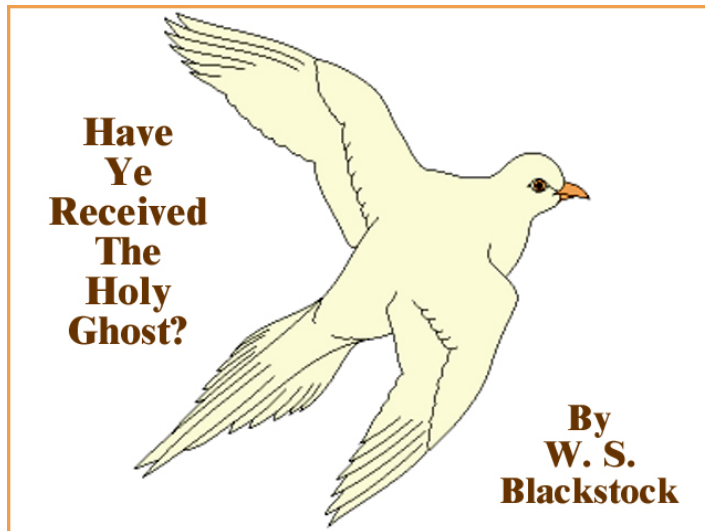


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HAVE YE RECEIVED THE HOLY GHOST?
By W. S. Blackstock



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01 -- PART

The story of those Ephesian disciples to whom this question was proposed is at once interesting and instructive. It shows that then, as now, the truth had found its way into places where the voice of the Christian preacher had not been heard. From whom these people learned what they knew of Christianity we know not, but that they had not learned it from any of the apostles or any of their co-labourers is evident. If an apostle or any who had been specially trained and commissioned by the apostles had preached the Gospel to them, they would have been more perfectly instructed. And yet, without the, ministry of such, they had learned enough of Christ to induce them to accept Him as the Messiah and to become His disciples. They had not only taken their place at His feet as learners, but, as the word imports, they had submitted themselves to His discipline and government. They were members of the Kingdom of God, subjects of the Mediatorial King.

And yet these people belonged to an inferior stage in the development of the Kingdom of God, they had not yet attained to the full enjoyment of the privileges of the new dispensation, the dispensation of the Gospel, which is the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of the Spirit was unknown to them. They had not so much as heard that there was any Holy Spirit, or, as it is in the Revised Version, dropping out the italicized word which the revisionists have supplied, but the equivalent of which is not in the Greek text, "We have not so much as heard that the Holy Ghost was." Evidently, so far as they were concerned, the evolution of the doctrine of the Trinity was not complete. They knew the Father and the Son. but the fact of the Holy Spirit being one of the persons of the Godhead, co-essential with these, was a truth which had not yet been apprehended by them. They had passed beyond the Jewish dispensation, but they had not reached the Christian; they were yet in the compound intermediate dispensation of John; and their apprehension of the truth rose no higher than that stage of development.

And as their knowledge was defective so was their experience. They had not received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The promise of the Father had not been fulfilled in them. That they had felt, to some extent, the influence of the Spirit, there is no reason to doubt. No man calleth Jesus Christ Lord but by Him; and the fact that they had accepted the Divine Redeemer as Lord is proof that they had been moved by Him. They had believed-and we have no reason to doubt that they had believed with the heart unto righteousness -- to the saving of their souls. They were to use the phraseology of our time, Christians -- imperfectly instructed Christians, it is true, but, nevertheless, Christians. And yet they had not the full measure of power and blessing which it was their privilege as Christians to enjoy. The characteristic gift of the new dispensation they had not received. That of which

John spake when he said of his Divine Master, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire," and of which Jesus Himself spake immediately before His ascension, when He said, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence," had not been realized by them in their own personal experience. They had not received their Pentecost.

This story teaches us, too, that without this baptism of the Holy Ghost the believer, though he be a disciple, is not complete. He has not yet entered into the power and privilege which properly belongs to the new dispensation. He has not come up to the standard of measurement which belongs to the Christian age. He does not enjoy what it is the privilege of the New Testament saint to enjoy; he is not prepared to do all that the New Testament saint, when fully equipped for his work, may do. There is no complaint made in respect to the consistency of these disciples lives. For aught that we can learn from the narrative, their morals were correct, their deportment irreproachable. Nor is there any complaints made of their habits of devotion. For aught that we know, they did justly, loved mercy, and walked humbly with God. Their knowledge, it is true, was defective, but this defect could have been easily remedied by appropriate instruction. Under the instruction of such a teacher as Paul, they would have soon been put right, so far as this was concerned. It may be assumed, therefore, that however well instructed they might have been, and however faultless might have been their external life, according to the apostolic standard they would have been defective Christians until, in some further sense, they had received the Holy Ghost.

It is evident, too, that this reception of the Spirit is not something that ought to be insisted on as a condition of membership in the Christian Church. I heard an estimable Baptist minister, preaching on this very subject a short time ago, complaining of what appears to him to be the almost criminal carelessness of some of his brethren in examining persons on this point as to whether they had received the Holy Ghost, before admitting them to baptism. But Paul baptized these people knowing that they had not received the Holy Ghost. Evidently he did not expect them to receive the Holy Ghost until after baptism. The gift of the Holy Ghost is nowhere in the New Testament offered to sinners outside of the Church, but invariably this offer is made to believers inside of it. It was on the Church in the upper room, not upon the multitude in the street, upon which the Spirit was poured out and on whose heads the tongues of flame sat on the day of Pentecost. The only instance in which the baptism of the Holy Ghost preceded the baptism of water was that of Cornelius and his household, and this being the opening of the Gospel dispensation to the Gentiles, was clearly an exception to what may be generally regarded as the Divine order.

