

Baptism of the Holy Spirit as a Second Experience after Conversion: An Examination of Relevant Passages in the Book of Acts

Brian Operu Aikona

He holds a Bachelors of Commerce (Finance) degree from the University of Nairobi and is currently pursuing a Master of Divinity in Theology at Africa International University.

Email: brian.operu@gmail.com

Abstract

The “Baptism of the Holy Spirit” is one of the most debated Pneumatological topics due to different biblical interpretations and traditions. On the one hand, some scholars argue that the experience was only available to the original disciples of Jesus and not today. On the other hand, some scholars teach that this experience is still available for believers today. These debates have both theological and practical dimensions. The book of Acts introduces to Christians the coming and working of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit came to indwell believers and continue the salvation work from Christ. Again, the Holy Spirit empowered believers to be witnesses both locally and globally. Biblically and theologically, is the conversion experience and Spirit baptism the same thing or are they different experiences? And is the baptism of the Holy Spirit accompanied by speaking in other tongues or visible manifestations of signs or gifts? The study analyses relevant biblical passages and key theological discussions on the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Then, it argues that conversion or regeneration experience is different from the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The conversion experience precedes Spirit’s baptism. Believers in all generations should desire to be empowered by the Spirit. In addition, the baptism of the Holy Spirit should not be exclusively tied to speaking in tongues because it is not Scripturally supported.

Keywords

Holy Spirit, Baptism, Disciple, Second Experience, Pentecost, Repentance, Conversion.

Introduction

The church has a vital role in ensuring that individual believers have a proper biblical understanding of the person and work of the Holy Spirit.¹ Such responsibility safeguards believers from warped doctrinal teachings. A balanced theological perspective informs what Christians can apply in life, thus remaining faithful to God's will.² One of such crucial tenets is the "baptism of the Holy Spirit." The present study analyzes relevant biblical in the book of Acts. Also, the research reviews various theological positions on the baptism of the Holy Spirit by looking at the arguments of notable scholars, but the biblical text remains the primary reference. The study argues that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is an experience after conversion and regeneration. This gift is available to all believers in all generations. It further argues that the Holy Spirit's baptism does not manifest in the same manner as seen in the book of Acts and is not limited to speaking in tongues as the only outward sign of baptism.

In a preview, the baptism of the Holy Spirit carries the following ideas: to be sealed by, to be filled with, to be clothed, to receive, or to be anointed with the Holy Spirit as recorded in the Bible.³ These analogies are used interchangeably, and like different facets of a diamond, each aspect presents an additional dimension of the same experience.⁴ Paul J. Achtemeier describes the baptism of the Holy Spirit as the mode through which the Spirit fills the believer and gives gifts that are essential for Christian ministry and extends the power and presence of Christ to individuals.⁵ Pentecostals hold that Christians receive the Spirit upon salvation and experience the full reception of the Holy Spirit after baptism.⁶ Merrill F. Unger describes the baptism of the Holy Spirit as that divine operation that unites a believer with Christ and with other believers. In addition, the experience enables the believer to share Christ's hope, salvation, and destiny. Therefore, baptism of the Holy Spirit affirms the believer's position and state.⁷ The Spirit's empowerment is a theological concept that deserves the attention of any theologian. John Stott

¹ Stanley Horton, *Systematic Theology Revised Edition* (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 2015), 222, <http://www.vlebooks.com/vleweb/product/openreader?id=none&isbn=9781607311225>.

² Tremper Longman and David E Garland, *Luke--Acts* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2007), 120.

³ Frederick Dale Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit: the Pentecostal Experience and the New Testament Witness*, Reprint (Grand Rapids Mich.: Eerdmans, 1986), 59.

⁴ David Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Nottingham, England: William B. Eerdmans, Apollos, 2009), 136.

⁵ Paul J. Achtemeier et al., eds., *The HarperCollins Bible Dictionary* (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996), 433.

⁶ Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit*, 60.

