

THE TONGUES QUESTION

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Is "speaking in tongues" the Bible evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit? Just what IS the baptism with the Holy Spirit? What about "tarry meetings"? Are there people "speaking in tongues" today? Here is the PLAIN TRUTH about this burning question plainly stated.

IS "SPEAKING in tongues" the BIBLE evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit? Is this "baptism" for us today? What is the biblical teaching about "TARRY MEETINGS"?

The Most Important Business of This Life

The most important business of this life is the receiving of the true baptism with the Holy Spirit.

But how few, today, understand what that baptism really is! Your eternal salvation depends on it! Let us come very humbly, prayerfully, to a study of this all-important subject.

It is one fraught with prejudices on both sides. Let us remember that the Holy Spirit is, first of all, the Spirit of LOVE -- of PATIENCE -- of TOLERANCE. So let us, if possible, come to this study, each admitting that he may have been wrong, and very humbly, prayerfully, seeking instruction from GOD out of His Word. And let us see this study through to the end.

Salvation means, simply, the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the very LIFE of God. Jesus said: "That which is born of the flesh is FLESH ... Ye must be BORN AGAIN" -- born of God's Spirit!

"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, IF SO be that the Spirit of God dwell IN YOU. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, HE IS NONE OF HIS ... But IF the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead DWELL IN YOU, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall ALSO quicken your mortal bodies BY HIS SPIRIT THAT DWELLETH IN YOU (Rom. 8:9, 11).

Unless, then, we have received the Holy Spirit, God's Spirit, God's LIFE, to dwell within us, we are LOST -- utterly without hope of eternal life! Surely, then, the receiving of the Holy Spirit is the most important business of this life! But what is the difference between "receiving" and being "baptized by" the Holy Spirit?

Is PENTECOST Repeated in This Day?

Let us, then, look prayerfully and without prejudice into God's Word.

Are the accompanying MANIFESTATIONS that took place on the day of Pentecost -- immediately following Jesus' ascension to heaven -- for us today? Many people assume that they are -- and that the method of receiving this experience or "blessing" is to attend modern "tarry meetings." And that the only "Bible evidence" of the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" is "speaking in tongues." On this assumption many would stake their lives!

So let us EXAMINE the original manifestations of that day, as described in the Bible, and SEE whether they are being repeated today. Perhaps a real surprise awaits us. Let us not ASSUME -- let us PROVE ALL THINGS as God's Word instructs.

The only record of that tremendous occasion is preserved in Acts 2:1-13. Let us carefully examine every incident that occurred that day.

1) "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." Are the "Pentecostal" people of today who believe in "speaking in tongues" in harmony and "one accord"? No, they are split up into many fragments and segments, over disputes among themselves.

2) "And SUDDENLY there came a SOUND from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind." Notice that on THAT day there was a SOUND. Not a sound made by the people, but this sound came FROM HEAVEN. It sounded like a violent windstorm. Have you ever seen THIS part of the manifestations repeated today? Then notice, too, that this sound -- the Spirit which caused them to speak with tongues -- came SUDDENLY. But today we see these people start to "work it up" GRADUALLY. Sometimes they twist, and jerk, and chatter and mutter, repeating certain phrases over and over, until they work themselves into it. But on THAT day, the Spirit that filled those disciples came FROM HEAVEN, and suddenly!

3) "And it [the sound] filled all the house where they were sitting." Do sounds coming, not from people's throats, but from heaven, fill THE WHOLE HOUSE where people are assembled today?

4) "And there appeared unto them CLOVEN TONGUES like as of fire, and it SAT UPON EACH OF THEM." Divided, flaming tongues APPEARED -- they saw them! They came and sat upon each of the disciples! Has any man living witnessed such a manifestation in this day?

5) "And they were ALL filled with the Holy Spirit." Surely no one has ever heard of a modern "Pentecost" meeting where ALL were filled, all at once, at the same time, SUDDENLY, when the Spirit came with a great SOUND from heaven!

6) "And began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Ah! Here, at last, some will be sure to say, is a manifestation repeated today! But wait! On this original day of Pentecost, ALL began SUDDENLY to speak in these OTHER languages. Now what kind of tongue-speaking was this? Was it UNKNOWN tongues? Was it the kind that needed an interpreter? Was it like we see demonstrated today? Let us examine and see!

Verse 5 tells us there were dwelling in Jerusalem at that time devout Jews out of every nation on earth. Word of this momentous experience went like wildfire over the city. A multitude of these Jews came rushing to the place. They were amazed. They marveled. Why? Because that:

7) "EVERY MAN HEARD THEM SPEAK IN HIS OWN LANGUAGE"! These Jews, from all nations, UNDERSTOOD what was said! Some were Parthians. Some Medes, Elamites, dwellers in Mesopotamia, Rome, Arabia, etc. And they said, "And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?"

Now notice carefully. Every man heard THEM (Acts 2:6) speak in HIS own language! These disciples were all speaking in tongues -- OTHER languages -- the languages of EVERY NATION under heaven. And EVERY MAN who came rushing in heard THEM -- the disciples -- speak in HIS OWN LANGUAGE! The Parthian heard THEM, ALL of them, speak the Parthian language. But the Mede heard the SAME disciples speak the language of the Medes. Those from Greece heard the entire number of THEM -- speaking Greek. THEY UNDERSTOOD what was said!

The gift of "tongues" spoken of in the Bible is the ability to speak of God in other languages -- languages that are foreign and previously unknown to the speaker.

A Different Kind of Tongues!

Have you ever witnessed an experience like this? Have you ever heard THIS kind of "tongue-speaking"? Can you even find a description, in all the Bible, where this same kind of manifestation occurred at any other time?

True, they spoke with other tongues when the Holy Spirit first came upon the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius (Acts 10). And in telling the apostles of it, Peter said, "The Holy Spirit fell on them, as on us at the beginning," and, "God gave them the like gift as He did unto us" (Acts 11:15, 17).