The history of Pentecost is instructive. It was the first instance in which what our Lord calls "the promise of the Father" was fulfilled. Whatever may be said of Judas, perhaps no Christian will be disposed to call in question the genuine discipleship of the other eleven who were associated with him in the apostolate. There can be as little doubt in respect to the character of those devoted women who

were last at the cross and first at the sepulchre. Probably not one of the one hundred and twenty who composed the infant Church which our Lord Himself had gathered, would have any difficulty in passing the scrutiny of the strictest examining committee that ever guarded the way into the Church of God. Nay, even before they became the disciples of Christ in the New Testament sense, the probability is that the bulk of them were such as would be recognized in any community as good people. Deplorably low as the Israelitish nation had fallen into unspirituality and formalism, the light had not altogether gone out nor the glory utterly departed. The nation that still had its Simeons and its Annas, its Zacharias and Elizabeths, and its Josephs and Marys, was not without its saints, though they had indeed, unhappily, become a diminished few.

And it must be remembered that those whom our Lord gathered around Him during his own personal ministry were the spiritually elite of the nation. The promptness, too, with which some of them, as soon as they saw and heard Him, left all and followed Him, shows that even in the comparative darkness of Judaism they had believed in Him whom they had not seen, that they were patiently waiting for His coming, and that they had such a measure of spiritual enlightenment as enabled them to recognize Him as soon as He appeared, even though His appearance must have been strangely out of harmony with their preconceived notions of Him. They had, moreover, the courage of their convictions, such a measure of self-abnegation and devotion to what they believed to be right and true, as led them to voluntarily share the obloquy which was heaped upon Him, and the danger which threatened Him, and which increased at every step taken by Him during His public life.

What progress these people must have made in the religious life during the three or four years that they were brought into close, personal, daily contact with their Divine Master! What progress we know, as a matter of fact, they made during these years of unique privilege, during which they daily heard the words of Jesus, witnessed His example and shared His spirit, What, a discipline, what a training was that through which they had passed. If they had not been converted, in our sense of that term, if they had not been spiritually quickened and renewed at the time that they first became His followers, one of two things must have inevitably taken place, either they would have become the subjects of this divine change, or else scandalized and discouraged by the deep spirituality which masked His unique and marvellous character, the strange, unearthly sentiments which ever and anon fell from His lips, and the opposition and obloquy which He was constantly bringing upon Himself by putting Himself in direct conflict with the passions and prejudices of the people, they would have gone back and followed no more with Him.

We do see now and again, no doubt, enough of the old Jewish character and spirit in them to perceive that, with all the privileges which they had enjoyed, they had not got entirely free from the low and comparatively worldly notions of the Kingdom of God which were peculiar to their time; but, after all, the more closely we study the character of these people, taking into account the spirit, of the age in which they lived and the circumstances in which they were placed, the more will

we, probably, be impressed with their moral excellence and even their saintly character. On them their risen Lord had breathed, saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," and I cannot believe that this act was altogether symbolical. I think it beyond question that there was a real communication of spiritual influence and power which accompanied that act, although very likely it was prophetic, too, pointing forward to the larger gift which was to be bestowed upon them after His personal presence had been withdrawn from them.

These were the people to whom the Lord Jesus Christ said immediately before the final withdrawal of His visible presence from them, "Behold I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses for Me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." And it was upon these that, after ten days of patient waiting, the Holy Ghost actually did come down, in the manner, and attended by the signs and wonders which are described in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. They were persons who had so far come under the influence of the Holy Spirit that, though not with the clearness of vision, perhaps, which belongs to this spiritual dispensation, they had been led through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to reconciliation with God; by the same Divine energy they had been quickened into newness of life, made conscious of the love of God, and of the power of the world to come. And yet they were not fully prepared for their life-work without that for which they were instructed to tarry in the city of Jerusalem, and which was realized in that which took place when "the day of Pentecost was fully come."

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02 -- PART

Hitherto we have been endeavouring to prepare the way for the intelligent discussion of this question, by the elimination from it of some things which are sometimes associated with it in the minds of men, but which do not properly belong to it. In order to avoid confusion, it will be necessary to push this process somewhat further. It has been proved that it could not have been the grace of the Spirit in the work of regeneration to which the apostle referred. It is equally evident that it was not to the operation of this Divine Agent in the after-work of sanctification. There can be little doubt that the Ephesian disciples, to whom this question was addressed, were both regenerated and sanctified. That is to say, they were born of the Spirit. and that progressive work of grace, the foundation of which was laid in this change, and by which the image of God is perfected in the soul was being carried on by the same Divine power. And whatever may be said of these people, in view. of the imperfection of their instruction, there can be no doubt that all this was true of the disciples whom our Lord had gathered around Him during His personal ministry, and who were admitted to the closest fellowship with Him up

to the time of His ascension. They were set apart, devoted to the service of their Lord. They had, in a sense, that in these times, and in our circumstances, it is not easy for us to understand, taken up their cross, renounced themselves, and in the midst of persecution and peril, with the prospect of martyrdom before them, they were following their Divine Exemplar; and there can be no reasonable doubt that they were growing in grace daily and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ Yet it was to these that the Lord Himself spoke of the descent of the Holy Ghost, as something that was still in the future. It was to them that He said: "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence; "and whom He instructed to tarry at Jerusalem until this promise was fulfilled. The plain inference is that a man may be both regenerated and sanctified, using the latter of these terms in its broadest and most general signification, and yet not have received the Holy Ghost in the Pentecostal sense.