⁷ Merrill Frederick Unger, *The Baptism and Gifts of the Holy Spirit* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1974), 21.

writes that without the Holy Spirit's empowerment, the discipleship of believers would be difficult. There would be no life since he is the life-giver, no understanding since he brings the truth, no fellowship because he brings unity, no character because of lack of fruit, and finally, no effective witnessing because of lack of power.⁸

The book of Acts records the fulfillment of promises made by Jesus and the prophets in the Old Testament. In Joel 2:28–29, God promised the ancient nation of Israel that in the future, He would pour out his Spirit on all people, the sons and daughters would prophesy, and old men would dream dreams, and young men see visions. Additionally, in his earthly ministry, Jesus promised in John 14; 15:26 about the coming of the Holy Spirit. The book of Acts records the fulfillment and full manifestation of these promises. Craig Keener notes that the opening two chapters of the book lay the foundation of Luke's work by describing the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The first two chapters of the book are critical in helping the readers understand why the Holy Spirit had to come. In Acts 1:4, Luke records Jesus' instruction to his disciples not to leave Jerusalem and wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was going to be pivotal in propagating the kingdom of God to all nations. Thus, the role of the Holy Spirit is evident throughout the book of Acts.⁹ In Acts chapter 2, Luke narrates how the Holy Spirit came upon the believers who had assembled on the day of Pentecost. This portion gives an in-depth account of the Spirit baptism, describes Peter's sermon, and shows how these two events were related.¹⁰

An Evaluation of Acts 2:1– 4, 37–40

a) The Descent of the Spirit (2:1–4)

*1 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.*¹¹

As observed, this portion of Scripture introduces the coming of the Holy Spirit as Christ had indicated to his disciples in Acts 1:4. In this chapter, we find the events surrounding the

⁸ John R. W Stott and Graham Benzie, *The Message of Acts: To the Ends of the Earth* (Leicester: Inter Varsity Press, 2005), 43.

⁹ Craig S. Keener, *Acts*, New Cambridge Bible Commentary (Cambridge, United Kingdom, 2020), 116.

¹⁰ Frank Ely Gaebelin, ed., *The Expositor's Bible Commentary. Vol. 9: John- Acts*, vol. 9 (London: Pickering & Inglis, 1981), 268.

¹¹ NIV version is used unless stated otherwise.

coming of the promise. The disciples were gathered together in Jerusalem when the Holy Spirit came upon them. Keener presumes that the believers were together, probably waiting in prayer, as was the case in Acts 1:14. In addition, he highlights that the term “all” in 2:1 includes more than the twelve disciples.¹² The experience of the Holy Spirit happened during the day of Pentecost.¹³ In the Jewish calendar, Pentecost was celebrated by the Jewish people and involved covenant renewals. However, on this day, the disciples had gathered in readiness for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Luke details the disciple’s moving encounter with God. The Holy Spirit baptism came with power and visible manifestations. In his book *Reading Acts*, Talbert writes that Luke in this portion presents a theophany where God is directly involved in the activities of men. There was a mighty wind from heaven, tongues of fire, and the filling of the disciples by the Holy Spirit. The disciples went through a life-changing experience that finally brought an end to the wait for the divine promise.

Notably, the interpretation of this portion of Scripture has resulted in two points of contention. The first issue revolves around whether those that had gathered were believers in Christ or not. The second point of contention is whether the disciples’ experience during the Pentecost was normative for the subsequent ages. These two points of contention significantly shape the debate on the baptism of the Holy Spirit. On the first question, Ernst Haenchen views the one hundred and twenty as believers in Christ.¹⁴ In agreement, Richard N. Longenecker and Eckhard Schnabel both affirm that those gathered together were believers. Also, Charles K. Barrett, in his commentary, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, Charles K. Barrett refers to Acts 1:14 and argues that Luke had alluded to the fact that the group that had gathered together were believers and that the disciples shared a common faith.¹⁵ D. G.

¹² Keener, *Acts*, 122.