But it is not recorded, nor did Peter say, that the Holy Spirit at that time came SUDDENLY from HEAVEN, like the SOUND of a windstorm, appearing as divided tongues of fire, or that men of different languages each understood all of them in HIS own language. Aside from being filled with the Spirit and speaking in tongues, the nature of which is not here described, there is no similarity between these two experiences.

It is true, too, that in one other recorded case, and one ONLY, men spoke with tongues upon being filled with the Holy Spirit. That was when Paul had baptized the Ephesian believers and laid his hands on them (Acts 19:6). But there is nothing to indicate similar accompanying manifestations as upon the original day of Pentecost.

So what must we conclude? The Pentecostal accompanying manifestations are not being repeated today?

But if not, WHY not?

Are they not available for us today? No, they surely are not! We have no word of condemnation for these "Pentecostal" people, as they call themselves, because they are unable to repeat the same accompanying manifestations as described for the day of Pentecost in 31 A.D. That will NEVER be repeated again! It never occurred before, and it never will again!

Unique in History

It was an EXPERIENCE unique in all history. It was the welcoming manifestation of the advent of the Holy Spirit -- the other Comforter -- to earth FROM HEAVEN.

During His ministry, Jesus said: "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 SPIRIT WAS NOT YET GIVEN; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)" (John 7:38, 39)

"The Holy Spirit was not yet given." How could men receive the GIFT before the GIFT had been GIVEN? The SPIRIT could not come until Jesus had been glorified. Speaking of the coming of the Holy Spirit, Jesus told His disciples, on the eve of His crucifixion: "If I go not away, the Comforter WILL NOT COME unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And WHEN he is come ..." (John 16:7, 8).

The Holy Spirit had not yet been given! It had not yet come from heaven! Unless Jesus went to heaven, and was glorified, it could not come!

Again, that same memorable night, Jesus said, "He dwelleth WITH you, and shall be IN you (John 14:17). He was WITH them, in the person of Jesus, but was, after the day of Pentecost, to be IN them, through the Holy Spirit. And so, today, as the Scriptures say, "Christ IN us, the hope of glory."

What happened on the day of Pentecost was the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy (Joel 2:28-29) -- the advent of the OTHER Comforter, the Holy Spirit to earth FROM HEAVEN, as Peter clearly and plainly explained on that very day (Acts 2:16-21).

And it was on that day of Pentecost, 31 A.D., eleven days after Jesus had ascended to heaven to be glorified, that the Holy Spirit, the "other Comforter," came from heaven!

AND THIS ADVENT FROM HEAVEN WAS ACCOMPANIED WITH MIGHTY Manifestations! The Spirit of God came with a SOUND as of mighty rushing wind! It came with the APPEARANCE of divided tongues of fire! And on that occasion, it filled all the 120 disciples, and spoke through them in such manner that every man from every nation on earth HEARD in his own language! The miracle on that occasion was in the HEARING, as well as the speaking!

Let us realize the truth, and not try, in our human fleshly power, to COPY and imitate that one tremendous welcoming manifestation! For truly we shall produce only a counterfeit!

"Praying Down Pentecost"

Today we frequently hear those who do not understand speak of "praying down another Pentecost." They exclaim, "It took Peter and the apostles ten days to pray down Pentecost," and they urge us to "tarry," and to "seek," and to beg and to agonize, and to plead with God to send down ANOTHER Pentecost -- to send His Holy Spirit from heaven again!

But the Holy Spirit CAME FROM HEAVEN to earth on the day of Pentecost, 31 A.D. and -- let us understand this -- HAS BEEN HERE EVER SINCE!

All we have to do now is to OPEN UP OUR HEARTS, and to let the blessed Holy Spirit in! Today you need not plead and beg and agonize for God to give you this greatest of all gifts. God needs no begging! The Holy Spirit is HERE -- and God tells us in His Word He is more WILLING to give us this gift than we are to give bread to our hungry children (Luke 11:13). Today the Spirit of God is

HERE -- knocking on the door of your heart (Rev. 3:20), and the way to OPEN the door is to REPENT (Rev. 3:19), and it will come in, and abide with you forever!

The Great Mistake

Do you know the great mistake so many earnest people have been deceived into making? They are pleading with God to GIVE them something that He is pleading with them to RECEIVE!

This is their mistake:

THEY ARE TRYING TO COPY AND TO DEMONSTRATE THE PENTECOST MANIFESTATIONS, INSTEAD OF FOLLOWING THE TEACHINGS GIVEN THAT DAY!

The manifestations of that day were unique in all earth's history. The manifestations of that day were the welcoming manifestations of the advent of the "other Comforter" to this earth from heaven. But the inspired teaching of Peter on that day is the teaching for this whole church age.

And Peter said, "REPENT, and BE BAPTIZED!" and then, ye SHALL receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Baptism in water is a demonstration of your repentance and belief. "REPENT and BELIEVE" are the two conditions -- and the ONLY conditions, to receiving the great blessing of the baptism with the Holy Spirit! Paul went "testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, REPENTANCE toward God, and FAITH toward our Lord Jesus Christ." And all who repented, and received Christ in faith, being baptized, DID receive the gift of the Spirit! And so will we today!

None can receive the precious Spirit of God without coming to that place of self-abasement, self-mortification, full and unconditional SURRENDER, entire willingness to give up ALL for Christ -- to come ALL the way out of the world and its ways, customs, beliefs -- to be willing to keep ALL of God's Commandments -- to have faith that will let the Holy Spirit in!

God gives His Holy Spirit ONLY to THEM THAT OBEY HIM! (Acts 5:32.)

No, we need not pray down another Pentecost! But we do need to SURRENDER, and that is where we fall down. We still want our own way!

