

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST

THE baptism of the Holy Ghost is the gift of power on the clean, sanctified life. It was spoken of by Joel the Prophet: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and 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 2:28, 29).

John the Baptist prophesied that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Ghost, saying: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire" (Matthew 3:11).

Promise Fulfilled

Jesus led His disciples out as far as Bethany, and after speaking those parting words He was carried up into Heaven. Then the disciples returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the Temple praising and blessing God. There were about 120 who tarried according to Jesus' command.

In the second chapter of Acts we read how the promise was fulfilled: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 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).

This was the first outpouring of the Spirit, and the standard for all time. It was fifty days after the crucifixion, at the selfsame hour, "the third hour of the day." Peter arose and preached, saying: "These are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But 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." He told them it was for all.

It brought conviction on the multitude, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. Pentecost always brings a revival of salvation.

Sanctification After Regeneration

Some people teach that one can be justified and sanctified by one work of grace, but that is contrary to the Word of God. The disciples had been with Jesus three years and were most certainly regenerated. Then Jesus prayed to the Father for His disciples: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). If the disciples had already been sanctified when they were justified, Jesus would not have prayed for God to sanctify them.

Then He commanded the disciples to wait for the promise of the Father, the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Jesus told them to tarry for the power — not for a clean heart.

The Apostle Paul gives us the order observed in the Temple service: "For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Hebrews 13: 11, 12).

Sanctification is obtained through faith in the purging power of the Blood of Jesus Christ. "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (Psalm 51:7).

David was sanctified when he prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God" (Psalm 51:10). Jacob was sanctified when he wrestled with the Angel and prevailed. Isaiah was sanctified when the live coal of fire from the altar touched his lips. The disciples were sanctified through Jesus' prayer: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17).

The Baptism for Sanctified Souls Only

One cannot expect the baptism of the Holy Ghost until the temple of his soul has been washed in the Blood of the Lamb and then thoroughly purged of all iniquity — sanctified wholly. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the same kind of anointing as that which Jesus received — and He was holy.

Knowing that His disciples were sanctified, Jesus commanded them to tarry for the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and His parting words were: "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). "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. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1:4, 5).

Sanctification Is Not the Baptism

Many people have been taught that the baptism of the Holy Ghost and sanctification are the same, and they have been robbed of their inheritance. Sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost are not the same. Every sanctified soul is eligible for the gift of the Holy Ghost; but if one holds that the cleansing of his heart is the baptism, he cannot receive it. God wants us to study His Word as it is, and then it will be wrought out in the heart. There are two works of grace — justification and sanctification — and there is the gift of the Holy Ghost that empowers for service.

Sanctification is holiness; and the baptism of the Holy Ghost is the enduement of power — the Comforter coming in to abide. Sanctification is a work in the soul; and the baptism is the immersion in the Holy Spirit, not only of the soul but also of the flesh. Sanctification is the emptying or cleansing of the heart; and the baptism is the filling with the Third Person of the Trinity.

A sanctified soul has the power to praise and magnify Jesus continually. When one is baptized with the Holy Ghost, the Spirit Himself takes possession and magnifies and praises God in a new tongue, and makes him a witness for Christ, endued with the power from on High. A sanctified soul has the witness of the Spirit, the breathing of the Holy Ghost upon him. When one is baptized with the Holy Ghost, the power of God comes down into his inmost being and issues forth as floods of Living Water.

The Work of the Holy Ghost

Jesus spoke of the baptism of the Holy Ghost as rivers of Living Water: "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" (John 7:38, 39).

Jesus taught also that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is the Comforter coming in to abide: "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:16, 17). "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; 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" (John 16:7).

The Holy Ghost gives power for service, power to witness of the work of God in the soul. Among Jesus' parting words was a command to tarry for the promised power: "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" (Acts 1:8). Today, too, God wants witnesses empowered for service, and will give this Holy Ghost power to all who w prepared to receive it.

The Outpouring Is for Today

The outpouring of the Holy Ghost did not cease with Pentecost, for we read that eight years later the Lord poured out His Spirit upon the Gentiles. Peter began preaching in the power of the Spirit to a company of Gentiles at the house of Cornelius, and the Holy Ghost fell upon them all. It was like unto the first Pentecost: "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, and magnify God" (Acts 10:44-46).

We read, too, that the Spirit was again poured out, at Ephesus, twenty-three years later; and it was the same as on the Day of Pentecost: "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).

Always the Same Evidence

In all these outpourings of the Spirit, the same evidence was manifested, the speaking in tongues. The Holy Ghost gave us these three instances of groups receiving the Holy Ghost, at various times, to establish the fact that the Spirit always speaks in tongues at the time one receives the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Peter proclaimed that the baptism of the Holy Ghost would be manifested in the last days also: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh" (Acts 2:17), and in Acts 2:38, 39, we read Peter's assurance that the gift of the Holy Ghost is for this day as well as for the days of the Apostles: "Then Peter said unto them, . . . ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 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."

In this Latter Outpouring of the Spirit thousands have magnified the Lord in new tongues; and all who have been baptized with the Holy Ghost have spoken in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. The essential gift, however, is not the speaking in tongues, but the infilling of the Holy Ghost, of which speaking in tongues is the God-given evidence. "Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order" (I Corinthians 14:39, 40).