ministry of Christ identified Him as the Prophet mentioned in Deut 18:15.

Deu 18:15 The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

ACTS 3:22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

2. The Holy Ghost revealed as the future Comforter.

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and **he shall give you another Comforter**, that he may abide with you forever;

As Jesus Christ prepared His disciples for His departure, He spoke again of the Comforter "which is the Holy Ghost". (v26)

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, *which is the Holy Ghost*, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

The Father would send the Holy Ghost to teach the disciples all things.

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, *which is the Holy Ghost*, whom the Father will send in my name, **he shall teach you all things**, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

This promise of the indwelling presence of the Holy Ghost was to be one of the great changes that the Baptism of the Holy Ghost would accomplish. Rather than just accompanying the disciples, **the Holy Spirit would actually come and dwell within the body of the believer forever.** Prophets, and men of God in the Old Testament, knew the presence of the Holy Spirit coming upon them - at which time they prophesied and gave the word of the Lord. The Holy Spirit came upon them in great strength, but then lifted from them after they had prophesied. (2 Chronicles 20:14, 1 Samuel 19:20-21)

Note David's plea in Psalm 51:11 ..."**and take not thy holy spirit from me.**" He valued God's presence, because he feared God.

3. The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit depended on the Ascension and Glorification of Jesus Christ.

John 16:7 "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."

Jesus Christ knew that the sending of the Holy Ghost into the world as the indwelling "Spirit Baptizer" was dependent on His ascending to the Father, to be glorified. So the experience of the Holy Ghost would be much different from that which men and women of God had experienced in previous generations.

4. **Jesus breathed on His disciples BEFORE the ascension.**

John 20:22. Jesus breathed on the disciples and prayed "**Receive ye the Holy Ghost.**" But there was no evidence of speaking in tongues. He had already said that He had to return to the Father before the Holy Ghost could be sent, and He also told them to wait in Jerusalem for the Promise of the Father. It was a word of promise to the disciples.

V. **JESUS' FINAL INSTRUCTIONS TO HIS DISCIPLES**

Mark 16:15-17 In the Great Commission given by Jesus Christ in the Mark's Gospel, the believers were to continue to believe for signs and wonders as they had experienced whilst accompanying Jesus Christ in His short ministry.

Mar 16:17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

Notice that Jesus prophesied that "new tongues" would come. One of the greatest contentions in Christendom has been the "tongues" of Acts. I have heard some say it was only for that era. I have heard others say, "It's from the devil". We must always fulfill Bible prophecy and must always embrace "the new tongues" wholehearted without fear or doubt. This end-time sign is from God Himself. If Jesus said "they shall speak with new tongues", then we need to speak in new tongues.

This first occurred on the day of Pentecost. The Lord was already preparing them for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit which was soon to come. The speaking in tongues was also linked to other demonstrations of signs and wonders - such as casting out devils, and healing the sick.

VI. **THE PROMISE FULFILLED**

Acts 2:1-13 records the outstanding account of the promised day of Pentecost when **the Holy Ghost was outpoured upon the disciples in great power, like the roar of a tornado strength wind.** Surely this was the initiating of greater and more personal spiritual experiences for the people of God. The fire of God was on their heads, in the shape of cloven tongues. From this time on they were to be "ministers of fire". (Psalms 104:4; Hebrews 1:7) Their mouths were speaking forth other tongues under the power of the Holy Spirit, telling the wonderful works of God. They were staggering about as drunken men, under the power of the Holy Ghost within.

Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Peter's sermon reveals one of the great personal transformations of the Bible. Weeks earlier, Peter, who was so frightened on the night of the crucifixion, had denied any knowledge of Christ and hid himself behind closed doors. Peter is now boldly preaching amidst a large gathering without fear. This transformation took place just a few hours after receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

In Acts chapter 2 Peter preached a message of repentance, calling for all people to repent. He encouraged the believers to receive what many disciples had received, the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Act 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Act 2:39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call.

"The promise is unto you and to your children, and to all those afar off, and even as many as the Lord our God shall call".

There is no limit placed on those receiving of the blessings and gifts of the Holy Spirit, however they are only given those who have received Christ. (Eph 1:3; 13)

VII. OTHER ACCOUNTS IN THE BOOK OF ACTS OF THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST

1. The First Gentiles Baptized in the Holy Ghost.

Acts 10:44-48. This biblical account records the first outpouring of the Holy Ghost on Gentile believers, on the Italian Cornelius and his band. The outpouring is associated once again with the speaking in unknown tongues and magnifying God. Because these Gentiles spoke in tongues, Peter had no hesitation in believing that they had received the Holy Ghost, even though Peter and the other Jews with him were astonished at such an outpouring. Until that time Peter and the other disciples with him had believed that all God's blessings were intended for the Jews.

Act 10:45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that **on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost**.

Act 10:46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.

In Acts 11:15-17, Peter recounts the experience to the other Jews in Jerusalem. It was a definite experience in time. "The Holy Ghost fell on them". This is revival anointing at its best. Peter had nothing to do with it; he couldn't talk about his ministry or his message, for it was all the Holy Ghost. The men of God had nothing to do with it.

Act 11:15 And as I began to speak, **the Holy Ghost fell on them**, as on us at the beginning.

Act 11:17 Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?

Peter could not resist the move of the Spirit, even among the gentiles. Unlike Paul, he was not sent to the gentiles.