This is not to say that no prayer at all is necessary, in order to receive the gift of God's Holy Spirit. On the contrary, MUCH PRAYER is usually necessary. But it must be the RIGHT KIND of PRAYER -- not the persistent, nagging, pleading of a self-willed child to have his own way, but the earnest prayer of a broken and contrite and repentant heart, that confesses its own utter depravity, its own helplessness, its own deceit and wickedness, and, like David, pleads with God to "create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a RIGHT spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10), confessing that our heart is not clean, nor our spirit right.

It may take a great deal of prayer -- of earnest supplication and prayer -- to bring one to the place where he CAN surrender fully to God -- to have revealed to him the things he must surrender, which perhaps, he himself does not fully realize -- to be made thoroughly WILLING to give up ALL for the blessed gift of life eternal through the Holy Spirit of God.

The Devil's COUNTERFEIT

Much has been written -- thousands of sermons preached -- on the NEED for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Much about "tongues," and "manifestations," and the "signs following."

BUT LITTLE IS EVER SAID ABOUT THE MANNER OR METHOD of receiving this gift!

That is because people have had their eyes on the MANIFESTATIONS, and not on the TEACHING of the day of Pentecost!

The method, unfortunately, has been taken for granted by thousands -- a modern method that has not been questioned, or checked or proved according to the BIBLE teaching.

Is it not a self-evident fact that if we seek it a wrong way, we shall receive a wrong thing?

Do you suppose the devil would be content to deceive men on all other questions, and then neglect to deceive the many thousands of seekers after the baptism with the Holy Spirit into a clever, false, spurious MANNER and METHOD of receiving this most precious gift of all -- and therefore into actually receiving a COUNTERFEIT instead of the genuine?

God's Word WARNS us that Satan is going about, today, as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, KNOWING HE HAS BUT A SHORT TIME. The church is asleep (Matt. 25:5) but Satan, the adversary, is on the job! Jesus warned us of false doctrines that would appear in these last days, and that would DECEIVE many.

"Oh, but Satan could never deceive ME," you say! Why, are YOU not seeking after the deeper SPIRITUAL experiences? Perhaps speaking in "tongues"? You think YOU could not be deceived -- it is only those who are not "spiritual" that are deceived.

Can't we see that Satan is a SPIRITUAL being? (Eph. 2:2.) He does not come as a red demon with horns and tail, but as "AN ANGEL OF LIGHT." He appears as an ANGEL -- a SPIRIT, and as bringing LIGHT. Those deceived THINK they have received marvelous new LIGHT. They THINK they have advanced and been elevated to a HIGHER SPIRITUAL PLANE.

And Satan has many MINISTERS. And they do not all come preaching modernism, or cold spiritless doctrines. They, too, come as SPIRITUAL ministers, and are "transformed as the ministers of RIGHTEOUSNESS (II Cor. 11:14, 15).

It is those searching for "deeper SPIRITUAL experiences" whom Satan will tempt and try the most, and WHO ARE MOST SUSCEPTIBLE to his deceptions! That is, unless we are constantly ON GUARD, and unless we refuse to follow any but the TRUE SCRIPTURAL TEST.

You cannot trust your EXPERIENCES, because Satan, a spirit being, can give counterfeit spiritual experiences, and by them deceive any human being!

"Beloved, BELIEVE NOT every spirit, but TRY the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1).

What is TRUTH? Jesus said, "THY WORD is truth!" The Bible! So, when the Spirit of Truth is come, it merely guides us into a RIGHT understanding of the BIBLE! The Bible, and the Bible ALONE, is the test.

"And when they shall say unto you, SEEK unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To THE LAW AND TO THE TESTIMONY: if they speak not according to THIS word, it is because there is no light in them"! (Isa. 8:19-20.)

The "Law and the Testimony" are the Old and the New Testaments -- the Bible. TRY the spirits! By what standard? The BIBLE!

Satan today is misleading, fooling, and cleverly deceiving thousands by giving "impressions," or dreams or "visions," until people say, "The Lord told me" this or that, and call their impressions "leadings of the Spirit." Remember, Satan is a spirit who can lead, as well as God. We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against WICKED SPIRITS in high places, and need to put on the WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD that we may withstand the WILES OF THE DEVIL (Eph. 6:10-18). And that armor includes the shield of FAITH, and the sword of THE WORD OF GOD. Every spirit is not the HOLY Spirit. There are many false, seducing, unclean spirits.

What About "TARRY Meetings"?

Are "tarry meetings" scriptural? Is this the BIBLE method?

It must be remembered that there are many different types of "Pentecostal" people. And so their ways differ.

But perhaps with the majority of these people, the method is as follows: The "seeker," as he is called, must attend a "tarry meeting" along with other "seekers" and with those, where possible, who already "have their baptism" as it is expressed. The seekers are told to say such phrases as "Glory! Glory!" over and over. Constantly they are urged to "say it a little faster." Variations of this phrase are "Hallelujah" or "Praise you Jesus!" Constantly the "seeker" is told to keep it up, faster and faster, not to become discouraged. Sometimes they are told to lift the arms above their heads, and hold them there. When they become so tired they are unable to hold them longer in the air, others will come and support their arms.

In other forms of the "tarry meeting" a group of seekers assemble together, with, where possible, some who already have "received their baptism." Children must be left at home. Only "seekers" are permitted. All pray aloud at once, begging God to give them the "blessing." For hours, often lasting until 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning, they continue to beg, plead, and agonize.

Occasionally, perhaps after many of these "tarry meetings," one or more of a company will begin to "speak in tongues," and are then acknowledged by all as having received "their baptism." Nothing but "speaking in tongues" will be accepted as the evidence of "the baptism."

Does the Bible Command the "TARRY Meetings"?

Is this modern "tarry meeting" the true scriptural WAY, or heathenism?

Those who defend the "tarry meeting" with, perhaps, a great deal of heat, will quote the scripture to the effect that Jesus COMMANDED us to "TARRY UNTIL ye be endued with power from on high."