It is equally evident that what our Lord referred to in the passage just quoted, and what was referred to by the apostle in the question which stands at the head of this article, was not the power to work miracles. The observation is all the more important because of the prevalence of the idea that this was the very thing to which they did refer, and that this was that for which the apostles and the other disciples were instructed to wait, as the final preparation for the work of the world's conquest upon which they were about to enter. Nothing, perhaps, has done more to produce confusion in men's minds, in respect to the nature and end of the coming of the Holy Spirit, and to divert attention from its purely spiritual character and effects than this utterly unwarrantable assumption. And yet, though the fact has been strangely overlooked, the power to work miracles was enjoyed by the disciples before the descent of the Holy Ghost just as fully, probably, as it ever was after that event. So far as the twelve were concerned, it is not easy to conceive how they could have been more amply endowed in this respect than they were from the very time of their call to the apostleship. When the Lord sent them out on their first missionary journey, it is said: "He gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of diseases" (Matt. x. 1). And when we come to examine the terms of their commission, we learn that it embraced more than this. A part of it ran thus: "Heal the sick, cleanse the leper, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. x. 8).

Surely, so far as miracle-working power is concerned, this was a pretty liberal endowment. In this respect, even at this early stage in their religious experience and missionary life, these men were pretty thoroughly furnished for their work. Indeed, it is not quite easy to see how their equipment could have been more complete. And the other seventy disciples who were sent out, two and two, as heralds to proclaim the coming of the Lord in all the places He proposed to visit, seemed go have shared very fully these supernatural gifts. At first it would appear as if the miracle-working power with which they were invested was confined (Luke x. 9) to healing the sick, but as we read on the sacred narrative discloses the fact that they enjoyed more than this. We read (Luke x. 17-19) that, when they had accomplished their mission, or at least had carried out the programme which the

Master had laid down for their first missionary tour, "the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy name. And He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you." Here we have a band of men, not only furnished with all those supernatural gifts which could be utilized in carrying the war into the ranks of the enemy, but clad, at the same time by the same means, from head to heel in invulnerable mail. Is it conceivable that men possessing in such abundance these extraordinary gifts should be instructed to tarry at Jerusalem until they received further endowment of the same kind. Surely if this were the sort of power specially needed for the conquest of the world it was not necessary for them to wait until the Holy Ghost had come upon them.

It is remarkable that in none of those utterances of the Saviour respecting the coming of the Holy Spirit, which we find in the Gospels, is there the slightest reference to miracle-working power. Take the fullest exposition of the doctrine of the Spirit which is to be found anywhere in the New Testament (John xiv., xv., xvi.), there is not the slightest mention of miracles from the beginning to the end of it. It is true, that Luke reports certain sayings of the Saviour about power, but it is a mere begging of the question to say that in either of them he refers to the power to work miracles. If this were the only, or even the most important, form of power -- that which is most essential to the spread of the Gospel and to the triumph of truth and righteousness in the absence of anything to the contrary, we might be warranted in giving to this word this meaning in those two or three instances in which it occurs in connection with the promise of the Spirit; but surely there must be some other and higher sense in which these words are to be understood when applied to the most spiritual things belonging to the most spiritual dispensation of the most spiritual religion the world has ever seen. In the treatment of this subject it must not be overlooked that we are dealing with the things of the Spirit, and the very words in which they are expressed in Scripture are spirit and are life. If it be true, without clear and indubitable Scriptural warrant we are not at liberty to put upon them any other than the most spiritual interpretation. We are not to assume, for example, that any of the grosser and more material forms in which the Divine power manifests itself is intended to be expressed by the word power, in the passage which refer to this subject, unless there be some clear and unquestionable intimation in the text itself that it was intended to be so understood.

Both the passages in which the idea of power is associated with the descent of the Spirit were uttered by the Saviour at the same time and refer to the same thing. The sentences in which these two things are brought together were uttered immediately before the Ascension, and referred to the part, which the disciples would be called to play as witnesses for their Master. Our Lord had been speaking of his own suffering, His death and His resurrection on the third day, and of the fact that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem, "and," said He, "ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of

Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke xxiv. 48 49). In the other passage, the ideas are the same, though their order is reversed. "But ye shall receive power after, that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me." And it is remarkable that the word which we translate "witness" also means a martyr. And this is what Christians are called to, not only to be witnesses in the judicial, but also in the tragic sense to be ready to seal the testimony which they give, if need be, with their blood. It is not miracle-working power which will fit any one for this sort of witnessing for Christ.

