

The Book of Acts

Lesson 2

Introducing the Spirit – Act 1:1-5

Acts 1:1-5

In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, ² until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³ He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

⁴ And while staying (being gathered in company such as while eating) with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with (or in) the Holy Spirit not many days from now.

v. 4 is probably a repetition of Luke 24:49 “*And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.*” Being “clothed with power from on high” is the work of baptism which means covered by or covered with. Water baptism is being covered with water. One baptized in the Spirit is permanently covered or surrounded by the Spirit. The presence of the Spirit is God’s gift at the time of salvation, now. The original baptism of the Spirit is applied to us at the immediate moment we are saved. We receive the Spirit as our Divine Occupant instantly. We become the Temple of the Spirit at salvation as the original baptism of the Spirit is applied to us. His work is to produce the Lordship of Christ in each believer’s life... “*and no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except in the Holy Spirit.*” 1 Cor. 12:3

The one with the Holy Spirit can live a life that reveals and shows that Jesus is Lord. As the Holy Spirit dwells inside of us as Christians, we are governed by that Holy Spirit leading us into glad submission to Jesus' Lordship. Each believer will oftentimes find the way one lives life is in direct contradiction to the world, because Jesus is Lord and the Spirit testifies to my spirit that I am His Son and He is Lord. The Holy Spirit works inside of each genuine believer so that I become a witness to the wisdom and redemption of God. How life is lived because Jesus is Lord is the key to a powerful witness. We are epistles read of men.

God had promised that there would be an outpouring of the Spirit in Israel. Joel’s passage (2:28) not only reveals the fact of the outpouring, but the circumstances, the timing, the conditions, surrounding this outpouring.

Notice 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.²⁹ Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.*”

The outpouring will be a gift particularly upon Israel, but probably all people (all flesh?) will have some participation. The outpouring will happen during the Day of the Lord, a specific period of judgment on the Gentiles for their treatment of Israel. (v.1) It will happen during a great time of grace for the nation of Israel. She will again prosper, a payback of the Lord for the years the swarming locusts devoured her prosperity. (v.25)

This will also be a time of spiritual prosperity. You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God and there is none else. And my people shall never again be put to shame. (v.27)

repeat of v. 26) The nation will never again turn away from the Lord, nor will any Gentile nation or people attack Israel. This outpouring of the Spirit fits well into the end of the Tribulation when all Israel will be saved (Romans 9) or perhaps at the beginning of the Millennium.

The outpouring of the Spirit which was promised (Joel 2) is not the same work as the promised Baptism of the Spirit (Acts 2). The work of the Spirit in Joel 2 is evidence of God's presence and evidence of a restored relationship with Israel. It is inward to the nation and meant to bless Israel. However, Acts 2 is meant to produce powerful witnessing. It is meant to produce an effect in disciples of our Lord and through them, through the ministry of teaching or proclaiming an affect is produced in the lives of those who hear. The Baptism of the Spirit was not meant to produce personal benefit, but rather to produce an effect that would build the Lord Jesus' Church. The purpose of Joel 2 and Acts 2 are not the same. They are separate works of the Spirit at two different times in history. The promise of the Spirit in Joel 2 is yet to be fulfilled.

The events to follow in Acts 1&2 are not fulfillments of Joel 2:28, which still must come to pass. The Lord Jesus had specifically taught the apostles about this near future enablement of the Spirit during His 40-day teaching ministry between His crucifixion and ascension. They knew and anticipated that the upcoming Baptism of the Spirit, "not many days hence" will be the Spirit's enablement for the work of teaching, resulting in the building of the Lord's Church.

John gives the Lord's promises concerning the coming of the Spirit (John 14:16; John 14:26; John 15:26). He is a gift of grace from the Father whose work will be in the name of the Son, that is in the Son's charge, for the Son's work. The Spirit will be under the direction of the Son, from the Father. This Heavenly Helper (both of the Lord Jesus and a Helper for those teaching) will be given "forever." The presence of the Spirit is permanent and intended to make believers supernatural witnesses. He will teach the Apostles and bring to their minds all that Jesus taught them. This ministry is now under the supervision of the Word of God. The Spirit will testify of the Lord Jesus. He will not glorify Himself or His own work. This present age is the age of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Spirit's energy is spent on glorifying the Lord Jesus and not Himself. God's Lamb has been lifted up before men so that they might be saved.

John the Baptist promised the Spirit's coming, in fact he prophesied the specific ministry of the baptism of the Spirit to the nation of Israel. Matt. 3:11 *"I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."*

The Lord Jesus also promised the Spirit.

"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever...Jn. 14:16

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you....Jn. 14:26

"When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me, Jn. 15:26

The Apostles were not new to the ministry of the Spirit. The Lord Jesus had given the Spirit to them temporarily several times. John 20:22 "And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit..."

The Apostles were not new to the ministry of the Spirit helping them speak. Matthew 10:19 When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour.²⁰ For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.