This command of Jesus to "tarry" is found in Luke 24:49. Pentecostal people invariably read this text thus: "Tarry UNTIL ye be endued with power." Then they construe the word "tarry" to mean the kind of meeting described above.

But that is not what this text says at all!

RIGHTLY quoted, Jesus' command to His disciples was: "Tarry YE IN THE CITY OF JERUSALEM, until YE be endued with power FROM on high."

Jesus told them to tarry, not in a certain MANNER, but in a definite PLACE -- in the CITY OF JERUSALEM. Why do Pentecostal people always omit the words "YE," expressing TO WHOM this command was addressed, and the words "IN THE CITY OF JERUSALEM," telling WHERE they were to "tarry ? And why did Jesus ask them to remain in the city of Jerusalem?

Because the "other Comforter" had not yet come FROM HEAVEN -- from "on high." And Jesus knew that WHEN IT came, it would come first to the city of Jerusalem. And so Jesus was merely instructing His disciples to wait, or remain, in Jerusalem until the day of Pentecost, when, it had been ordained, the Holy Spirit was to come from heaven -- "from on high" -- to earth.

Now "tarry" is an English word, translated over 300 years ago. It is an old English word, formerly in popular usage, now seldom used. Today many mistake its meaning. What does it mean? It does not mean "pray." It does not mean "supplicate." It does not mean beg, or agonize, or repeat words over and over. It does not mean a prayer meeting.

The dictionary says "tarry" means "to put off going or coming; linger. To remain in the same place; abide; stay. To await; to delay; sojourn, stay."

The literal Greek, word for word, from the Interlinear Greek text is: But REMAIN YE IN THE CITY OF JERUSALEM, till ye be clothed with power from on high." How can we conceive the idea of these modern "tarry meetings" from the scriptural command: REMAIN YE IN THE CITY OF JERUSALEM"?

But, protests the "tarry meeting" defender, it says in Acts 1:13, 14, that the disciples "went up into an upper room," and "these all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." The assumption is that the disciples met at a certain house for this purpose -- that they were holding a "tarry meeting" -- that they begged and pleaded with God until He finally sent them the "blessing" from on high -- and that we should do the same thing. Often the statement is made that "it took the disciples ten days to pray down Pentecost!"

The MEANING of "Pentecost"

One difficulty is that few know the meaning of the types of Leviticus 23. There we find instruction regarding the seven annual festivals, occurring at the three different times of the year.

The first is the Passover, on the 14th of Abib, the first month of the sacred year. On this day a lamb was always slain. And so the crucifixion occurred on this very day. It was upon the 14th of Abib, 31 A.D. that Christ, the Lamb of God, our Passover, was slain for us!

The second of these set feasts is the Festival of Unleavened Bread, seven days beginning on the 15th of Abib. This pictures obedience to God -- commandment keeping -- putting sin completely out of our lives. The first and seventh of these days are Holy Days -- annual Sabbaths of God.

The third festival is "the Feast of Firstfruits," known as the day of Pentecost. This always had typified the "Firstfruits" of the New Testament Church. And, accordingly, when the "other Comforter" came from heaven -- from "on high" -- to bring forth the FIRSTFRUITS of the New Testament Church, this tremendous event, to occur but once in all eternity, was ordained to take place ON THE VERY DAY OF PENTECOST, 31 A.D.!

Jesus well knew the Holy Spirit would come from heaven on that very day. So Jesus told His disciples they should be "baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence" (Acts 1:5). In the first chapter of Acts we find the same instruction of Jesus as recorded in Luke 24:49, this time in words more plainly to be understood: "And ... commanded them that THEY SHOULD NOT DEPART FROM JERUSALEM, but WAIT for the promise of the Father" (Acts 1:4).

So the disciples did not "pray down Pentecost." "Pentecost" is a DAY, not an experience. And since it was ordained that the Holy Spirit was to come from heaven TO JERUSALEM, and on that very day, do you suppose that, if the disciples had prayed and begged just a little harder, they could have "prayed it down" a day or two sooner? Certainly not! Not even an hour sooner!

"But," argues the tarry-meeting advocate, "didn't the disciples all meet in an upper room, and continue there in prayer and supplication?"

Most assuredly. But why?

Notice the Scriptures! "And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, WHERE ABODE both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" (Acts 1:13-14), as they naturally would have done, at so solemn a time.

Is there even a hint, in this text, that they were BEGGING or PLEADING with God to give them the promised Comforter? Rather, we know they were merely WAITING there, as Jesus had commanded, in complete FAITH that God would keep His promise! Is there so much as a HINT in this passage that they were saying words over and over, like the modern "glory, glory, glory"?

Now notice, WHEN the day of Pentecost was fully come (and remember Pentecost was a DAY, not an experience), did they have to plead and agonize? No, but rather when this DAY had arrived,

"SUDDENLY there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind," and instantly "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit."

Once the "other Comforter" had come from heaven, there was no waiting they were all filled AT ONCE!

Experience AFTER Pentecost

Now that the Holy Spirit had COME to earth, did those who honestly repented, and believed, have to beg and plead and agonize, and "tarry" before they could receive the full baptism here with the Holy Spirit?

There are just four other experiences recorded, subsequent to the day of Pentecost, 31 A.D., of receiving the baptism with the Spirit. Let us examine each. Let us see if there were any TARRY MEETINGS.

The next experience recorded is found in the 8th chapter of Acts. Philip had gone to Samaria. When they BELIEVED Philip's preaching of the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized (verse 12). Peter and John came to Samaria from Jerusalem (verse 14) and prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit (verse 15). Then they laid their hands on them AND THEY RECEIVED THE HOLY SPIRIT (verse 17). There is no evidence of any "tarry meeting" here. No tongue-speaking mentioned. The people believed, were baptized, the apostles prayed for them, laid their hands on them, and they received the Spirit.

