

# The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

“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 set 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).

## Introduction

**M**any today speak of being “spirit-filled” and “born again.” But what are they talking about?

The term “born again” usually refers to Jesus’ conversation with Nicodemus, the Pharisee who came to him at night in John 3:5-6: *“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. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”*

What do people mean by “spirit-filled?”

More than one Old Testament prophet wrote of this phenomenon of God’s Spirit actually living inside of us:

- 📖 Jeremiah 31:33-34 says: *“But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”*
- 📖 Ezekiel, in his important prophecy about the New Testament Messiah promised: *“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them”* (Ezekiel 36:26-27).
- 📖 Probably the most well-known prophecy about being “spirit-filled” is found in Joel 2:28-29, *“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.”*

What does the New Testament say about this same phenomenon?

- 📖 Acts 2:4 clearly states that the Spirit gave the disciples the utterance of “*other tongues*,” – the initial sign manifesting His indwelling presence.
- 📖 When Peter told the Jews assembled in Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost that “*this was that*” which was spoken by the prophet Joel, his answer linked speaking with tongues to the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:16-18).
- 📖 Again, in Acts 2:33, Peter identified the sign of speaking with tongues as the evidence that the disciples had received the “*promise of the Holy Ghost*.”

Both the Old and New Testaments agreed that God would fill people with His Spirit, and when that happened, the initial evidence was speaking in tongues. Fred Kinzie gives us several reasons in his tract about this subject:

**The Sovereignty of God** – God is not accountable to us for what He chooses to do. We have no reason to question His ways, nor dispute His actions. If you have any doubts about the connection between speaking with tongues and the baptism of the Holy Ghost, read the following Scriptures:

- 📖 Isaiah 28:11-12
- 📖 Mark 16:17
- 📖 Acts 10:46
- 📖 Acts 2:4
- 📖 Acts 19:1-6

**An External Evidence** – There are many evidences of the operation of God’s Spirit in one’s life. With some, such as the fruit of the Spirit, it is a matter of time before they are manifested. These follow after the Holy Ghost comes to live in our heart and life and are results of it. Peter and the six who went with him to Caesarea knew the Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost, not because of long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, or temperance, but because they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. This is an outward evidence, instantly observed and heard.

**A Uniform Evidence** – In speaking about being born of the Spirit, Jesus states in John 3:8, “*So is everyone that is born of the Spirit*.” This is uniformity. By carefully analyzing this verse, you will see that Jesus places emphasis upon the word “*sound*.” You hear the sound of the wind blowing, and this is evidence of its presence. It is not seeing nor feeling that is important, though these evidences may be present, but hearing the sound. Some may conclude that this means the experience at Pentecost where they heard the sound as of a rushing mighty wind. However, this rushing mighty wind was not spoken of in Acts 10:46, or in Acts 19:6, but speaking in tongues was. We must conclude that the important part of the Spirit’s evidence at Pentecost was the speaking in other tongues. The *wind* was impersonal; the *speaking* was personal.

**Complete Control** – The speaking in tongues symbolized God’s complete control of the believer. James teaches very revealing things about the nature of the tongue:

- 📖 It is capable of defiling the whole body.
- 📖 Though it is a small member, it has never been tamed by mankind.

Since these things are true about the tongue, wouldn’t it need to be tamed before the whole body could be consecrated to God? In Matthew 12:29, Jesus says that before one can enter a strong man’s house and spoil or plunder his goods, he must first bind the strong man. The strong man of our house is our tongue. When God tames our tongue, we are under His control and endued with a spiritual force from on high for His service.

**The Tongue is Man’s Greatest Expression of His Spirit** – The ability and power to coordinate thought and tongue into intelligent speech is one of the highest prerogatives of man and elevates him above the beasts of the field. This makes him superior to any other of God’s creations. Therefore the tongue is the vehicle of expression for the spirit.

It is not difficult, after realizing these things about the tongue, to understand why God would use speaking in tongues to express the greatest, most wonderful experience man could receive. In the baptism of the Holy Ghost, God’s Spirit and ours become one. He uses our tongue and voice to express it. It is the wonder chosen by God, the sovereign ruler of the universe.

### **Who Needs the Holy Ghost?**

In the Bible, there are six categories of people who needed the Holy Ghost. By studying them, we can see who needs the Holy Ghost even in modern society. Bro. Simeon Young wrote an excellent article on this subject, and he says:

**1. Religious Activists Need the Spirit** – Even the twelve apostles who had been with Jesus for three and a half years needed the Holy Ghost. They had been healing the sick and casting out devils. Jesus told them to wait in Jerusalem until they were given the “power from on high” (Luke 24:49). In the book of Acts, Luke says that these twelve men received the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 1:13-14; 2:1-2).