¹³ Frank Ely Gaebelein, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 1981, 268. “The Pentecost festival, which, according to Leviticus 23:15-16 (cf. Deut 16:9–12; Jos. Antiq. III, 252 [ix.6]; SBK, 2:597–602), was to be celebrated on the “day after the seventh Sabbath” and hence on the fiftieth day after Passover. It was originally the festival of the firstfruits of the grain harvest (Exod 23:16; Lev 23:17–22; Num 28:26–31); and it was called the Feast of Weeks because it came after a period of seven weeks of harvesting that began with the offering of the first barley sheaf during the Passover celebration and ended with the wheat harvest. By the time of the first Christian century, however, it was considered the anniversary of the giving of the law at Mount Sinai (as deduced from the chronological note at Exod 19:1) and as a time for the annual renewal of the Mosaic covenant Gub 6:17; b Peshaim 68b; M Tanchuma 26c); and it was therefore looked upon as one of the three great pilgrim festivals of Judaism (along with Passover preceding it and Tabernacles some four months later).”

¹⁴ Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971), 167.

¹⁵ Charles K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles. I: Preliminary Introduction and Commentary on Acts I–XIV*, (Edinburgh: Clark, 1998), 110.

On the contrary, Dunn disagrees with the above conclusions, arguing that the disciples had not yet entered into the new age and covenant according to Luke's explanation of the salvation-history. They entered the new era when they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Further, he argues that until then, its only Jesus who the Spirit had baptized at Jordan hence had entered into the new age. Dunn explains baptism in the Spirit as a necessary means of entry into the new age. Therefore, since the disciples had not received this baptism, they were still in the old era. It is the reception of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost the disciples were translated into the new age.¹⁶ Unger concurs with Dunn by stating that the baptism simply ushered the disciples into the common salvation won by Christ on the cross. It suffices to mention at this point that the congregation in Acts 2 were believers in Christ.

In answering the second question, Unger explains that the experience was not normative; hence we should not wait for a similar experience as the disciples.¹⁷ Likewise, authors like Frederick Dale Bruner¹⁸ and Anthony A. Hoekema¹⁹ hold that the experience of the Pentecost is not repeatable. Later, this paper argues that it is not entirely true that the experience of Pentecost cannot be repeated.

The significance of the day of Pentecost was to empower the disciples to witness. Acts 1:6–8 is crucial in outlining the central theme of Acts and lays a foundation for the rest of the book. The concept of “witness” is prominent in Acts and appears almost thirty-nine times. The mandate of witnessing is core since it came from Christ himself.²⁰ In Acts 1:8, Christ commissions his disciples to extend his ministry to the ends of the earth. Haenchen agrees that Jesus' last words are of importance since they contain an obligation to believers.²¹ The disciples of Jesus needed to remain in Jerusalem to be empowered by the Holy Spirit for this global mission. This mission necessitates the encounter with the Spirit of God. Therefore, the baptism of the Holy Spirit for the effective proclamation of the Gospel is a subject worthy of consideration.

The Centrality of Repentance in Receiving the Holy Spirit (2:37–40)

¹⁶ James D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit: A Re-Examination of the New Testament Teaching on the Gift of the Spirit in Relation to Pentecostalism Today* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970), 43.

¹⁷ Unger, *The Baptism and Gifts of the Holy Spirit*, 64.

¹⁸ Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit*, 164.

¹⁹ Anthony A. Hoekema, *Tongues and Spirit-Baptism: A Biblical and Theological Evaluation* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1981), 19.

²⁰ Longman and Garland, *Luke–Acts*, 100.

²¹ Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 144.

37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” 38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, 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. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” 40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”

This text presents the necessity of repentance and the reaction of the people upon hearing Peter’s sermon. The Holy Spirit convicted the crowd through Peter’s message. In verses 37–38, the people realized that they had made a severe error of crucifying Christ (v. 23). Peter’s sermon “cut to the heart” of his listeners, implying how the preaching had impacted the people’s hearts. The crowd responded by asking an important question “Brothers, what shall we do?” The hearers expressed their desire to be reconciled back to God.²² Stott argues that the Jews had rejected Christ and believed that baptism was only meant for the Gentiles. Schnabel indicates that the Jews practiced immersion in water only for purification purposes to cleanse them from impurities such as coming into contact with unclean animals and bodily discharges. Such forms of impurities would deter them from temple worship.²³ Therefore, their acceptance of Christ and baptism was an act of their repentance which was a humbling experience. Indeed, signifying the working of the Holy Spirit as evidenced in verse 44 that calls the new converts believers.

