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Living Hope EFC

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Acts: The Transitional Nature of the Book, part 2.
The New Ministries of the Holy Spirit.

Review

ILLUS: A Church Plant is a time of much transition.

Much happens during this phase of building a church that doesn't continue once established, but is essential to und/ its identiity.

ACTS: Records a time of transition in God's administration of man.

- ***It is not primarily doctrinal in nature***, but historical.
- Many divisions in the church have taken place because certain phenomena surrounding the ministry of the H.S. during this time of transition are thought to be *normative* for the entire church age.

KEY ISSUES WE NEED TO LOOK AT TO NOT MISINTERPRET IT:

1-Understand the general concept of God's distinct Economies.

Simple stated: God works with mankind in distinct/ different ways, during different periods/ phases of history.

PREMISE:

In the ***progress of history***, in accordance with the people and circumstances of a given time period, ***God gives specific Revelation*** and ***administers His will*** for mankind ***in distinct & differing ways***.

If you don't make animal sacrifices or meet to worship on Saturday, you are living under God's new economy.

ILLUS: If Moses were suddenly alive today he would need to read Acts in order to understand why he can now eat pork, welcome Gentiles without them being circumcised, and trust Christ for his salvation.

2- Understanding the major transition God was making in Acts.

3- The purpose of the *Gift of Miracles* in Acts

ACTS serves as **a bridge** between the Gospels & the Epistles

1. From an absent Savior - to a present Holy Spirit's ministry (Acts 2).
2. From Christ's ascension - to His present ministry as Great H.P.
3. From the beginning of the church in Jerusalem...to Rome, Acts 28.
4. Regarding spiritual leaders: From Law-appointed from tribe of Levi, to Christ-appointed Apostles, to elders (20:28) to P.T.'s (Eph.4:11f)
5. From the O.T. to Paul's(?) Epistles, New Revelation for a new era.

This brought about a **Major Challenge**.

How would these Apostles ever be accepted as God's spokesmen?
How would their writings be accepted as new Revelation from God?

ANSWER: 2 Cor.12:12; Heb.2:3-4; Acts 2:22 & 5:12; 14:3

PRINCIPLE OF TRANSITIONAL PERIODS

Transitional times in God's economies employ & involve unique features not necessarily normative for the age they introduce.

- In Acts, Jesus appointed Apostles (prophets) to proclaim the Good News to the world, and **authenticated them** by gift of miracles!
- Acts is not teaching that the gift of miracles would be **normative** for other or all spiritual leaders for the duration of the church age;
- anymore than it was teaching that Apostles would be normative.
- Once they passed off the scene (as with Moses) **the new Torah**, the *Epistles*, would serve as a lifestyle guide during the church age

WHY?

- (1) They would be so commonplace that they would no longer signify the giving of new Revelation that mankind must heed & obey.
- (2) Not all gifts are needed throughout a new phase of administration.
 - Some are given to build the foundation: **Eph.2:20**.
 - Some are for building the temple of God to maturity: **Eph. 4:11-16**.

Today

4- The unique ministries of the Holy Spirit beginning in Acts.
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A: The Purpose of the Gift of Tongues in Acts

First: What was the gift of tongues?

(1) Acts 2:1-12 The first occurrence. Two Greek words were used.

- **2:4 & 11** - γλωσσαις, tongues. "As **the Spirit** enabled," Vs.4.
- **2:6 & 8** - διαλεκτω, language or dialect.
- διαλεκτος is used only 6 times in the N.T.; Acts:1:19, 2:6,8; 21:40; 22:2 & 26:14 "in Aramaic/ Hebrew (*language*" –not translated).

(2) The passage itself defines the gift without ambiguity.

- **"Tongues:"** was a gift of the H.S., which enabled men to speak in foreign languages unlearned & previously unknown to them.
- Unless told otherwise, there is no reason to think that the gift of tongues is ever any different than "speaking in a human dialect."

Second: Why was the gift of tongues given?

(1) To indicate that Jesus was Lord & was instituting a new age of **grace** by the sending of the Holy Spirit **2:33, 36, 39, 17**.

(2) To indicate that God was judging /Israel/ for her disobedience to His message: **1 Cor.14:20-22**. > Isaiah 28:11, 14,16,19,22.

(3) As a demonstration of the reversal of Babel's judgment. (WW)

- *Babel* = God's jmt. He confused the languages = separated man.
- **Pentecost** = God's overcoming separation, uniting by His Spirit.
- *Babel* = Man's scheme to make a name for himself.
- **Pentecost** = God's grace to glorify His name – John 17:20-23.

(4) To establish Apostolic authority over the *whole church* and to unite the church in Jerusalem, Samaria, & to the end of the world (gentiles).

There are only 3-4 of "tongues" in Acts. All with the above purpose.

Acts 2 Those who spoke are likely only Apostles, 2:7 –“All Galileans.”

- 2:14 Peter spoke. Matt.16:19 Christ gave Peter “**keys of K’dom.**”
- **At Pentecost Peter opens the door to the K’dom to the Jews.**
- This also established the “12” Apostles as Christ’s spokesmen.

Acts 8:14-17- In Samaria. We’re not sure that tongues were present.

