

THE PROMISE OF THE FATHER

Just before Jesus ascended, He commanded his disciples to stay in Jerusalem and, “wait for the promise of the Father... For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” (Acts 1:4-5) One hundred and twenty obeyed and after a week of prayer in an “upper room,” the promise came. “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ...And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (Acts 2:1,4)

Due to the Feast of Pentecost celebration, Jews from every nation were in Jerusalem at this time and news of this unusual event drew a crowd. Several thousand of these Jews heard the 120 speaking in tongues and wondered, “how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?” (v8) “And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?” (v12) They were asking, What is the meaning of this speaking in tongues?

Peter stood up and answered their question. “...this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh:” (v16) “This”—their speaking in tongues—was God pouring out His Spirit upon all flesh! In verse 33 Peter said this was “...the promise of the Holy Ghost...” and that Jesus had “shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.” What were they seeing and hearing? One hundred and twenty people speaking in tongues! It was the beginning of God pouring out the “promise of the Father” upon all flesh.

Peter then told the multitude of Jews, “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.” (v39) Did you hear it? The promise wasn’t just for the 120 and it wasn’t just for the Jews there in that day, but the Bible says it was for as many as the Lord our God shall call. The promise of the Father—the Holy Ghost that came evidenced by 120 speaking in tongues—is *your* promise! It is for you today.

THEY BELIEVED AND WERE BAPTIZED, YET WERE NOT FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST

There are some doctrines that state that you receive the Holy Spirit when you believe. Other doctrines state that you receive the Holy Spirit when you believe and are baptized. BOTH of these doctrines are direct contradictions of the Bible. In the eighth chapter of Acts the evangelist Phillip went to Samaria to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Acts 8:12, “But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” Notice that they believed AND they were baptized. Yet, if you keep reading you find that they did not have the Holy Ghost! The Apostles sent Peter and John to Samaria, “Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)” (Acts 8:15-16)

The Samaritans believed and were baptized but they did not receive the Holy Ghost until later. Although the Bible doesn’t specifically state that they spoke in tongues when they received the Holy Ghost, there was an “outward” evidence. Acts 8:18, “And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money.” What did Simon see when people received the Holy Ghost? Peter could have said it again—Jesus has “shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.” How did he *see* the Samaritans receive the Holy

Ghost? The only logical answer is that Simon saw the same thing the Jews saw on the day of Pentecost; he must have seen and heard them speaking in tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance!

HOW DO YOU KNOW?

Speaking in tongues was how the Apostles knew that Cornelius (the first Gentile to receive the Holy Ghost) and his family had received the Holy Ghost. In Acts 10:44-46 the Bible says, “While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they ... were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.” How did Peter know the Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost? Because he heard them speak with tongues!

This is how Jesus had said it would be when someone is born again. John 3:5, “Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” Then He told Nicodemus, “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” (v8) It is important to notice here that 1) there is a SOUND [also translated “voice” in other passages] when someone is born of the Spirit and 2) you cannot enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and of the Spirit. You can’t see the wind, but you can hear it; you can’t see the Holy Ghost but you can hear Him when someone is born again!

This experience was also prophesied about in the Old Testament. “For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.” (Isa. 28:11-12)

EXAMINE THE BIBLE EVIDENCE

Consider the four Biblical accounts of people receiving their initial experience in the Holy Ghost in the New Testament Church; Acts 2:4, Acts 8:17-18, Acts 10:44-46, and Acts 19:6:

- “And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Acts 2:4
- “Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money.” Acts 8:17-18
- “While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 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. For they heard them speak with tongues,” Acts 10:44-46
- “And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.” Acts 19:6

In three of these, the Bible tells us specifically that they spoke with tongues. In the fourth, the Bible says that Simon *saw* people receive the Holy Ghost—there was an outward evidence of being filled with the Holy Ghost. One of the passages tells us that Peter knew that the Gentiles

received the Holy Ghost *because* he heard them speaking in tongues. Conclusive evidence that the Holy Ghost is accompanied by a “sound” or “voice” just as Jesus said it would be.

There is another passage that needs to be considered. In Acts 9:17, the prophet Ananias told Saul (Apostle Paul), “Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, ... hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.” Later, Apostle Paul told the church at Corinth, “I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all.”

In Acts chapter 19 Paul went to Ephesus, “...and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?” (Acts 19:1-2)

This is the question you need to consider today...

HAVE YOU RECEIVED THE HOLY GHOST SINCE YOU BELIEVED?