Most importantly, in verse 38, Peter instructs that repentance and forgiveness of sins precede the reception of the Holy Spirit. Schnabel writes that the presence of the Holy Spirit is the mark for all those who repent their sins and acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the Lord. The central message of Peter and the apostles was that after the forgiveness of sins, the Lord distributes his Spirit.²⁴ The promise is sure since it originates from God and was mentioned earlier in Joel 2:32: “And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Verse 39 presents a great promise; Peter highlights that for the bystanders, the reception of the Holy Spirit was not only limited to them but was available even for their children and those who are far-off.

Commentators have debated how the phrase “for all who are far off” should be understood. Some posit that the promise was for the Jews in the diaspora, while others argue that

²² Frederick Fyvie Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text* (Leicester: Apollos, 1990), 85.

²³ Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Acts: Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2012), 261.

²⁴ Schnabel, *Acts*, 265.

it included both the Jews and Gentiles.²⁵ However, looking through the book of Acts and the conversion of the Gentiles, we can conclude that Luke's intention shows that the promise is for both the Gentiles and the Jews.²⁶ Acts 2:1–4; narrates the baptism experience the disciples had on the day of Pentecost, while 2:37–40 shows the necessity of repentance and forgiveness of sins to receive the promise of the Holy Spirit.

The following section looks at the concept of the Second Experience, that is, the subsequent event that comes after receiving the new birth.²⁷ It involves the infilling of the Holy Spirit and empowering of the believer for service. According to the Roman Catholics, the first experience involves baptism while the Second Experience is confirmation which comes through the laying on of hands. In contrast, Pentecostals and some Charismatics explain the first stage as conversion and regeneration while they refer to the second experience as the baptism of the Holy Spirit.²⁸ The doctrine of the Second Experience has been a controversial theme among theologians. The key texts used in this debate are Acts 8:12–15; 19:1–7. Thus, this section interrogates these two portions of Scripture regarding the Second experience.

The Reception of the Holy Spirit as a Second Experience after Conversion in Acts 8:12–17

This portion recounts how Philip preached the Gospel to the people of Samaria and their response to this message. Acts 8:12 reads, *“But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.”* Luke in this section suggests that after Philip had preached the message, the people believed, which led them to convert.²⁹ The people were attentive to the words spoken by Philip and accepted everything he said. Parsons remarks that despite the Samaritan's belief of *taheb* to restore the true and proper worship, they believed in Jesus as the Messiah.³⁰ It included Simon, the sorcerer who, before this, had in verse 9 been the amazement of the city because of the supernatural power he possessed. Stott observes that Luke uses the term “believe” in several other passages to show that the participants had entirely accepted the message they heard. The other instances include the conversion of the three thousand people on the day of Pentecost and

²⁵ Longman and Garland, *Luke–Acts*, 151.

²⁶ Longman and Garland, 153.

²⁷ Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 38.

²⁸ Stott and Benzies, *The Message of Acts*, 112.

²⁹ Stott and Benzies, 109.

³⁰ Mikeal Carl Parsons, *Acts*, Paideia (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Academic, 2008), 113.

the conversion in the house of Cornelius.³¹ Therefore, verse 12 fully asserts that conversion had taken place in the lives of the Samaritans based on the term “*they believed*.” After these events, Peter and John were sent to Samaria to inspect the work of Christ that was ongoing. During the church’s early years, the apostles were tasked with supervising the Gospel’s progress wherever it was preached.³² Stott mentions that Peter and John had come to investigate the report that had reached them about the Samaritans. Additionally, Stott notes that it was particularly important for John to be amongst the two apostles sent since he had desired to see the people destroyed.³³ However, on this particular visit, he had come to witness the good work that Philip had started.³⁴

The aftermath of the Apostle’s visit has led to so much theological debate within the church. Verse 15 suggests that the new believers had to be prayed for in order to receive the Holy Spirit. It is not clear how the Apostles knew the people had not received the Holy Spirit. Luke does not disclose this outrightly. But the conclusion of the apostles is true; the Holy Spirit had not come upon the Samaritans as recorded in verse 16, “*because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus*.” Bruce notes that ancient and modern commentators have implied that Peter and John were sent to perform the rite of confirmation. This rite of confirmation involved the laying on of hands. Subsequently, some commentators have gone ahead to suggest that apostles could only do a confirmation.