- It is significant that the Samaritans did not receive the H.S. when they believed. God waited until the **Apostles** came & laid their hands on them. “Laying of hands” = association with Apostles.
- The Samaritans & Jews were not natural friends (Jn.4). It was important, as the church expanded, that unity be made.
- Both would now accept the other as “brothers.”
- **The Apostles would be recognized as leaders in the church.**

Acts 10:41-48 – Cornelius. Salvation extends to the Gentiles.

- Peter is witnessing to the resurrection of Christ. He just finished announcing forgiveness of sins to all who believe (v.43). He isn’t even through with his message – and the H.S. came, and tongues.

NOTE: 1- They spoke in dialects/ languages, **v.47** – same gift.

2- Peter—is again the one opening wider the door of the K’dom.

3- This time the H.S. came *without* laying of hands, but by faith.

4- These people did not walk down an isle, they weren’t in church, Peter hadn’t even given his invitation – before they were saved!

APPLY: This passage clarifies two doctrines that Acts is not teaching: (1) Acts cannot be teaching that *water baptism is necessary for salvation* or to receiving the H.S., as same claim because of 2:38.

(2) Acts can’t be teaching the *H.S. only comes by lying on of hands*.

ACTS IS TRANSITIONAL, NOT DOCTRINAL

- Acts 1-10 is an especially transitional time, in this transitional book
- 10: 41-48 introduces what will become normative (see Eph.1:13).

Acts 19:1-7 – Paul lays hands on Ephesian believers, receive H.S.

What is the deal with John’s Baptism?

- J.B. baptized during Christ’s life, **pre-cross**. He announced H.S.
- He was the last of the O.T. prophets, in the *O.T. economy*.
- Those baptized by him were repenting of sin, readying themselves for the coming King/ Messiah. Baptism was symbolic of repenting.
- **Those baptized by J.B., like other O.T. saints, did not receive H.S.**
- There were bound to be pockets of John’s disciples around.
- These believers were probably from the ministry of Apollos (18:24f)
- God waited for Paul to lay hands on them, before they received the H.S. to **establish Paul’s Apostolic authority** in the gentile church
- Ministry in Ephesus = especially important as Capital of Asia Minor.
- **This is the last instance of “tongues” in Acts.**
- **Paul would write to the Ephesians the church-age norm, Eph.2:13.**

POINT: At each stage of the expansion of the Gospel to new people groups: **(1)** God testified to the Jews, through the gift of tongues/ H.S., that He was now including Gentiles in His K’dom = equal with Jews.

(2) He established the authority of the Apostles church-wide, to every people group, the gift of tongues evidencing the Holy Spirit’s ministry. **(3)** He created unity between Jew & Gentile – baptizing them into one body. **(4)** Tongues are never commanded for believer or unbel/ in N.T.

B: The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

The baptism of Holy Spirit is distinct & **normative** in the church age.

(1) Baptism of the H.S. is mentioned only 7 times in the N.T.:

- Mt.3:11; Mk.1:8; Lk.3:16; Jn.1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16; 1 Cor.12:13
- The H.S. was promised by Jesus: John 14:15-18; 7:38-39.
- Baptism begins in Acts 1:4-5 (11:15-17). Jew & Gentile alike.
- **Every believer is baptized by the H.S. at conversion:**
 - **1 Cor.12:13; 6:19** (Note: Carnality (1 Cor.1-3) doesn't cause one not to be baptized by the H.S.). - Rom.8:9; Eph.4:4,5.
- It is a sov'n, permanent work of God, not necessarily emotional.
- Nowhere in the N.T. are we commanded to be "baptized" by H.S.
- It occurs at salvation is not repeated.
- **Significance:**
 - 1- It joins us to Christ's body, the Church –1 Cor.12:13.
Thus, baptism must take place at salvation, or you would have people who are saved, but not part of the body of Christ?
 - 2- It joins us to the death-resurrection of Christ - Rom.6:1-1.1

(2) Other ministries of the Holy Spirit in the church age.

- The H.S. gives new birth, Christ's life, to every believer: **Tit.3:5-7.**
- The Spirit indwells & permanently seals each believer: **Eph.1:13; 4:30; 2 Cor.1:21-22.** God seals us until the day of redemption.
- He gives every believer spiritual gifts: 1 Cor.12:4-7.
- He makes us adopted children of God: Eph.1:5.
- He teaches, guides, assures, prays for believers.

C: The Filling of the Holy Spirit

The Filling of the Holy Spirit is distinct & **normative** in the church age.

(1) Every Christian is given the presence of the indwelling H.S. Rom.8:9

(2) Every Christian is commanded to be filled with H.S. **Eph.5:18**

- Filling is contrasted with **being drunk** (controlled) with wine.
- While every believer can be filled, maturity is a process of time.
- Filling by the H.S. is evidenced by the Spirit's virtues in our lives Gal.5:16,18,22-25; John 13:34-35. – Filling is a repeated act.
- *Baptism=I belong to Christ's body. Filling=my body belongs to Him.*

(3) How are we filled by the Spirit?

- It is a matter of submitting to His control & to truth- Eph.5:18.
- We must not be grieving the Spirit – by sin in our lives Eph.4:30.
- Parallel doctrines: John 15 "Abide." Obey the Great Commands.

NOTE: The EPISTLES establish doctrine normative during this age!