

THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (continued) - Today we will study the accounts of the coming of the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts. There are five specific passages on this subject:

- 1) **Acts 2:1-13** - "When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. [2] And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. [3] And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. [4] And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. [5] Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. [6] And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. [7] And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? [8] And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? [9] Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, [10] Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, [11] both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God." [12] And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" [13] But others mocking said, "They are filled with new wine."

Here are some important points. The coming of the Spirit was *expected* from the teaching of Jesus (see *verses 1-4*). The coming of the Spirit was a matter of *much prayer* among these early Christians. The outward manifestation of "fire" and the sound of "wind" are not repeated in the Scriptures, indicating they were never meant to be ongoing manifestations. Probably they are special signs to indicate the first arrival of a new era.

The Scriptures specifically identify this event as the fulfillment of **Joel 2:28** - "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions." Notice that Peter immediately dispels the idea that the baptism in the Holy Spirit was only for certain people in a certain time, or of a certain denomination. The gift is for all Christian men and women - right up until the unmistakable signs of the end of this present age - **Acts 2:17-21** - "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; [18] even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. [19] And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; [20] the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. [21] And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

- 2) **Acts 8:9-25** - "But there was a man named Simon, who had previously practiced magic in the city and amazed the people of Samaria, saying that he himself was somebody great. [10] They all paid attention to him, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the power of God that is called Great." [11] And they paid attention to him because for a long time he had amazed them with his magic. [12] But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. [13] Even Simon himself believed, and after being baptized he continued with Philip. And seeing signs and great miracles performed, he was amazed. [14] Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had *received the word of God*, they sent to them Peter and John, [15] who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, [16] for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been *baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus*. [17] Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. [18] Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, [19] saying, "Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." [20] But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! [21] You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. [22] Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. [23] For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." [24] And Simon answered, "Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may come upon me." [25] Now when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans."

Here we have the story of the Samaritan believers receiving ministry from Peter and John. The goal is specifically stated in **verse 15**, "....that they might receive the Holy Spirit". No outward signs are mentioned, but that something happened is obvious, in that Simon the sorcerer was willing to pay money to learn how to duplicate what he saw take place in each one. Again, this has all the appearance of a *post-conversion baptism in the Spirit*.

- 3) **Acts 9:10-19** - "Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." [11] And the Lord said to him, "Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying, [12] and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." [13] But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem. [14] And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name." [15] But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. [16] For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." [17] So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." [18] And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized; [19] and taking food, he was strengthened. For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus."

This is the record of Paul's baptism in the Spirit. Again, it is clear from the passage that *Ananias recognizes this as a post-conversion baptism with the Holy Spirit* (notice his reference to Paul as "brother Saul" in **verse 17**). Tongues are not mentioned at all in the passage. Yet Simon assumes his assignment was successfully completed. How did he know Saul was baptized with the Spirit? We also know Paul testified to "speaking in tongues more than you all" (1 Corinthians 14:18).

- 4) **Acts 10:44-48** - "While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. [45] And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. [46] For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, [47] "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" [48] And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days."

The Spirit was breaking all the barriers of race and background in the Book of Acts. Here the Holy Spirit comes upon Gentiles in Caesarea. These were already "devout and god-fearing" people (10:2). Peter also makes it clear that these people had *already heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ* (10:34-38). Notice that Peter came to the conclusion that God played no favorites in offering salvation to the gentiles. Peter reached that conclusion in **verse 34**, *before* the gentiles were baptized in the Holy Spirit! The Holy Spirit wasn't given just to prove people other than Jews could be saved. When these gentiles were filled with the Holy Spirit Peter learned a *different* lesson - *God's impartiality applies to more than just salvation. It extends to all His gifts, including the baptism in the Holy Spirit*. For Peter, the sign of tongues was *proof* that these people had indeed received the baptism in the Holy Spirit - **Acts 11:15-16** - "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. [16] And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'"

- 5) **Acts 19:1-7** - "And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. [2] And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." [3] And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." [4] And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus." [5] On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. [6] And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. [7] There were about twelve men in all."

The context of the passage is one of *believers* being filled with the Spirit. Notice Paul's telling question in **verse 2**, He does not question that they *believed*. He wants to know if they *received the Spirit* when they believed. *He would hardly have asked non-Christians if they had received the Spirit!* Again, the sign of charismatic gifts proved the reality of their reception of the Spirit. Paul assumed this was an *identifiable* experience.