

A WORLDWIDE MINISTRY IN CAESAREA (PART III): RECEIVING THE HOLY SPIRIT ACTS 10:44–48

Introduction

God and God alone saves the Gentiles, that is, the people of the world. No man can save another man. No man has the power to save anyone else; therefore no man has the authority to save. Salvation — the gift of the new birth and of God’s Spirit — is of God and God alone. This is made abundantly clear in this passage, the passage where the Gentiles received the Holy Spirit of God.

- I. The Holy Spirit came on the Gentiles (vv. 44-45).
- II. The Gentile believers spoke in tongues and praised God (v. 46).
- III. The Gentile believers were baptised (v. 47).
- IV. The door to the Gentiles was opened (v. 48).

I. Acts 10:44–45 *Coming of the Holy Spirit*

The Holy Spirit came on the Gentiles. Note four significant points.

1. The Holy Spirit came on the Gentiles when they “heard the message.” Hearing the message — the Word of God — was necessary. It is one of the essentials for receiving the Holy Spirit. The unsaved (Gentiles) *had to hear the Word* before they could receive the Holy Spirit. The idea is that they heard and believed and received the truth of God’s Word into their hearts without Peter even telling them to believe. This is made clear in Acts 11:17. They heard and received the message, hungering and thirsting for the Word of God in their lives. Therefore, they believed it immediately. (See note. *Believe*, Rom. 10:16-17.)

Thought 1. What a glorious testimony! A striking challenge to every unbeliever! To hunger and thirst so much for the Word of God and for His salvation that we do not wait for the invitation of the messenger. We just believe and receive while we are hearing.

Mat 7:24-25 “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.”

Luke 8:15 “But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.”

1 Th 2:13 And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.

Prov 15:31 *He who listens to a life-giving rebuke will be at home among the wise.*

2. The Holy Spirit fell on the Gentiles “while Peter was still speaking.” Peter was still preaching; he had not finished his message when the Holy Spirit fell. God and God alone caused the Holy Spirit to fall upon the Gentile believers, not the hands of Peter...

- anointing them
- baptising them
- being laid upon them
- placing them into water

No man had anything to do with God pouring His Spirit upon these believers. The gift of the Spirit was the act of God and God alone.

3. “The Holy Spirit *came on*” (epepesen to pneuma to hagian) and was “poured out” upon the Gentiles. Peter said the Gentiles “*received* the Holy Spirit just as we have” (v. 47). Note that God gave them the Holy Spirit after they “believed in the Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 11:17). Hearing the message (v. 44) and believing in the Lord Jesus Christ are absolute essentials for receiving the Holy Spirit. (See *Holy Spirit*, Acts 10:44: *Holy Spirit, Pentecost*, Acts 2:1-4. Also see note 1, Acts 2:1 for the purpose of the Holy Spirit’s presence in a life.)

Luke 2:25 *Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.*

Acts 2:3 *They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.*

Acts 8:17 *Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.*

Acts 10:44 *While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message.*

Acts 19:6 *When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.*

1 Cor 12:13 *For we were all baptised by one Spirit into one body — whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free — and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.*

1 John 2:20 *But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth.*

4. The Jewish believers were *astonished* (exestesan) or amazed. This refers to the six Jewish believers who had come with Peter (Acts 10:23). They had been taught from earliest childhood that the Holy Spirit was available only to the Jews. But here before their very eyes they witnessed God accepting Gentile believers into the church. All their life these leaders, Peter included, had been taught and steeped in a bitterness that bordered on hatred for Gentiles (see note, Acts 10:1-33). What a radical course of events to see their God pouring His Spirit upon the Gentiles! The sight of such, and the gift of tongues, was the sign to these leaders that Gentiles were to be as much a part of the church as Jews. And the Jews were to accept the Gentiles as readily as they did each other.

Thought 1. The gospel is universal — for the whole world.

Mark 16:15 He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.”

Luke 11:10 “For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.”

Acts 10:34 Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favouritism.”

Rom 10:12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile — the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him.

Rev 22:17 The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.

ACTS 10:44 HOLY SPIRIT

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. Acts 10:44

There seem to be at least two, perhaps three, historical times when God “poured out” or baptised a group of people with His Spirit. Each time fulfilled His promise to send the Spirit and each time served as a pivotal point in church history.

1. There was a Jewish Pentecost (see notes, Acts 2:1-13).
2. There was the Gentile Pentecost covered here. The least that can be said about this event is that it is an extension of the Jewish Pentecost to include the Gentiles (Acts 10:44-48).
3. Perhaps there is also historical significance in the account of the half-Jew, half-Gentile Samaritans receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:15-17). This may have been a transition Pentecost between the Jewish Pentecost and the Gentile Pentecost. □

II. Acts 10:46 *Speaking in Tongues*

The Gentile believers spoke in tongues and praised God. Note: the speaking in tongues led the Gentile believers into a glorious and joyful praise of God. They “praised” God (megalunonton ton theon). They were caught up in an ecstatic praise of the Lord. The “speaking in tongues” seems to be the sign that the Holy Spirit had fallen upon the Gentiles. Both Peter and the Jewish believers needed a sign, a sign that would leave no doubt that the Gentiles were saved. Speaking in tongues, that is, breaking out in an ecstatic praise of God, was such a sign. It was the sign that would leave no doubt whatsoever. Note: it is this that utterly shocked the Jewish believers who were with Peter; for the Gentiles were, as Peter says, receiving “the Holy Spirit just as we have” (v. 47. See *Holy Spirit, Pentecost*, Acts 2:1-4. Also see *Tongues*, Acts 2:4.)

Mark 16:17 “And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues.”

Acts 2:4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

Acts 10:46-47 For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, “Can anyone keep these people from being baptised with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.”

Acts 19:6 When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

1 Cor 12:8-11 To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

1 Cor 14:5 I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. He who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may be edified.

III. Acts 10:47 *Baptism of the Gentiles*

The Gentile believers were baptised. Note that Peter asked a question. Apparently he was challenging the Jewish believers who were with him. There could be no question: the Gentiles had received the Spirit. No one present could deny it. Therefore, could “anyone keep these people from being baptised?” (See *Baptism*, Acts 2:38.)

Mat 28:19 “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

Mark 16:16 “Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.”

John 3:5 Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.”

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 10:48 So he ordered that they be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

Acts 22:16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptised and wash your sins away, calling on his name.

IV. Acts 10:48 World Evangelisation

The door to the Gentiles was opened. Peter ordered (prosetexen) the Gentile believers to be baptised. Evidently he commanded the six Jewish brothers to baptise them. Note: the Gentiles...

- had “heard the message” (v. 44)
- “believed in the Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 11:17)
- experienced “the Holy Spirit” falling (v. 44), and being “poured” upon them (v. 45). They had “received the Holy Spirit” (v. 47)
- were “baptised in the name of Jesus Christ” (v. 48)

Isa 45:22 “Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other.”

Isa 55:1 “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.”

Mat 22:9 ‘Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.’

John 7:37 On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.”

Rom 10:12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile — the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him.

1 Tim 2:4 Who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

Rev 22:17 The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life. ■