In the 10th chapter of Acts we find the experience at the Gentile house of Cornelius. Peter was preaching to them. They already had repented, and merely wanted to be shown the way of God. Was there a "tarry meeting" here? No, while "Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word" (Acts 10:44). The Holy Spirit had come from heaven on the day of Pentecost, 31 A.D. Cornelius and his house did not have to "pray down another Pentecost." They did not have to beg or plead or agonize. They had surrendered fully and unconditionally. When Peter came to reveal to them the Truth, and the Way, they did not begin to argue, or try to refute God's Word. They accepted it. And so, their hearts being ready and subdued "while Peter yet spake," they received the baptism with the Holy Spirit!

And so can you, just as quickly and suddenly, IF, and WHEN, you are as surrendered as they were. There was surely no "tarry meeting" here. No repeating words over and over. Just real repentance and faith, the only TWO CONDITIONS.

The next experience is found in Acts 19:1-7. Paul came to Ephesus. He found a dozen disciples there. Paul asked them if they had received the Holy Spirit. The literal translation is not "since ye believed," but, "Did ye receive the Holy Spirit WHEN ye believed?" Paul well knew God had promised we should receive the Spirit WHEN we have yielded to the conditions.

They knew nothing of the Holy Spirit. What was wrong? Paul immediately determined to find out. Did he ask them how long they had "tarried"? Did he tell them the difficulty was that they had not "tarried" or agonized enough? No. Paul began at the very LAST condition, water baptism, to find

out what was wrong. And there he found it! They had been baptized only with John's baptism. That was baptism into the FIRST condition, repentance. They had not been baptized INTO CHRIST for the remission of sins. And so Paul at once told them how to be baptized. When they heard this, they did not argue or rebel. They humbly did as directed, and were baptized.

And WHEN they were baptized, and WHEN Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them. WHEN the CONDITIONS of God's Word were fulfilled, they received God's Spirit! And in this case, they spoke with tongues, and prophesied. There was no tarry meeting here. No agonizing, or meaningless repeating of words. Just yielding to God, and conforming to GOD'S conditions.

One other experience is mentioned that of Paul. Read it in Acts 9:1-22. Again there is no hint of anything like a modern "tarry meeting," just complete surrender, self-abasement, a willing, submissive conforming to the CONDITIONS. The Bible makes no mention of speaking in tongues at this time, although later Paul told the Corinthians he spoke in more languages than any of them.

And so there is not one example in Holy Scripture of a modern "tarry meeting"! Let us have a BIBLE REASON for all that we do!

One time a "Pentecostal" preacher was urging someone to attend a series of these so-called "tarry meetings," where words were muttered repeatedly over and over, and where the people deliberately worked up their emotions, shouted, and went through all the usual formula. This person replied he could find no Bible teaching or example for such a formula or kind of meeting, and he wanted to do everything the BIBLE WAY.

"You'll never get 'your baptism' any other way, brother," he asserted.

"Well," he replied, "whatever you people are getting in an unscriptural way contrary to the Bible is not the true Holy Spirit PROMISED in the Bible, but a counterfeit spirit I don't want.

Hear the warning through Isaiah: "When they shall say unto YOU, SEEK unto them that have familiar spirits [counterfeit spirits of demons], and unto wizards that peep, and that MUTTER ... TO THE LAW AND TO THE TESTIMONY [Old and New Testaments -- the BIBLE]: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them"! (Isa. 8:19-20.) Yes, be sure you have a BIBLE reason for all you do!

What IS the "Baptism With the Holy Spirit"?

Just what is this "baptism"? The very crux of the whole question -- the basis of the error so many have been led into -- is a MISUNDERSTANDING of what the true "baptism with the Holy Spirit" really is!

The whole error comes from one erroneous idea which is generally ASSUMED -- carelessly taken for granted -- never so much as QUESTIONED, let alone being PROVED!

It is the general idea that one is first converted, through which he receives the Holy Spirit -- actually has the Holy Spirit within. And then, AFTERWARD, as an entirely separate and later special act or

blessing from God, if he "seeks" it diligently enough, he may receive "the baptism" with the Holy Spirit.

This "baptism" is supposed to be a special endowment with POWER. This power is supposed to be "power to witness for Jesus." Actually it is regarded in practice as a sort of loosening of the tongue.

The teaching is that one always "speaks in tongues" -- that is, unknown languages, at the time this "baptism" is received. Often thrills and sensations are felt surging in overpowering waves through the body. From that time all timidity and bashfulness in "witnessing for Christ" is gone. The tongue is loosened. The recipient now testifies in open meeting bodily, loudly, often in a jazzy manner and with a fluency and flippancy of speech never before possible.

Peter, James, John, and the other apostles, they believe, all were CONVERTED, and received the Holy Spirit either when first called by Jesus, or during His ministry and before "Pentecost." Then, having already received "the gift of the Holy Spirit," these disciples, so it is believed, had to "tarry," and "pray down Pentecost," until, finally on Pentecost, they "got their baptism." That's the common belief.

BUT THAT IS NOT THE TRUTH!

And this error causes thousands to SEEK and SEEK and SEEK this supposed ADDITIONAL experience called "the baptism." Worse, it leads people by hundreds to become discouraged and to decide there is no hope for them, and to give up even trying to live a Christian life!

Was Peter Converted Before "Pentecost"?

Let's not ASSUME this idea. Let's not take it carelessly for granted. Let's look into the Scripture for the TRUTH!

The TRUTH is that neither Peter, James, John, nor any of the disciples of Jesus had ever so much as RECEIVED the Holy Spirit at all until that day of Pentecost!

Under the Old Covenant, God had a CHURCH. Israel was both a nation, called the "Kingdom of Israel," and a CHURCH, called "The Congregation of Israel." But that church was a FLESH-born church. It was wholly MATERIAL, fleshly, physical. It was not spiritual. One became a member by FLESH-birth.