It is evident, then, that the reception of the Holy Ghost is not to be confounded with the obtaining power to work miracles. Men have wrought miracles, even of the most extraordinary kind without it, and thousands, probably millions, have received and enjoyed this gift of the Spirit who never wrought a miracle in their lives. But in this inquiry we must stick close to the Scripture narrative and seek for the import of the promise in the nature of its fulfillment. And the only special gift, which appears to have been enjoyed after the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, that was not enjoyed before, was the gift of tongues, concerning which there is so much difference of opinion among Biblical critics and commentators, and which, after all the labour that has been bestowed upon it is still involved in a great deal of obscurity. Indeed, it may be doubted whether there be anything in the spiritual phenomena of the Apostolic Church, of which it is more difficult to get anything like a clear and consistent conception than this gift of tongues. Indeed, one naturally shrinks from taking any part in the discussion of a subject beset with so many difficulties; but as it lies directly in our path, it cannot be very well ignored. The narrow limits of what remains of this article will, however, admit of little more being done than to indicate some of the theories by which critics and commentators have attempted to account for the facts connected with it, and to explain it as far as they have conceived it to be explicable.

The proposition under discussion is, that the special gift of the Holy Ghost referred to by our Lord immediately before His death, and afterward immediately before His ascension, and which is referred to in the question which forms the heading of this article, did not consist in the power to work miracles. And it is remarkable that, explain it as we may, the apostle does not put the gift of tongues in the category of miracles. Besides, whatever may have been the precise nature of this gift, it was not bestowed upon all that received the Holy Ghost. It is not, therefore, to be regarded as being either identical with the baptism of the Holy Ghost, or even as one of its invariable attendants. Nor is this the only one of the spiritual gifts of the supernatural order, of which this may be affirmed. It is true of every one of them. There never was a time when they were not exceptional and extraordinary. And even among those who were supernaturally endowed, not only was there diversity of gifts, but the same gifts were possessed by different persons in widely different degrees. In nothing, perhaps, was the sovereignty of God more manifest than in the bestowment of these supernatural gifts. As He selected whom He would to fill the various orders and offices of His Church, assigning to each his

particular work, so in the distribution of these exceptional and extraordinary gifts He acted according to the counsel of His own will.

As to the diversity and inequality of the bestowment of these charismata the teaching of the Apostle Paul is explicit:

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit: to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will" (1 Cor. xii. 4-11). Toward the end of the same chapter (vs. 28-30) we read: "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?"

The intelligent reader, who has paid the least attention to the philosophy of language, need not to be told that each one of these interrogatories, in the rhetorical sense in which they are used by the apostle, has the force of the strongest possible denial. His meaning is that all are not apostles, all are not prophets, all are not teachers, all are not workers of miracles, all have not the gift of healing, all do not speak with tongues. That is what he desires to say, what in effect he does say; but by the employment of the figure of speech which rhetoricians call interrogation, at the same time that he appeals to the observation and experience of his readers, he adds a spirit and force to his style which it would not otherwise possess. Besides, the fact that these gifts are associated with the various orders and offices in the Church orders and offices which are admittedly exceptional and extraordinary is itself significant. It shows that he would have them regarded in the same light. Even the order of these offices in the Church should not be overlooked. It is not by accident, we may be well assured, that Paul says: "first," "secondarily," "thirdly." The things which are thus numerically distinguished, do not stand on the same plane, though they are all important and valuable to the Church; there is a gradation in their value and importance. The apostle is more valuable, more important to the Church than the prophet; and the prophet has an importance that does not belong to the teacher. And this suggests the idea that the apostle would have the same discriminative principle applied to the various charismata of which he speaks. They, too, have a graduated value and importance. Now the order in which he arranges these things is this: (1) miracles. or powers the ability to use the power of God, within a certain limited range, and on particular occasions, these being determined by the will of God; (2) the gift of healing -- subject to the same

limitation, and the same in kind as the other, but differing from it in that it is confined to a narrower sphere being applicable only to the healing of diseases; (3) then come what our translators have rendered "helps, governments," the gift of executive ability and wise counsel in the administration of discipline and the management of the business of the Church; and (4) the gift of tongues and the interpretation of tongues.

It is evident from this gradation of gifts, as well as from the disparaging comparison which he makes of the gift of tongues with prophecy that he did not consider it worthy to be regarded as the crowning glory, the typical gift, of the new dispensation. While fully recognizing its divine origin, and its value to its possessor, so far as the edification and enlargement, of the Church was concerned, he evidently looked upon it as the least important of all the gifts. And this fact is in itself important as indicating, if not what the nature of this gift was, at least what it was not. The theory which seems to have been held generally in ancient times, though not universally, was that the gift of tongues consisted in the ability of the person possessing it to speak one or more foreign languages that he had never learned. If this had been the nature of it, one cannot conceive it possible that Paul would have been disposed to rank it so low. He knew too well the value of languages in connection with the missionary work of the Church, and the labour and drudgery of acquiring them, to hold, in even comparatively low esteem, a gift which would confer so great advantages, both of a negative and positive character. It is not, however, possible to study with candour 1 Cor. xii. and xiv., without coming to the conclusion that what Paul writes respecting this gift, as it existed in the Corinthian Church. cannot on any rational principle of interpretation be reconciled with this theory.

