

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

Text: Acts 2:38-39

INTRO: The book by the name, "The Acts of the Apostles," could just as correctly be called the acts of the Holy Spirit in the early church. Any person who has a correct understanding of the Biblical teaching re the Holy Spirit will be dependent on the book of Acts for much of that understanding. It is with this in mind that we examine the subject of the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts.

I. HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM.

For John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now. (Acts 1:5).

Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, "John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit." (Acts 11:16).

A. Holy Spirit baptism was not a command, but a promise.
Behold I send the Promise of My Father upon you, but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high. (Luke 24:49).

1. Jesus made such a promise, as already noted.
2. John B had earlier spoken such a promise, MT 3:11.

B. H.S. baptism was not received at man's discretion, but at the discretion of the Lord, MT 3:11.

C. H.S. baptism was not promised to all. Some were warned of a baptism of fire instead, & some to whom John spoke may not have received either baptism.

NOTE that the fire in the context of MT 3:11 is the fire of punishment. READ MATTHEW 3:10-12.

D. There are 2 recorded & 1 implied case of H.S. baptism.
1. The apostles on Pentecost 30 AD, Acts 1:26-2:4, 7, 14, 42-43. Enabled them to fulfill the apostolic office.

2. It is nowhere specifically stated that Paul received H.S. baptism, but clearly implied by the claims re his apostleship. Paul received H.S. baptism for the same reason the other apostles did, about 36 AD.
3. Finally, an overwhelming in the H.S. was administered by the Lord on Cornelius & his family, Acts 10, 41 AD. The purpose was different this time--to convince the Jews that Gentiles were fit subjects to hear & obey the gospel. Since its purpose was different it is reasonable to conclude that its result & duration differed accordingly. READ ACTS 11:15-17.

E. The direct effects of H.S. baptism lasted till the death of the last apostle near the end of the first century--& its indirect effects still endure in the written word. H.S. baptism was last experienced about 41 AD. Paul spoke of water baptism about 64 AD, Eph 4:4-5.

II. SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

- A. In addition to H.S. baptism, there were manifested in early congregations what were called Spiritual gifts. These gifts were imparted to some first century Christians by the laying on of the apostles' hands.

[Peter & John laid hands on the converts in Samaria] & they received the H.S. Now when Simon saw that thru the laying on of the apostles' hands the H.S. was given, he offered them money. (Acts 8:17-18).

I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established... (Rom 1:11).

Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you thru the laying on of my hands. (2 Tim 1:6).

- B. Several important facts about spiritual gifts are made known in 1 Cor., chapters 12-14.

1. There are at least 9 separate gifts & different persons received one or more of the gifts, 1 Cor 12:8-11
2. Spiritual gifts were given during the "childhood" state of the church--before the N.T. was completely committed to writing, but were to cease when the revelation was perfect.
1 Cor 13:8-13; Zech 13:1-2; JN 20:30-31

III. THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, Acts 2:38-39.

- A. The Bible teaches an indwelling of the H.S. in every true Christian.

And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" (Gal 4:6).

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the H.S. who is in you, whom you have from God & you are not your own? (1 Cor 6:19).

- B. What is said of the indwelling of the H.S. is also true of the Father & the Son.

No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us & His love has been perfected in us. (1 JN 4:12).

Be strengthened with might thru His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts thru faith... (Eph 3:16-17).

- C. That this indwelling is a spiritual relationship becomes obvious when we consider that not only does Deity dwell in man, but at one & the same time, man dwells in Deity. This indwelling is not some sort of physical monstrosity that cannot be understood or explained, but a spiritual relationship that God shares with those who obey Him.

He who eats My flesh & drinks My blood abides in Me & I in him. (John 6:56).

But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. (Rom 8:9).

D. Such language is simply another of many ways of expressing the oneness, fellowship, cooperation between God & those who have been properly influenced by His word. READ 2 COR 6:14-16.

I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me thru their word; that as You are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. (John 17:20-21).

IV. FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT.

A. The phrase "full of the H.S." & similar phrases are used several times in the book of Acts. These phrases may have slightly different applications depending on the context in which they are found.

1. Such phrases are often used in connection with receiving a revelation, but they are not limited to that use.

And they were all filled with the H.S. & began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2:4).

2. The phrase was also used when the non-miraculous was under consideration.

a. Compare the manner in which Satan filled the hearts of Ananias & Sapphira, Acts 5:3

b. Even so, men & women who submit to the

influence & instructions given thru the H.S. are said to be full of the H.S.
7 men of good report, full of the H.S. & wisdom. (Acts 6:3).

Barnabas, Acts 11:24

Eph. 5:18

- c. Also compare the use of the term filled in Acts 9:36, Dorcas was "full of good works & charitable deeds which she did."
- d. In the same way, we may be full of good works & full of the H.S. today by allowing the H.S.'s revelation thru the Scriptures to be a direct & motivating influence in our lives.

CONCLUSION: We must learn to distinguish between H.S. baptism, spiritual gifts, & the indwelling of the H.S., to properly understand the teachings of the Scriptures on this important subject. It is true that H.S. baptism was a gift, Acts 11:17. The powers imparted by apostolic hands were gifts, Acts 8:20. The indwelling of the H.S. is also a gift, Acts 2:38. But they are not the same gift. The first two we benefit from indirectly thru the writings of the inspired men who were under their direct influence. The indwelling of the H.S.--the oneness & fellowship that comes by obeying God's revealed will--is ours in a direct & personal way, allowing us to communicate directly with God in prayer, even as He communicates to us thru His written word.

La Porte, TX, May 20, 1979

Humphrey, AR, August 2, 1980 (meeting)

Liberty Hill, TX, August 13, 1980 (meeting)

Exton, PA, March 16, 1986

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, July 4, 1993

Imhoff Ave., Port Arthur, TX, August 1, 1993 (meeting)

Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, July 11, 1999