Now here is the point so many have never realized. Under the Old Covenant THERE WAS NO SALVATION! The people of that church were NOT CONVERTED. They did not have the Holy Spirit! That is, none except the prophets specially called of God. David, Elijah, and Jeremiah had the Holy Spirit. They were called for very special missions.

But the rank-and-file members of the Old Testament Congregation NEVER HAD THE HOLY SPIRIT. You can't find any place where the Holy Spirit was promised Israel under the OLD COVENANT. Or where salvation and eternal life was promised. Their animal sacrifices did NOT take away their sins. "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away SINS" (Heb. 10:4). But rather, as explained in Hebrews, the animal sacrifices of the Old Covenant

were merely a reminder of sins! There was no remission of sins, and therefore no salvation possible, UNTIL the one and only great sacrifice was made when Jesus Christ was crucified.

During Jesus' ministry He told His disciples: "It is expedient for YOU that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter [Holy Spirit] will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (John 16:7). Notice, it was expedient for THEM. He was talking to Peter and the other disciples on the very eve of His crucifixion, at the Passover meal, commonly called the "Last Supper." If Peter and the other apostles already had the Holy Spirit, Jesus would not have told them, His very last night alive on earth with them before being crucified, it was needful for them that He depart, go to heaven, in order to send the Holy Spirit. And this was only some 50 days before Pentecost!

Again, Jesus said that same night: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father [FROM HEAVEN] ... He shall testify of me" (John 15:26). Again the same night He said: If ye love me, KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; EVEN THE SPIRIT of truth ... for he dwelleth WITH you [in the person of Christ], and SHALL be in you" [the Holy Spirit which the Father would send from heaven] (John 14:15-17).

Notice it carefully! It wasn't the disciples who prayed down the Holy Spirit. It was JESUS who prayed, and the Father sent them the Holy Spirit which was to be IN THEM -- and the Spirit CAME on the day of Pentecost AFTER Jesus had GONE AWAY, to heaven! Earlier, on the Last Great Day -- the day after the Feast of Tabernacles, "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. 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 [in the future] receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)" (John 7:37-39).

Not Yet Given

Study that! The Holy Spirit was not yet given. Why? Jesus had not yet GONE AWAY -- ascended to heaven -- BEEN GLORIFIED! It was expedient for them that He go away. Otherwise the holy Spirit would not have come! Notice the future tense -- out of his innermost being shall flow the Holy Spirit!

The Holy Spirit had never yet come from heaven to enter and dwell WITHIN converted Christians. The Holy Spirit had never been offered to the people during Old Testament times. But the Prophet Joel had prophesied: "It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out MY SPIRIT upon all flesh" (Joel 2:28).

And Jesus gave them the PROMISE He would send the Holy Spirit from heaven, if and after He went to heaven. And, after His resurrection, on the very day and hour of His ascending to heaven, Jesus "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" (Acts 1:4). Yes, the promises quoted above, that unless He went to heaven they could not have or be filled with the Holy Spirit. The promise that He would pray the Father and the Father would SEND the Holy Spirit.

And then, on the day of Pentecost, THE HOLY SPIRIT CAME!

This was its first coming from heaven! And on that day, the newly inspired Peter said, "THIS is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel," quoting that prophecy. Now, at last, God had sent His Spirit, as promised, for all flesh all who would repent, and accept Jesus as Saviour, in faith believing!

Before receiving the Holy Spirit, Peter was weak. He lacked faith to cast out a demon, or walk on the water. He denied Jesus three times. He went fishing instead of attending to God's Work. At the Passover meal Jesus had told him, "WHEN thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" (Luke 22:32).

Some believe Peter received the Holy Spirit when Jesus breathed on him. "And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22). But He merely breathed the breath of air wind. That's what breath is, always, in the Scriptures. After breathing on them Jesus did not say, "You have now received the Holy Spirit."

If His breathing on them is what gave them the Holy Spirit, they would already have had the Holy Spirit in them when Jesus afterwards spoke but they did not, because He said, "RECEIVE YE the Holy Spirit." They were yet to receive the Spirit, as He promised, after He went away after He was glorified after He went to heaven, and the FATHER sent the Spirit from heaven. And it was after this that Jesus told them to wait in Jerusalem for the Spirit to come.

The personal appearances of some have led many to accept this erroneous assumption that one first receives the Holy Spirit, and then, AFTERWARD, as an entirely separate experience, receives "the baptism of the Spirit." But experience is a poor guide, and these dear people are interpreting the WORD OF GOD by their experience. All such experiences should be explained by the Scripture, and not vice versa!

BIBLE DEFINITION of Spirit "Baptism"

There is only one text in all the Bible that actually defines this "baptism."

It is in I Corinthians 12:13: "For by one Spirit are we all BAPTIZED into one body -- the BODY OF CHRIST, the true Church of God.

Let us understand this. What is the meaning of the word "baptize"? It is a Greek word, untranslated, in our English Bibles. Had the translators rendered it into the English language, it would have read "IMMERSE." For the Greek word "baptiso" means "to immerse." To "plunge into." The person baptized is plunged into the thing he is baptized in. When baptized in water, the candidate is plunged into, or immersed in, water.

Consequently, the baptism with, or by, the Holy Spirit is not our immersion into the Holy Spirit, for the Scriptures tell us it is the entrance of the Spirit into US.

And in Romans 8:9, Paul tells us plainly that unless the Spirit of God dwells IN US, we are none of Christ's! We become Christ's, then, when the Holy Spirit comes INTO US! And when we are

Christ's, we are then in the BODY OF CHRIST, the Church. Therefore, it is the receiving of the Holy Spirit which plunges us, immerses or puts us into the Church. And this immersion into the Church saw the Holy Spirit, the Scriptures call "the baptism with, or by, the Holy Spirit."