(1) If the gift Of tongues consisted in the ability to speak one or more foreign languages, it would not have been true as affirmed (1 Cor. xiv. 2), that "he that speaketh in a tongue speaketh not unto men but unto God; for no man understandeth him; but in the spirit he speaketh mysteries." Surely this cannot be truthfully affirmed of speaking in any language. The very purpose of language is to be the medium of communication between man and man; and it cannot be affirmed of any language, broadly and without qualification, as the apostle does of this tongue-speaking, that "no man understandeth him," that speaks it.

(2) Then if this were the nature of this gift, there would be no ground for the contrast of it (v. 6) with revelation, knowledge, prophesying or teaching. All these may be done in any language, and with one language, providing it is fully developed and thoroughly organized, as well as another.

(3) Upon the theory under consideration, the difficulty arising from the absence of an interpretation of which the apostle speaks (v. 25) would have been impossible, for every one who spoke in a foreign language which he understood, would be able to translate it into his own vernacular.

(4) This theory can scarcely be regarded as consistent with what the apostle says of his own practice (v. 18), though he possessed the gift of tongues in a high degree, he tells us he did not exercise it in the Church -- the inference is that he only used it in private, and we can scarcely imagine such a thing as that he should have been in the habit of performing his private devotions in a foreign language.

(5) Finally, this theory is inconsistent with the apostle's treatment of the subject in 1 Cor. xii. and xiv. He does not say a single word about the propriety of using this gift when foreigners happened to be present in their assemblies, or about its value as a means of preaching the Gospel in foreign parts, enabling men to speak to the heathen in languages they had never learned. The silence of Paul, and indeed all the New Testament writers, on this aspect of the subject is entirely inexplicable on this theory.

For these and other reasons -- some of them too critical to be appropriately introduced in this article -- the most learned of the modern commentators have found themselves compelled to abandon what is certainly the most ancient, and is probably still the most generally accepted view of the gift of tongues. Neander and Meyer and Beet, though among the most reverent and conservative expositors of the Word of God, have been forced to the conclusion that the theory that the gift of tongues was a miraculous gift of languages, or that the speaking in a tongue was speaking a language at all, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, is entirely untenable. The difficulty, however, which all of these learned expositors have found to be most perplexing is how to reconcile what is clearly the teaching of St. Paul (1 Cor. xii. and xiv.), with the account given (Acts ii.) of the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost and the effects which followed. From the former of these sources Neander concludes as follows:

"In the gift of tongues the high and ecstatic consciousness in respect to God alone preponderated, while the consciousness of the world was wholly withdrawn. In this condition the medium of communication between the deeply moved inward man and the external world was wholly wanting. What he spoke in this condition, from the strong impulse of his emotions and inward views, was not a connected discourse, nor an address adapted to the wants and circumstances of others. He was wholly occupied with the relations of his own soul to God. The soul was absorbed in adoration and devotion. Hence to this condition are ascribed prayer, songs of praise to God, and the attestation of His mighty deeds. Such an one prayed in spirit; the higher life of the soul and spirit predominated in him. When, therefore, in the midst of his peculiar emotions and contemplations he formed for himself a peculiar language he was wanting in the power so to express himself as to be understood by the greatest number."

With this view Meyer is in substantial agreement. He analyses the spiritual phenomena of the Apostolic Church, and in so doing both indicates his views of the nature of this particular gift, and assigns to it what he judges to be its relation to the other charismata. The following is, in substance, his analysis: (1) First the gift of

teaching, the most important of all, to which belong the apostolic, the prophetic, and the teaching charismata. (2) The gift of miracles, to which belong powers in the larger sense, and the more limited and specific gift of healing. (3) The gift of practical administration, to which belong the "service of help" and the gift of government; and (4) the ecstatic charisma, to which belongs the gift of tongues.

Mr. Beet holds, in the main, the same view. He describes it as a special and extraordinary gift of the Spirit, but denies that it was the faculty of speaking one or more foreign languages, or that it was a miraculous utterance in moments of special inspiration of prayer or praise in a human language unknown to the speaker, and affirms that words spoken "with a tongue" were evidently intelligible to others only when interpreted. He holds, indeed, that this gift was profitable to the speaker himself, as indicated by Paul's gratitude to God that he enjoyed it in an eminent degree, and that the words spoken in this preternatural state of spiritual exaltation, though unintelligible without interpretation, must have had a meaning, else they would not have been susceptible of interpretation. This, in meagre outline, and roughly expressed, is the substance of what this exceptionally able commentator says on this gift, as it existed in the Church at Corinth. The only point, in fact, in which he differs from Neander and Meyer is in respect to the complete identity of this with that bestowed upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost. While admitting, with these authorities, that the gift of tongues, as it existed in the Apostolic Church, was not generally the miraculous power of speaking languages which the speaker had never learned, he thinks that the gift bestowed upon the Church at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost was an exception to the rule, and that the apostles were actually enabled to address every one in the multitude drawn together on that occasion in his own mother-tongue. This, he thinks to be the only way in which the narrative, Acts ii., can be explained. Neander and Meyer feel the difficulty just as keenly as he does i i but they cut the Gordian knot by assuming that St. Luke, following the prevailing tradition at the time that, he wrote, was unconsciously led to attribute more to this phenomenon and the effect which it produced than really belonged to it.