**2. Highly Favored and Blessed People Need the Spirit** – Mary, the mother of Jesus who had been called “highly favored” and “blessed” at least five times in the first chapter of Luke needed the Holy Ghost. Her name was listed with the names of the twelve apostles and other family members of Jesus who were waiting in the upper room when the Holy Ghost first fell on the Day of Pentecost. Just because God blessed her and favored her did not mean she was okay without God’s Spirit living inside her.

**3. Those Healed and Delivered Need the Spirit** – *“Unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many (Samaritans) that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies,*

*and that were lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city” (Acts 8:7-8). Peter and John still came from Jerusalem and “prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost” because even with the divine touch of God in healing, they still needed His Spirit dwelling inside (Acts 8:15-17).*

**4. Sincere, But Misguided, Religious Zealots Need the Spirit** – Saul of Tarsus was all of these things. But Saul desperately needed God’s Spirit living inside. God sent him a preacher and Saul became Paul with a new birth (Acts 9:17).

**5. Prayerful, Generous Friends of the Church Need the Spirit** – Cornelius was generous, and he prayed so hard that God sent an angel to speak to him! But this God-fearing Gentile still needed the Spirit of God dwelling within (Acts 11:14).

**6. Long-Standing Church Members Need the Spirit** – Paul found twelve men in the city of Ephesus who had been followers of John the Baptist for years. It was obvious these men were true believers, but Paul STILL asked them, *“Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?”* (Acts 19:2). After Paul baptized them again – this time in the name of the Lord Jesus – he *“laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them: and they spake with tongues, and prophesied”* (Acts 19:5-6).

These six examples from God’s Word prove that anyone who does not have the Holy Ghost needs it.

### What Does the Holy Ghost Do For You?

- 📖 John 14:26 says that the Holy Ghost will teach and bring all things to our remembrance, so we will have an understanding of the Word of God.
- 📖 Isaiah 28:12 lets us know that the Holy Ghost is refreshing and gives rest to the weary.
- 📖 John 16:13 says the Spirit of truth lets us know things to come in the future.
- 📖 Acts 1:8 tells us the Spirit gives us power for witnessing.
- 📖 Romans 8:11 helps us understand that the Spirit is our promise; we will be resurrected.
- 📖 Romans 8:26 gives us assurance that the Spirit even helps us to pray – through intercession.
- 📖 Isaiah 59:19 says the Spirit of the Lord will raise a standard against the enemy of our soul.
- 📖 Romans 8:9 says Christ places His seal of ownership on us by His Spirit *in us*.

If someone were offering you a gift that would grant all of these benefits, would you refuse it? The gift of the Holy Ghost is a wonderful thing that is needed by all and has tremendous benefits. If you want this gift, obey God’s Word and . . . **Receive Ye the Holy Ghost!**

### Study Questions

1. What does the term “born again” usually refer to? Give Scripture reference to support.
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2. Write out the verses (with reference) from three Old Testament prophets that speak of the phenomenon of God's Spirit living inside of us.

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2) \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Briefly explain the connection between these Old and New Testament passages of Scripture: Isaiah 28:11-12 and Acts 19:1-6 \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Both Old and New Testaments agree that God would fill His people with His Spirit, and the initial evidence would be speaking in tongues. Briefly explain each of the four reasons given below, and support your answer with Scripture.

1) The Tongue is Man's Greatest Expression of His Spirit \_\_\_\_\_

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2) An External Evidence \_\_\_\_\_

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3) A Uniform Evidence \_\_\_\_\_

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4) Complete Control \_\_\_\_\_

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5. Given the following categories of Bible people who needed the Holy Ghost, write the names of specific people included in each group. Support your answer with Scripture.

1) Religious Activists - \_\_\_\_\_

2) Highly Favored and Blessed People \_\_\_\_\_

3) Long-Standing Church Members \_\_\_\_\_

4) Those Healed and Delivered \_\_\_\_\_

5) Prayerful, Generous Friends of the Church \_\_\_\_\_

6) Sincere, but Misguided Religious Zealots \_\_\_\_\_

6. List (with Scripture reference) eight (8) things the Holy Ghost will do for you.

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2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_

6) \_\_\_\_\_

7) \_\_\_\_\_

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