The term "baptism OF the Holy Spirit" as "Pentecostal" people say it, is not to be found in the BIBLE. It is the baptism with, or by, the Holy Spirit, INTO the Church.

And so "BY one Spirit are we all baptized into one body."

Thus the RECEIVING of the Holy Spirit is the BAPTISM with the Spirit!

"Receiving" the Spirit, and the "Baptism" One and the Same

Let us carefully study this in the Word of God!

Before the day of Pentecost, 31 A.D., Jesus said to His disciples, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence." Therefore we know that what the disciples received the day of Pentecost was the BAPTISM with the Holy Spirit.

Now let us notice the terms used to describe this baptism.

In Acts 2:4, we read, "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit." And so being filled with the Holy Spirit is the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

The thousands who came running to hear the apostles, pricked in their hearts, asked what they should do to receive this same baptism with the Holy Spirit. Peter did not say "tarry," or "agonize," but he said, "Repent and be baptized" and "ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). And so the receiving of the gift of the Holy Spirit is the baptism with the Holy Spirit. And three thousand received it that day! And there is no mention of their speaking in "tongues," and certainly there was no "tarrying"!

And note it! this was their first receiving of the Holy Spirit! These Jews were not previously converted -- had not previously received the Spirit. This was their conversion.

Ten years later, God, through a vision of the sheet and unclean animals, showed Peter he must go to preach Christ to the Gentile house of CORNELIUS. These people were Gentiles -- unconverted. Peter went to preach Christ to show them the way of salvation. Cornelius was a devout man; he and his house feared God; he gave alms and prayed. But he did not know the way of salvation, and was not converted.

Peter went to his house and PREACHED CHRIST -- His message, His crucifixion, resurrection; that "whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." At that very point in his sermon, Cornelius and his house, already repentant and devout, believed -- and "while Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word" (Acts 10:44).

After Peter returned to Jerusalem from the house of Cornelius, he was taken severely to task by the other apostles for associating with Gentiles. In explaining how God had led him to go, and of what

had occurred at Caesarea, Peter explained how an angel had told Cornelius to send for Peter, "who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved" (Acts 11:14). After hearing Peter's report, the apostles exclaimed, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (verse 18). This conclusively shows that what Cornelius and his household experienced was their original CONVERSION -- their first receiving of the Holy Spirit -- not a subsequent "baptism" as some special endowment of power.

In explaining just what these Gentiles received, Peter said: "Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us ..." (Acts 11:16-17).

Peter plainly says that what the Gentiles then received was the baptism with the Holy Spirit. And this baptism is also called, in verse 17, "the like GIFT." And so "the gift of the Holy Spirit" is the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

In verse 15 Peter said, "The Holy Spirit fell on them, as on us at the beginning. So the Holy Spirit FALLING on them was the baptism with the Holy Spirit -- into the Church!

In the 10th chapter, verse 44, where this actual experience is described, we learn that "the Holy Spirit fell on all them," and in verse 45 we find that "on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit"! And in verse 47 they "received the Holy Spirit." So the receiving of the Holy Spirit is the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

All these terms are used synonymously and interchangeably by the Holy Spirit to describe the same experience.

So what must we conclude? That which is born of the flesh is FLESH (John 3:6). When fleshly, sinning, mortal man repents and is baptized as a symbol of his FAITH in Christ, he receives the Holy Spirit not as a result of "tarrying," but through FAITH (Gal. 3:14; John 7:37, 39). And this receiving of the gift of the Holy Spirit is the baptism with the Spirit INTO the Church!

He is then a child of God. He has been begotten -- though the real rebirth must come at the time of the resurrection. He is begotten from above -- begotten of the Spirit. And thus he is baptized BY the Spirit into the body of Christ!

This baptism is not the end, but only the BEGINNING of his Christian experience! He is merely a newborn BABE in Christ! He must now GROW in grace and knowledge. He must live a life of overcoming. And he that endureth unto the end shall be saved!

Do ALL Speak with TONGUES?

Is "speaking in tongues" THE Bible evidence of the "baptism with the Holy Spirit"?

Must ALL speak with tongues at the time they receive the Spirit, and are brought into the true Church?

The apostles did not teach it!

The EXPERIENCES recorded in the New Testament, subsequent to Pentecost, do not indicate it. Of all the experiences of conversions recorded in the New Testament, it is recorded that there was tongue-speaking in only two of them! Shall we ASSUME there were tongues in all the other experiences? Let us be careful about ADDING to God's Word what is not there.

There is NO STATEMENT IN SCRIPTURE that you must speak with tongues to prove you have received the Holy Spirit "baptism."

No SCRIPTURE says, by their TONGUES ye shall know them."

But the Scripture does say, "by their FRUITS ye shall know them! (Matt. 7:20.) The lives we live are the BIBLE EVIDENCE of whether or not we have received the Holy Spirit!

Jesus said, "By this shall all men KNOW that ye are my disciples, if ye have LOVE one to another" (John 13:35).

But are not the "tongues" at least AN evidence of the baptism with the Spirit?

Read what the apostle Paul says: "Though I speak with the tongues of ... ANGELS, and have not charity [LOVE], I am become as sounding brass" (I Cor. 13:1). There are fallen angels, demons, and without a question many today are speaking in the "tongues" of these demons. Would you say the counterfeit tongues of demons are any evidence at all of the true baptism with the Holy Spirit?

All admit "tongues" can be counterfeited by Satan. If one has been careless about PROVING all things by the Word of God, and has unsuspectingly been lured into SEEKING what the Bible nowhere tells us to seek -- "tongues" and physical sensations and thrills pleasing to the SENSUAL self -- then that one is caught off guard and becomes an open channel through which an evil spirit may enter and possibly take full possession of the mind.

Yes. Satan can COUNTERFEIT "tongues." And do you suppose for one moment that the true BIBLE EVIDENCE could be something that can be cleverly COUNTERFEITED? No, NEVER! The "tongues" gibberish as practiced today does not even resemble the gift of languages given on that day of Pentecost in 31 A.D.