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03 -- PART 3

Owing to the inexorable limitation of the space at our disposal, the preceding article closed rather abruptly, and a few explanatory sentences will be necessary in order to intelligibly connect it with what is to follow. Our object has been, and still is, to get as definite a conception as possible of the nature of the gift of the Holy Ghost, in the Pentecostal sense, and the sense of the question which stands at the head of these articles; but in order to this it was necessary to exclude from this conception everything which did not properly belong to it. The last point which has been reached in this process is expressed in the proposition, that this gift does not consist of the power to work miracles. This existed in the Church in quite as eminent a degree before Pentecost as it did afterward. Besides, there was never a

time, either before or since the inauguration of the dispensation of the Spirit, when the miracle-working power was not exceptional and extraordinary, whereas the gift of the Holy Ghost is the common heritage of all the people of God.

The only thing that affords even a colorable support to the theory that this gift consisted in the power to work miracles, or even that that particular form of supernatural endowment was one of its invariable attendants, is the fact that in two or three instances that are described in the Acts of the Apostles, the glossolalia, or gift of tongues, is referred to as among its effects. But even this is expressly excluded from the category of miracles by apostolic authority. It would, indeed, have been the power to work a miracle, and that, too, of one of the most extraordinary character, if it had consisted of the ability to speak one or more foreign languages which the possessor of it had never learned; but beyond question this was not the nature of it as it existed in the Church at Corinth. It is, however, a question upon which there is difference of opinion among the learned, whether the gift of tongues in that Church was precisely identical with that which was bestowed upon the disciples at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. Mr. Beet, while admitting, as we have seen that the theory of this gift which makes it consist of the power to speak languages which the speaker had never learned, is entirely untenable, in view of what the Apostle says of it in 2 Cor. xii. and xiv., is, nevertheless, of the opinion, that the phenomenon of Pentecost was an exception to its general character, and that those upon whom the Spirit was poured out on that occasion were actually endowed with the power to speak a great number and variety of languages of which up to that time they had been ignorant. Neander and Meyer, however, take a different view; while admitting that the account given by St. Luke (Acts ii.) if infallibly correct and literally interpreted, would lead to this conclusion, evade the difficulty by assuming that St. Luke, following the tradition which was current in the Church at the time that he wrote, was unintentionally led to invest this gift with attributes which did not in reality belong to it.

It must be confessed that there are very serious difficulties in the way of the acceptance of either the one or the other of these attempts to reconcile St. Luke's account of Pentecost, as it is generally understood, with the apostle's account of the gift of tongues, contained in the chapters which have been so frequently referred to in the course of these articles. The hypothesis adopted by the two German divines shocks one by the doubt which it seems to cast upon the integrity of the narrative; and that adopted by Mr. Beet and others, is open to the objection that it represents a particular gift, though described in the same words, as meaning one thing in one place and an entirely different thing in another. The admission of such a principle would add immensely to the difficulty of the interpretation of Holy Scripture. In view of the objections which lie against both the one and the other of these theories, one is tempted to ask whether there may not be some other mode of reconciliation which will equally well account for all the facts, and that is more simple and satisfactory?

Assuming, then, the literal exactitude and entire trustworthiness of the narrative of St. Luke, and the complete identity of the gift of tongues bestowed upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost, with that afterwards enjoyed by the Church at Corinth, is there any sober and rational way of accounting for the astonishment experienced by the multitude which was present on that occasion, drawn from the ends of the earth. when each one heard the disciples speaking in the language in which he was born? The difficulty appears to have been felt at a very early period in the history of the Church, and a theory was adopted in order to get rid of it. As early as the days of Gregory Nazianzum, some held that the Pentecostal miracle was auricular rather than lingual. That it was rather a miracle of hearing than of speaking, or that if the tongue was the instrument of the Spirit in producing the miraculous effect, it was not produced by the sound proceeding from it, operating in the natural way upon the organ of hearing, but by the supernatural influence which attend these sounds. The theory was that the miracle consisted in this: though all spoke in one and the same language, each of the hearers believed that he heard them speak in his own. The speakers, by the power of inspiration, operated so mightily on the feelings of their susceptible hearers, that they involuntarily translated what went to their hearts into their mother tongue. "By the element of inspiration," as one says, "the inward communion of feeling was so strongly brought forth, that the lingual wall of separation was entirely taken away."

The question, however, is whether the difficulties really exist for the removal of which these theories have been invented? The narrative in Acts is highly condensed, and may not this fact have been the occasion of some of the confusion of ideas which exist in respect to its teaching? What is described in the 4th verse, and that which is described in the 6th verse. are commonly understood as sustaining the relation to each other of cause and effect. But it is entirely overlooked that near as these two verses are to each other, an entirely new subject has been introduced between them. Indeed, the Revisionists have perceived this so clearly that they have made the fifth verse the beginning of a new paragraph. In the first paragraph, including the first four verses, the descent of the Holy Ghost and the immediate effects of it are described, and the description is complete. Then comes the statement of a fact without which what follows could not have been so easily understood. "Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven." They were not mere transient guests drawn thither by the exigencies of travel and trade, but they dwelt there. They are supposed to have been attracted thither by the prevalent expectation of the Messiah. These pious people could not, have been ignorant of what had recently taken place among them. They must have known a good deal about Jesus, they had heard, less or more, of the story of His life, they were acquainted with the facts of His death, and had heard the rumour of His resurrection and ascension. Is it too much to believe that many of these were in heart His disciples? Even in our own day, when it costs less to make a public profession of faith than it did then, there are not a few who, in the judgment of charity, are real disciples, though they have not formally connected themselves with the Church. But at that very time we know that "even of the rulers many believed on Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess it." It is

