

## The Gifts of the Spirit in the First Century:

### Reasons for the Spirit Gifts

There were many special reasons for Christ to provide his disciples with various Spirit gifts in the first century. These included:

**For a Sign** to support the gospel  
(Acts 16:17-18 , Mark 16:15-20)

**As a Teacher**  
(John 16:13, John 14:26)

**A foretaste or deposit** of the power of the Kingdom age  
( Eph 1:13-14, 2 Cor 1:22, 2 Cor 5:5, Heb 6:4-8)

**To prepare God's people to**

During the first century, before the gospel message was completed and available in written form, there was

a unique need for the Holy Spirit power to be manifested in support of the preaching effort.

Miracles and signs were performed to provide credibility to the message of the Apostles.

The Holy Spirit helped them to understand the new teachings that were associated with the grace and truth in Jesus. It enabled them to remember the words that Jesus had spoken, so that they could accurately record them.

The power of the Spirit provided real life examples of the blessings of healing that will be available in the Kingdom.

It provided them with support for edifying the believers, until the "word of his grace" was available to fulfill that need.

These special needs were fulfilled in that age. Today, the written Word of God replaces those needs.

## The Holy Spirit would be the Power of the Sabbath Day:

Many of the miracles that were performed by Jesus took place on the seventh day of the week (the Jewish Sabbath). Jesus used the Holy Spirit specifically on that day, to demonstrate the power that would be available during a future Sabbath. The seventh day was typical of that future rest.

In Hebrews 4 we are reminded how that **God rested** on the seventh day of creation. In the same way we are promised that there will be a seventh day **rest** for the people of God.

One day with the Lord is as a thousand years (2 Pet 3:8). The Kingdom of God on this earth will be during the seventh thousand year period from the creation. During that wonderful **day of rest**, the Holy Spirit power will again be at the disposal of God's faithful followers, who will help to heal all diseases.

LOCAL CONTACT:

Send all Correspondence to:  
"Things Concerning"  
27 Delphian Rd  
Springfield, VT 05156

# Things Concerning

## The Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ

Volume 1 No 4

D12-98



### The Holy Spirit, Like a Dove

One of the remarkable incidents in the life of our Master was when he was baptized by John in the River Jordan and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in the form of a dove. (Matt 3:16)

#### The Holy Spirit

The dove provided an outward sign of the fact that Jesus had been given the power of the Holy Spirit without measure.

The presence of this unlimited power was so much that Jesus was driven into the wilderness. He spent 40 days resisting his temptation to abuse the power he had been given. (Matt 4)

Jesus used this "gift" of the Holy Spirit to perform many miracles and signs during his ministry. He always glorified his Father with

the power. (John 6:38, 8:29)

#### Spirit Gifts in Bible Times

Jesus was the son of God with a special mission. He was the "lamb of God" to take away sin.

The Holy Spirit was given to him to help support the gospel of salvation that he taught.

In addition to Jesus, gifts of the Spirit were given to many of the disciples during the first century era. Their ministry was also supported with miracles and signs.

#### Gifts of the Spirit Today?

It is thought by many that these special gifts of the Holy Spirit were intended to be made available to all believers, in every generation, including today.

However, this was not the intention. There were very special needs in the first century that do not exist in our day.

Today, we have the written word (in all languages). The Bible is at our disposal, providing guidance and influence in our lives. It has the power to

change us, to turn us from sin to righteousness. (Heb 4:12)

#### The Power of God

Yes, the power of God is still at work on the earth today.

## Hope and Comfort from the Scriptures

### The Comforter

Jesus promised his disciples that they would receive a comforter to help them with the teaching of the gospel after he ascended to the right hand of his Father in heaven.

The comforter, was the Holy Spirit. Jesus had already demonstrated during his own ministry, how comforting the power of God could be.

Think how comforting it must have been to those who were healed. He comforted the blind and the lame, he even raised some from the dead. This would have been a great source of consolation for them and their families.

### Why did he Heal?

Jesus performed many miracles during his ministry to demonstrate the power that will be available in the Kingdom age. In that day, the power of the Holy Spirit will help the blind to see and the deaf to hear. The dumb shall speak and the lame man shall leap and run like the deer. (Isa 35:5-6)

The following words from Rev 21 help to illustrate the comfort that will be present when Jesus fills this earth with the glory of God:

“And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for



the old order things has passed away.” (NIV)

### Righteousness and Peace

The comfort of the Kingdom age will not be restricted to the miracles that are performed through the power of the Holy Spirit.

In addition to those blessings, There will also be an end to political corruption in high places. Violence and the rampant immorality will finally be controlled by a righteous government.

The confusion fostered by the many sects and religions will be ended. Many people will learn that they have been taught falsehoods about the Word of God, and they will seek after the Lord in truth.

Mad men, hungry for power and control will no longer rule, and all nations will finally live in a time of peace and righteousness.

How comforting it will be for those who see that day through the grace of God.

“He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. Every man will sit under his own vine

“ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off-- for all whom the Lord our God will



### The Promise

The promise recorded in the quotation above is one that is very often used to show that all of those who are called by God will receive the Holy Spirit powers.

The confusion stems from the preceding verse ( Acts 2:38). This verse reads: “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.”

### An Obvious Interpretation?

At first glance it seems so obvious. If you are baptized, you will also receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The question is: Is the gift the Holy Spirit? Or is it a gift promised by the Holy Spirit? The context of the chapter supports the latter of the two choices.

### The Gift- Salvation

The promise is hinted at in verse 21 “And everyone who

*calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” (NIV)*

If you and your children call on the name of the Lord, with an understanding heart, you will be eligible to receive the promise of life.

### Moved by the Holy Spirit

The prophets of old spoke and recorded their words under the influence of the Holy Spirit. It was the power of God that actually made the promises that they were allowed to utter.

Some of these promises that were given under the influence of the Holy Spirit appear in this chapter (verses 31-32):

*“Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying, ‘He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption.’ This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses”.* (NRSV)

### The Gift-Resurrection to Life

Jesus was the first one to receive the gift promised by the Holy Spirit(verse 33): *“Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you both see and hear”.*

We are also promised this gift of exaltation and life. We are not promised the power of