Thus, the need for Peter and John to be sent to the new converts in Samaria. Bruce refutes this stand by declaring that the New Testament has not explicitly taught this as a practice. Also, this analogy of apostles laying hands on people as the only act of confirmation is not found elsewhere in Scripture. The only instance that seems to give a hint of laying on of hands is in Ephesians 19:1–7.³⁵ Haenchen writes that the bestowal of the Holy Spirit is a divine gift. Thus, the apostles needed to come and pray for the Samaritans.³⁶ However, it is critical to note that Luke does not make it seem like every believer’s reception of the Holy Spirit is the same.³⁷ Throughout Acts, we observe how the reception of the Spirit was different for individuals. In

³¹ Stott and Benzies, *The Message of Acts*, 109.

³² Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 193.

³³ Luke 9:51–56

³⁴ Stott and Benzies, *The Message of Acts*, 110.

³⁵ F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, Rev. ed., The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 2009), 192.

³⁶ Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 306.

³⁷ Craig S. Keener, *Spirit Hermeneutics: Reading Scripture in Light of Pentecost* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 2016), 266.

other places, the reception of the Holy Spirit came without the laying on of hands. For instance, during the Pentecost (Acts 2:38–42) and the conversion in the household of Cornelius (Acts 10:44–48).

This passage suggests that conversion and reception of the Holy Spirit are two separate and consecutive experiences. The reception of the Spirit was limited to conversion. It is true that conversion experience plays a vital role in initiating the believer into a new life but does not confer all the new life experiences. The reception of the Spirit enables the believer to receive power for service and victorious Christian living. According to the passage, the Samaritan people received and believed the Gospel message preached by Philip. This marked their first experience. Later on, when the Apostles came, they prayed and laid hands on them, leading to the Second Experience, which was the reception of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:14–17). Mikeal C. Parsons rightly puts it that the Samaritan's ministry was initiated by Philip through his service when he cast out unclean spirits and proclaimed to them the message of the kingdom of God. Thereafter, the baptism of the Holy Spirit came through the prayers of the apostles, also referred to as "the Samaritan Pentecost" (Acts 8:17).³⁸ Dunn disagrees that the Samaritans were believers of Jesus Christ. He argues that their response to the Gospel was defective, evidenced by their failure to receive the Holy Spirit.³⁹ Howard Marshall counters Dunn by stating that nowhere has Luke referred to the Samaritan's belief as defective. If this were the case, Peter and John would have first preached to the people before praying for them.⁴⁰ Stott agrees with Marshall that Luke does not record Samaritan's response as inadequate, nor do the apostles seem to question Philip's ministry or faith as defective. However, despite agreeing to the Samaritan's experience taking a two-stage experience, Stott questions whether it's God's original purpose for the reception of the Holy Spirit to be a subsequent experience after conversion.⁴¹

The Reception of the Holy Spirit as a Second Experience after Conversion in Acts 19:1–7

³⁸ Parsons, *Acts*, 116.

³⁹ Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 55.

⁴⁰ I. Howard Marshall, *Acts: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, V. 5 (Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic, 2008), 159.

⁴¹ Stott and Benzies, *The Message of Acts*, 113.

This pericope records the ministry of Paul in Ephesus. Paul addresses the disciples of John who had not yet received or even heard about the Holy Spirit.⁴² In verse 2, Paul asks, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” Peterson refutes the narrative that the disciples were believers. In addition, he notes that Paul asked the critical question in verses 2 since he noticed a disconnect in their spiritual condition. Peterson assumes that possibly they could have given the appearance of being Christians when Paul came hence being called believers.⁴³ On the contrary, Bruce argues that they were believers although they had some defective understanding of the Gospel, hence the direct question from Paul.