scarcely conceivable that after all that had taken place in Jerusalem, to say nothing of the regions round about, that there were no other real disciples there but the hundred and twenty persons who apparently lived in community, and "with one accord continued steadfastly in prayer?" St. Paul, enumerating the proofs of the resurrection of our Lord, says expressly (1 Cor. xv. 6), "He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once" and Where was this great gathering of the disciples more likely to have taken place than in Jerusalem? And is there anything unreasonable or violently improbable in the assumption that in it were a considerable number of these devout strangers gathered from the ends of the earth?" In that case the infant Church, formed by the Redeemer and His disciples during His life-time, instead of being composed of a handful of Galileans, as the ignorant multitude in the streets of Jerusalem evidently supposed, was really made of the first-fruits of the great spiritual harvest which was afterward about to be gathered in all lands. And if this theory be correct, it is no wonder that these people were confounded in view of the state of facts which the events of the day of Pentecost disclosed.

These were the people who, when the rumour of what had taken place in the upper room was spreading in the city, were first to be attracted to the spot. And there is nothing at all improbable in the idea that long before Peter's sermon began, or even the general concourse commenced, many even among those of them who had not previously joined themselves to the disciples had submitted themselves to God, made a public profession of their faith, and entered into the joy of the great salvation. And the testimony of a score or two of souls to what the Lord had done for them would account, on perfectly natural grounds, for what is commonly supposed to have been the effect of the supernatural endowment by which the disciples were enabled to speak, in the instant, a great number and variety of languages which they had never learned. It is not at all inconceivable that, in this way, every one present, to whatever nationality he happened to belong, might, even in the early part of the day, have heard someone declaring the wonderful works of God in his own language.

Besides, it is evident that the original followers of the Messiah were not the illiterate and ignorant sort of people that many at that time supposed them to be, and that the linguistic knowledge which they possessed, independently of this particular gift, might account, in part at least, for the wonder expressed by the multitude. It could not, indeed, be said of any of them probably, that they were learned men, but it would be a mistake to suppose that they were not fairly educated. They were, we know, eloquent and powerful public speakers, and some of them became authors of books. and books, too, that were not written in their own vernacular, but in a foreign language -- books, it may be added, which have stood the test of ages, and are destined to endure to the end of time. The Aramaic was their native tongue, and the Hebrew was the sacred language of their nation, in which their sacred books were written and their worship was conducted; and yet the Gospel of Matthew is the only one of the books of the New Testament that was written in either of these tongues, all the rest being written in Greek. Besides, at that

time Palestine was a Roman province, it was garrisoned with Roman soldiers, the civil administration was carried on chiefly by Roman officers, and doubtless the Latin, the language of the Romans, was the official language. It is probable, therefore, that some, at least, of these men knew the Latin as well as the Greek. This must have been the case especially with Matthew, who was a revenue officer commissioned by the Roman Government. The disciples were not, therefore, the illiterate and ignorant men that they were supposed to be; but, though not in the technical sense scholars, persons of superior intelligence and fairly well educated, having a knowledge of three or four languages, two of these languages being the Greek and the Latin.

Then another thing which must have made a profound impression upon the spectators of what occurred on the day of Pentecost was the spirit of the speakers. They spoke of spiritual and eternal things with a courage, a depth of conviction, an intensity of feeling, and with an overwhelming energy, that we may believe was altogether unique, and which in the absence of the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit would have been impossible. Besides there was in connection with this state of spiritual exaltation -- as the result of it, in fact a degree of intellectual quickening, which must have appeared to those about them as if they had become now men, or had been suddenly invested with new powers. They spoke as the Spirit give them utterance. We must not anticipate what will be more appropriately treated when we come to the more direct treatment of the gift of the Holy Spirit; but this glimpse at the influences and agencies at work on that occasion, show that they were amply sufficient to account for all the effects which were produced, without investing the gift of tongues with attributes, and with an importance which, according to the clear teaching of the Holy Scriptures in other places, do not belong to it. And this view derives confirmation from the fact that St. Peter makes no reference whatever to this particular gift in the highly apologetic discourse which he delivered on the occasion. Nor is there the slightest intimation in the whole of the New Testament that any apologetic use was ever made of this gift in apostolic times.

These observations are respectfully submitted to the consideration and candid examination of biblical students, who, like the writer, have no other object in view but the ascertainment of truth. It is in no dogmatic or controversial spirit that this humble attempt to remove what seems to be a real difficulty is made. And its acceptance or rejection will not have the slightest effect on the validity of the main argument of this and the preceding article, the object of which is to prove that the special gift of the Holy Ghost, which is the subject of this discussion, is not only not identical with the power to work miracles, but that it has no necessary connection with that form of supernatural endowment. And now, assuming that this thesis has been established to the satisfaction of the candid reader, the way is at length prepared for the more direct and positive treatment of the subject under consideration.