But the FRUITS of the Holy Spirit -- LOVE, JOY, PEACE, patience, kindness, gentleness, goodness, meekness (most "tongues" people are not meek, but loud-mouthed and bragging), temperance, FAITH -- these things in one's life cannot be counterfeited. They are not natural. No one has sufficient will- power to FORCE himself to show always these fruits in his life. It requires the miracle of the LOVE of GOD shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5). Satan has no counterfeit for that!

That is the BIBLE EVIDENCE! "Tongues" are not even "an evidence." This is the PLAIN teaching of the Bible.

Are There Any GENUINE Tongues?

They DID speak with "tongues" at the house of Cornelius, and at Ephesus, AFTER the day of

Pentecost.

While correcting the Corinthian church, Paul said, "I would that ye ALL spake with tongues" (I Cor. 14:5), and "forbid not to speak with tongues," in the church (verse 39).

We should banish all prejudice against the true manifestation of tongues which is the ability to speak in real languages.

But we should get the tongues into the proper SCRIPTURAL place of importance.

In the same 14th chapter of I Corinthians, above quoted, Paul said he would rather speak just five words with his understanding, that he might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. To those Corinthians, becoming fanatical on tongues, he said, Brethren, BE NOT CHILDREN in understanding" (verse 20). The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of a SOUND MIND (II Tim. 1:7).

We should NOT seek tongues. "Pentecostal" people loudly protest they do not do this, but in practice and in fact, they do, and they should not deny it.

One of Satan's Clever Pitfalls

The reason for this caution is found in the Scripture. "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue EDIFIETH HIMSELF (I Cor. 14:4). It is seeking for self -- for self-blessings -- for self- thrills -- and is contrary to fulfilling the law of God which is love away from self and toward God and neighbor! And therefore it may easily degenerate into a most deceptive form of SIN.

One of the "fruits" of this "tongues" movement is that many seek nothing but "blessings," as they express it -- which in plain language means sensual FEELINGS and THRILLS that they themselves ENJOY as a PLEASURE. This often includes an unnatural, perverted, Satan-inspired SEX sensation. Deluded people are led to believe this is a spiritual blessing from GOD! It's time people knew the TRUTH!

Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is FLESH" (John 3:6). We must be BORN AGAIN -- born of the SPIRIT -- to inherit eternal life. Now the flesh has its FEELINGS, its EMOTIONS, its five SENSES.

It is but natural that Satan's counterfeits are of the FLESH -- even his counterfeits of spiritual things. So Satan the Devil gives to people FEELINGS, and EMOTIONS, and THRILLS -- and induces many zealous seekers after the Holy Spirit to accept these pleasing sensations as "blessings" and "manifestations" of the Holy Spirit!

The saddest thing is that Satan has beguiled many into continually lusting for SENSUAL FEELINGS, and for THRILLS of the FLESH, deceiving them into believing they are receiving "blessings" from God!

Oh, WHY will so many honest people be misled, and fall into this satanic snare? God's Word warns us to TRY the spirits, WHETHER they be of God! For many false SPIRITS are gone out into the

world!

This is not to say there is no EXPERIENCE, or nothing felt, when God pours forth His blessed Holy Spirit. There is a definite EXPERIENCE to real genuine conversion . But what a tragedy to see so many deceived into receiving the FALSE experience -- the FALSE "blessing" -- because they have failed to heed God's warning to TRY the spirits -- because they fail to have on the WHOLE ARMOR of God, which is THE WORD OF GOD!

God's way is the way of CRUCIFYING the flesh, the sensual -- of denying the SELF -- of LOVE toward God and toward fellow man. Satan's counterfeit is SELF-SEEKING, lusting for fleshly thrills, and feelings, and "blessings" that bring pleasure through the five senses.

And the greater pity is that the very ones most deceived are the ones who RESENT having the Scriptures opened to them to CORRECT them, to REPROVE, and to set them right! If you feel resentment of these words, it is the surest BIBLE EVIDENCE that you are under the deceptive power of Satan the Devil, and you should flee the influence he has over you, and drop to your knees at once, and ask God to renew a RIGHT spirit within you.

So many in this modern "tongues" movement do not seem to understand the real PURPOSE of receiving the Holy Spirit. They look upon spiritual gifts as ornaments to decorate and embellish the PERSON. But the gifts of the Spirit are the TOOLS placed in our hands to DO THE WORK OF GOD.

After Jesus had received the FULLNESS of the Holy Spirit, He said: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, BECAUSE he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind ..." (Luke 4:18).

The object and purpose of the Holy Spirit is not to give feelings and thrills that are of the senses of the flesh, and therefore sensual -- not to please the SELF -- but to enable one to crucify the SELF -- to endow with power to overcome sin, which is transgressing of God's Commandments (I John 3:4) -- to Cleanse us of all unrighteousness -- to impart to us GOD'S righteousness, so our light may shine and others may see Christ in us -- to understand the Word of God, so we may know how to live by its every word -- to give us the FAITH of Jesus, making possible His righteousness -- to give us POWER to be kind, patient, gentle, and of service to others -- to preach the Gospel -- to heal the sick.

Let Us Receive THIS Power

Jesus did not say, "Ye shall fall helpless UNDER the power." He did not say the Holy Spirit would ROB us of power, render us powerless. He said, YE SHALL RECEIVE POWER!

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of POWER, and of LOVE, and of a SOUND MIND (II Tim. 1:7). The Spirit of UNDERSTANDING (John 16:13; I Cor. 2:10). And that kind of power comes from just two things: SURRENDER and FAITH, along with much earnest PRAYER.

Let us YIELD to God, and His Word. Let us seek more of His Love, more of His FAITH, a better UNDERSTANDING, more POWER FOR SERVICE! And let us leave manifestations and feelings to HIM!