Furthermore, because they had received the baptism of John, they must have known the Old Testament expression of the Spirit and that John’s baptism was a preparation for the coming of another that would usher them to the Spirit’s baptism. However, they did not know that Jesus they had believed in was the one going to administer the Holy Spirit to them. Bruce concludes that their understanding was worse than that of Apollos.⁴⁴ Longenecker explains that Paul’s question suggests the following: First, he assumed that they were believers, and second, they had received the Holy Spirit. He goes on to say that the disciple’s answer nullified the second assumption that Paul had. However, Longenecker concedes that it is hard to interpret the account since it is brief. He argues that Apollos had also believed in the baptism of John the Baptist. He only needed proper teaching, as recorded in Acts 18:24–26.⁴⁵ In my assessment, the disciples were believers since they had received the baptism and teachings of John the Baptist as recorded in verse 3. However, their understanding was skewed, which led to Paul guiding them on the right path that eventually led to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, this portion seems to suggest a second experience after conversion.

This portion of Scripture seems to compare closely to the Pentecostal narrative in Acts 2:1–4; because, similar to the disciple’s experience on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came with power and visible manifestations upon the disciples of John. Acts 19:6 explains that after Paul had laid his hands on them, the disciples of John spoke in tongues and prophesied. Marshall notes that such manifestations of the Holy Spirit were not the general rule as observed through

⁴² J. B. Lightfoot and Ben Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Newly Discovered Commentary*, The Lightfoot Legacy Set, volume 1 (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, an Imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2014), 247.

⁴³ Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 641.

⁴⁴ Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, 383.

⁴⁵ Gaebelein, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*. Vol. 9, 9: 493.

the book of Acts. He highlights the narrative in Acts 8:15–17, where the speaking in tongues did not accompany the baptism of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁶

Summary of the Study

First, the research has shown that the first baptism of the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost as prophecied in the Old Testament. This experience ushered the disciples into a new age and dispensation under the power of the Holy Spirit as witnesses. The coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was with power and visible manifestation. The disciples were all filled by the Holy Spirit and spoke in other tongues. The study has indicated that the visible manifestation is not limited to speaking in tongues, as evidenced in the Spirit baptism. Just as the Holy Spirit descended on every disciple, the same applies to believers today. The Second Experience is available for believers. As observed in Acts 8:12–17 and Acts 19:1–7, the believers received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. However, the study has revealed that some of the events are not repeatable. The signs that accompanied the initial coming of the Holy Spirit are not witnessed in other parts of the New Testament.

Second, the study has shown that the Holy Spirit is available for all who repent and seek forgiveness from God. Peter, in his sermon, emphasized that the promise was available for all those who repented and believed in Christ. Also, the promise is available for the subsequent generations based on these two conditions. The promise included both the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Third, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is an experience that continues and is different from the conversion and regeneration (Acts 8:12–17; 19:1–7). Barrett writes that believers receive the Holy Spirit upon being converted, and in times of service, they are empowered by the Holy Spirit to act or speak appropriately.⁴⁷ Thus the baptism of the Holy Spirit is necessary for successful Christian living and empowerment for service.

Conclusion

A review of relevant biblical passages and key theological debates surrounding the baptism of the Holy Spirit is necessary to develop a biblically sound Pneumatology. The coming of the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts was part of God's grand plan of salvation to humanity, as promised in

⁴⁶ Marshall, *Acts*, 307.

⁴⁷ Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles. I*, iii.

the Old Testament. The paper majorly argued three points. First, God initiates the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Like the day of Pentecost, God sent the Holy Spirit upon the disciples to empower them to witness and to continue the work of Christ. Second, Christians should know that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is available for all who repent and believe in Christ. In the book of Acts, repentance, the forgiveness of sins, and belief in Christ precede the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. As indicated, the promise of the Spirit applies to believers in all generations. Third, the conversion or regeneration experience, as seen in the two biblical passages, is distinct from the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Thus, believers should desire to be empowered by the Holy Spirit for a victorious Christian life and witness.

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