Having separated from it those things which have frequently been confounded with it, or treated as if they were its invariable attendants, but which in reality are not it, nor indeed have anything necessarily to do with it, the object of what follows will be to get from the Scriptures which refer to this subject as clear a conception as we can of this thing which our Lord describes as "the promise of the Father," and as the baptism of the Holy Ghost, for which He instructed His disciples to wait at Jerusalem as the final preparation for the stupendous work of the world's conquest upon which they were about to enter, which every one of the Christian communities in apostolic times appear to have received, without which the Apostle Paul evidently did not think the Christian experience of the disciples at Ephesus or their equipment for their work complete, and which, is doubtless, just as essential to the success of the Church in her work of world conquest in our day as it has been at any period in the past. Surely no words are necessary to impress the Christian reader with the superlative importance of such an inquiry.

The nature of this spiritual gift of the Holy Ghost may be learned in part from the terms in which it was promised. And the first thing about it which is likely to attract the attention of the careful student of the New Testament, in examining those passages in which this promise is contained, is that it was to be a real personal presence. It was not to consist merely in the shedding forth of a peculiar influence, the exertion of a remarkable energy. The coming of the Holy Spirit was foretold in terms which are only applicable to a person. The personal pronouns applied to Him are in themselves sufficient to establish this point. If what the disciples were to look for were a breath or a wind, an influence or a force, it is inconceivable that our Lord should have said, "HE shall teach you;" "HE shall testify of Me;" "HE will reprove the world;" "HE shall guide you into all truth;" "HE shall not speak of Himself;" "What HE heareth that shall He speak;" "HE shall glorify Me, for HE shall receive of Mine and show it unto you;" and yet all these things are affirmed of the Holy Spirit in the remarkable valedictory address, delivered by our Lord immediately before His crucifixion (John xiv., xv., xvi.) Surely if there be any force in words, or any stress to be laid upon the grammatical structure of the utterances of the Lord Jesus Christ in respect to this matter, it was for the revelation of a real personal presence of the Holy Spirit that His infant Church was instructed to wait.

It is true, indeed, that in highly poetical and impassioned discourse an energy or force might be invested with the attributes of personality by a bold and striking figure of speech. It is possible that something of this kind might be found even in the Bible, among the passionate utterances of the Old Testament prophets. But there is nothing in the nature or style of the discourse from which these extracts have been taken, or in the sorrowful circumstances in which it was delivered, to lead us to look for this sort of personification. There is, in fact, nothing at all to indicate that any figure of speech is intended. Besides, it is not by the application of pronouns to Him, alone, that the personality of Him who was to come was indicated, but by the acts which He was to perform, and the functions which He was to exercise. The exercise of thought and deliberation, and of volition and intelligent predetermined action are attributable only to a person. They are, in fact, the

infallible signs of personality. Wherever they are found, whether in the heavens above or in the earth beneath, we are compelled to recognize the presence of a person. And all these things are attributed, by the Great Teacher Himself, to Him whose coming He foretold, and for whose advent He was at the time preparing the minds of His disciples when He delivered the discourse from which the citations in the preceding paragraph are made.

There are other passages of Scripture and other arguments by which the personality as well as Deity of the Holy Spirit might be proved; but the object of this discussion is not primarily to establish this, or, indeed, any other doctrine, but simply to ascertain as clearly as we can the light in which the great event which was to almost immediately follow His ascension, which was to give character to the new dispensation, and for which His disciples were to look and wait, was set before their minds by the Master Himself. In order to this it is proper that we should confine our investigations to those of His utterances which most unquestionably refer to this subject. And these are amply sufficient for our purpose. The light which they shed upon the point under consideration is so clear and steady that they really leave nothing to be desired. Nothing seems clearer than that what the Church was encouraged to look for, and for which the disciples were instructed to believingly, prayerfully, and patiently wait, was the personal coming of the Holy Spirit. Perhaps it should be said, for the establishment of the personal reign of the Holy Spirit in the Church, and in the individual souls of men.

The valedictory discourse delivered by our Lord on the night on which the sacrament of the Supper was instituted, the night on which He was betrayed, when the horror of thick darkness was gathering around Him, when probably His soul had already begun to be exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, and the cross was just before Him, leaves no ground of doubt in this respect. In what is said therein of the Holy Spirit, all that is included in the highest conception of personality is implied. Without thought and deliberation, volition and intelligent pre-concerted and predetermined action, the things which are affirmed of Him are impossible. To "speak," to "teach," to "testify," to "reprove," to act the part of an intellectual and spiritual Guide, not to say to guide the souls of men into all truth, to receive communications of the most profound and spiritual character from one, and impart it to another, are acts in which all that pertains to personality is implied. And as these things are all, as we have seen, distinctly affirmed of the promised Spirit in the divine discourse which has just been referred to, the element of personality in the divine conception of His coming may be regarded as beyond question. He that was to come as the successor and representative of Christ, to carry on His work and to abide with His Church, was to be One capable of communing with His people, speaking to them, teaching them, testifying to them of Christ, and taking of those things which belong to Him, and which would otherwise have been invisible to them, and unknown by them, and showing them to them.

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