

Two Promises of the Father

New Life in the Spirit's Power

There are two sides to salvation: Jesus' death for you and the Spirit's life in you. Just as Jesus died for you the death you deserved, so the Holy Spirit has come to live in and through you the life you could not attain. As you look to Jesus in love and trust, the Holy Spirit (without any effort on your part) raises you into the new way of life. [Walking in the Spirit](#) is a great beginning; supernatural empowerment lies just ahead.

And Peter said to them, "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. Acts 2:38 ESV

Two Tremendous "Promises of the Father"

During the Old Testament period the Holy Spirit was definitely present and powerful, but He was never permanently present within the Israelite believers, nor was His power equally available to them all.

A few individuals, for instance, were chosen and anointed by the Spirit of God for specific reasons. Prophets, priest, kings, leaders like the "judge" Samson, craftsmen, and others experienced the Holy Spirit coming "upon" them at certain times or were "anointed" for certain tasks.

God promised that this would change dramatically in the future. The day would surely come when the Lord God would make a way for His Spirit to be placed both "within" and also be poured out "upon" his believing people.



1) Inward Life

The promise of an indwelling presence was given through Ezekiel. The Lord declared that one day He would give us a "new heart" and put a "new spirit" within us. In hindsight we can see better what this meant than would have been possible for Ezekiel's contemporaries. Through faith-conversion we now understand that God gives us a new heart—one that knows Him and loves Him—and places His Spirit within us when we are born again.

This is called regeneration and it is accomplished as the Holy Spirit is joined to our spirit, raising us from spiritual death to new life in Christ. So much of this hidden work is shrouded in mysteries that we may never fully understand or agree upon. Nevertheless, it is clear even in this prophetic passage from Ezekiel that God intends to cleanse us from sin and restore us to faithful living by empowering us from within.



"I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God." Ezekiel 36:25-28 ESV

2) Supernatural Power.

The promise of an empowering presence was given through Joel. The Lord declared that one day He would "pour out" the Holy Spirit upon us. In the words of Joel this outpouring would be upon "all flesh"—not just a select few. Everyone in the faith community from youth to elderly, both men and women, would be suitable candidates for receiving this divine empowerment.

Dreams, visions and prophecy are specifically identified as among the supernatural gifts that would be given, but more is implied. The prophets of ancient Israel were renowned, not just for their visionary encounters with God and their words from the Lord, but also for healing and miracles of all kinds. These too will be "poured out" when the Holy Spirit comes upon God's people to empower them for supernatural works of ministry.

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit." Joel 2:28-29 ESV

When These Gifts Were Given

In the Upper Room on the evening of the Resurrection as Jesus breathed upon His disciples, they "received" the Holy Spirit. Clearly, at this moment in time they were the first fully "born again" believers in the resurrected Lord. This fulfilled the Father's promise given through Ezekiel.

And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven; if you withhold forgiveness from anyone, it is withheld." John 20:22-23 ESV

In the Upper Room on the morning of Pentecost (50 days later) many of these same disciples received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them. This fulfilled the Father's promise of empowerment given through Joel, which is also the "promise of the Father" Jesus referred to when He told them to pray and wait for "power from on high."

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy



Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Acts 2:1-4 ESV

Two Ways to Receive the Gift of the Spirit

What this tells us is that there are two quite different ways in which the Holy Spirit can be given to those who believe. These gifts equip us in different ways for different purposes.

1) The Indwelling Presence

Every Christian receives the gift of the [Indwelling Presence](#) of the Holy Spirit within them through faith-conversion when they repent and turn to Jesus as their Savior. This is the source of our new life in Christ. We are forgiven for our past and we have Jesus living in us through the Holy Spirit. We all receive an equipping for dwelling in Jesus by faith and growing spiritual fruit as we learn to trust and obey Him.

2) The Baptism of Power

Any Christian who desires it can also receive the gift of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them. This [Baptism of Power](#) is the source of our empowerment for the supernatural workings of the Holy Spirit. This readies us for Jesus to do His deeds of power through us by His Holy Spirit. Being "baptized with power" from on high is available to everyone who believes in the Risen Lord and is willing to seek this further blessing of empowerment.

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For over a decade Steve Evans and [Healing Streams](#) have been helping people recover inner peace and freedom through the free eCourse for healing, [Matters of the Heart](#). Through Forerunners4Him he has been showing how we can be saved for heaven and teaching the way to live a Spirit-filled life on earth. Go now to receive a completely free primer, [Getting to Heaven](#) and/or an introduction to [Living in the Spirit](#) at our website.



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