2. The Disciples at Ephesus

In Acts 19:2-7 Paul found believers who had only received John's water baptism for repentance. Paul laid his hands upon them (v.6). Once again, the speaking in unknown tongues was manifested as the Holy Ghost came upon these disciples. The record also shows that these twelve disciples prophesied as they received the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Acts 19:6 And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, **the Holy Ghost came on them**; and **they spake with tongues, and prophesied.**

Note: Paul's first question to the Ephesus believers. "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed"? Acts 19:2 shows believers today, the importance of receiving this separate experience of being baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Like Paul, we need to ask Christians if they have received the Holy Ghost; and if they do not speak in tongues, we need to pray for them that they may also receive of God.

Paul went into the synagogue in Ephesus and spoke boldly for three months of the things concerning the kingdom of God. (Acts 19:8) It is quite probable that he would have been teaching on the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, with the evidence of speaking in unknown tongues, which he had just ministered to John's disciples. (Acts 19:6) John's disciples not only spoke in unknown tongues, but they prophesied as well.

Spirit-filled (tongue talking) believers should realize that the baptism of the Holy Spirit brings the enabling to operate all nine Holy Spirit gifts necessary to do God's work.

Paul's letter to the Ephesian Church speaks of the "sealing of that Holy Spirit of promise", received "after that ye believed". (Eph 1:13).

In Ephesians 5:18-19 Paul admonishes the believers to be "filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." **These spiritual songs, or songs of the spirit, would certainly include singing in unknown tongues.**

The letter to the church at Ephesus was also circulated to other Christian communities so that all believers had common ground.

3. The Disciples at Colossae and Corinth

Colossians 3:16 also includes an admonition to enter into "spiritual song". In this verse

of scripture, the implication is to do this as a body, "teaching and admonishing one another".

In Paul's first letter to the church at Corinth, it is apparent that the Corinthians spoke in tongues. 1 Corinthians, Chapters 12 & 14.

4. **The Experience of the Apostle Paul**

Acts 9:1-20 records the well-known conversion of the Pharisee Saul. In verse 17, Ananias acknowledges Saul as a brother in Christ. Upon the laying on of hands to be filled with the Holy Ghost, he arose and was baptized in water.

It is evident that Paul spoke with tongues. First, in the account in Acts 19:6. Second, in 1 Corinthians 14:18, Paul writes, "**I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all.**"

5. **The Experience of the Samaritans**

Acts 8:5-8, 14-18 records the revival conducted by Philip the Evangelist. Many became believers. **The Apostles at Jerusalem sent Peter and John down to Samaria especially to lay hands on them to receive the Holy Ghost.** The record of Acts specifically says that He had fallen on none of them, but they had been baptized in water. These disciples received the Holy Ghost as the apostles laid their hands on them.

The evidence the apostles used to ascertain whether the Samaritans had received the Holy Ghost was that they had spoken with unknown tongues.

Simon the sorcerer had personally witnessed Holy Spirit revival in some of the Disciples after receiving the Holy Spirit. He then requested the same "power" that he had seen others receive. The word used for "**power**" in this verse is "**exousia**", meaning authority. Simon saw there were changes in the lives of those who received the Holy Ghost. Of course, Simon the sorcerer was greatly rebuked by Peter for thinking that the gift of God could be purchased with money.

VIII. THE CONTINUING PROMISE OF THE FATHER

The experience of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost has never been withdrawn by God. It was the desire of God that all those who called upon the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ be endued with power from God. It was not just an experience for those who lived during the first years of the early church.

Believers are to be "temples" of the Holy Ghost, both individually, and corporately as one body. (1 Corinthians 6:19, Ephesians 2:21-22). Wherever believers have sought the Lord with open believing hearts, the baptism of the Holy Spirit will come upon them, with speaking in unknown tongues. The "tongues" is the overflow of the "infilling".

Pastors must ask the sheep the same question as Paul. "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" Peter and Paul looked for the evidence of receiving. If a believer had not spoken in tongues, then this was one of the first things they attended too.

Many times, the Disciples of Christ had times of rejoicing as they experienced the power of God during their 3 years with Christ. (Luke 10:17) Even though they witnessed the miraculous power of the Lord, they had not yet received the power that they needed for ministry after the ascension of Jesus.

There was much joy when the first Samaritans believed on Christ Jesus. (Acts 8:8) However, this was not the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Believers today may experience great joy as they give their lives to Christ. They all enter into that new life found in Christ Jesus. (2 Corinthians 5:17-18)

1 Peter 1:23 speaks of being born again, "...by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever". Verse 22 says "ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren".

However, let me again stress that this experience is referring to the spiritual new birth and is a separate experience to the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

IX. RECEIVING THE PROMISE OF THE FATHER

The disciples waited in Jerusalem in one accord and one spirit, until the day of Pentecost was fulfilled and the Holy Ghost was poured out. From that time, it was not necessary to wait.

Paul was filled with the Spirit as soon as Ananias laid hands on him. (Acts 9:17-18)

Cornelius and his band received the Holy Ghost and spoke in tongues even as Peter was sharing the Word. (Acts 10:44)

The disciples at Ephesus received the Holy Spirit as soon as Paul laid hands on them. (Acts 19:6)

X. CONCLUSION

Today in many nations God is still outpouring His Holy Ghost, as recorded in the book of Acts. Millions of believers have and are continuing to receive this powerful experience, even in the most remote areas of the world.

God is bringing to pass by fulfillment the prophecy of Joel 2:28-29, "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh".

As believers, we need to answer with a resounding "YES" the question in Acts 19:2:

"HAVE YE RECEIVED THE HOLY GHOST SINCE YE BELIEVED?"

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