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Does the Holy Spirit Speak?

Hebrews 3:7-8: (NIV) *"⁷So, as the Holy Spirit says: 'Today, if you hear his voice, ⁸do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the desert,'"*

One of the things that separate true Christianity from other religions is the way in which we profess that God works in our lives. According to the Bible, the true Christian is given a special brand of help for their life. This help is called the Holy Spirit and it is the awesome power and influence of God working in our lives to help us to not only cope with a world that we are in but not of, but it is there to help us become Christ-like from the inside out. So, how does the Holy Spirit work? Does it really guide us? Stay with us as we look into this mighty power of God to try and grasp just how significant its influence is in our lives.

Questions for Consideration:

1. How did the Holy Spirit enter the Christian world?
2. Does the Holy Spirit actually have a voice?

1. How did the Holy Spirit enter the Christian world?

The context of our discussion actually begins in [Luke 3:7-17](#). We will begin by inserting the [Matthew 3:7](#) rendering of this account to clarify some detail.

[Matthew 3:7](#): *"But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them..."*

[Luke 3:7-17:](#) (KJV) *"⁷...O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. ⁹And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire..."*

Jesus is not yet on the scene. This is John the Baptist speaking to a great crowd. He is talking about the coming of Jesus and the potential difficulties the Pharisees and Sadducees are about to face.

"¹⁰...And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? ¹¹He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. ¹²Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? ¹³And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you..."

As he is preaching, each of these different groups are feeling the message and want to know what they can do to get back to righteousness in their lives. "What should we do?"

"¹⁴...And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages. ¹⁵And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not; ¹⁶John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: ¹⁷Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable."

Notice the Pharisees and the Sadducees never asked him, "What should we do," like the other groups of people. John's audience is a wide cross-section of the Jewish population. His work is preparatory - the work of opening the door of repentance for sin, so the remission of sin through Jesus can have a people in which to flourish. John prophesied to this mixed crowd the fact that all will not accept the coming Lord - some will need to be cut down and some will be destroyed. It is in this context that the baptism of the Spirit is introduced. John was baptizing with water for repentance, but tells the people that Jesus will baptize them with the Holy Spirit.

This is the first real introduction of the Holy Spirit as a mechanism of baptism. This is the beginning of something very new, even before Jesus is active.

Next, we jump to the risen Lord appearing to his disciples: [Luke 24:45-49:](#) (KJV) This is before Jesus' ascension. He tells his disciples that something different will begin at Jerusalem.

The risen Lord's eleventh and final appearance: [Acts 1:3-9](#)

Observations so far know about this coming baptism of the Spirit:

- It was typified in the rituals of the Law, shown by its arrival on Pentecost;
- It was clearly prophesied by John the Baptist before the BEGINNING of Jesus' ministry;
- It was to be a critical event - the risen Lord labeled it as a "new beginning;"
- It was to be a one-time event - the risen Lord instructed their whereabouts emphatically.

We now examine the actual baptism and arrival of the Spirit:

[Acts 2:1-4:](#) Something miraculous and dramatic took place here.

Verse 1: Prophetic timing - The day of Pentecost had arrived.

There is a typical picture that the Day of Pentecost (50 days after) was very significant. In the Jewish cycle of living, the seventh day of rest was the Sabbath. After seven Sabbaths was a 50th day - a day of Pentecost - in which this



particular celebration was to take place. The Jewish Law reflected some of the important things that were happening here.

Verse 1: In addition to prophetic timing, this verse also shows obedience - the Apostles were where they were supposed to be: Acts 1:4: "While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father."

Verse 2: "And suddenly there came a **sound** from heaven as of a **rushing mighty wind**, and it filled all the house where they were sitting."

Sound: Strong's #2279 echos (ay'-khos); a loud or confused noise ("echo"), i.e. roar;

Perhaps this was a sound like a tornado? Let's look at some other scriptures that use this exact Greek word for "sound:"

Luke 4:37: "And the **fame** <2279> of him went out into every place of the country round about."

Think of the roar of the crowd, the energy and activity involved with fame.

Hebrews 12:19: "And the **sound** <2279> of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:"

So the sound in Acts 2:2 was the audible announcement of the monumental change to come.

Rushing: Strong's #5342 phero (fer'-o); to "bear" or carry
Lexicon: to be conveyed or borne, with the suggestion of force or speed

So, this "rushing" means that something is being born or carried, not just something going by fast.

John 15:2: "Every branch in me that **beareth** <5342> not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that **beareth** <5342> fruit, he purgeth it, that it **may bring forth** <5342> more fruit."

The Greek word for "rushing" is the same word for "carrying" or "bearing." This helps us to understand that the rushing sound in Acts 2:2 was carrying something very special.

Hebrews 13:12-13: (KJV) ¹²Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. ¹³Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, **bearing** <972> his reproach."

Mighty: Strong's #972 biaios (bee'-ah-yos); violent: Lexicon - forcible

Acts 2:2 is the only text in the Bible where this particular word #972 is used.

Wind: Strong's #4157 pne (pno-ay'); respiration, a breeze:
KJV-- breath, wind.

Acts 17:23-25: (ASV) ²³For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you. ²⁴The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; ²⁵neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and **breath** <4157>, and all things;"

The Apostle is preaching to those in Athens on Mars Hill. He talks about God giving breath to all things, such as when God the breath of life given to Adam when he became a living soul.

Think about this: the "**sound** from heaven as of a **rushing mighty wind**" was the audible announcement that bore to those present the mighty respiration of the Holy Spirit! Just as God had breathed into Adam the breath of life, the Almighty now impart the mighty breath of New Creature life into what would become the true Church! This was the beginning of something dramatic, something that would change them and eventually the world forever.

Acts 2:1 finishes with "and it filled all the house where they were sitting." The word "baptize" means to immerse, not just sprinkle. This scripture indicates their complete immersion, their "baptism by the Spirit." There is a difference between living life following after Jesus and trying to keep up and being baptized with God's power and influence that works within you.

This day, the day of Pentecost, was the birth of the Bride of Christ. This baptism of the Spirit was the proclamation and proof of the separation of this "little flock" from the world. 1 Peter 2:9-10: How were they "not a people but are now the people?" The Holy Spirit came and gave them a different perspective on life, because this is the power and influence of God working from the inside out, rather than from the outside in. It is absolutely different and is important groundwork for understanding how the Holy Spirit's power and influence works in our lives. This "chosen generation" was not made up of only Jews.

Continuing with the next verse: Acts 2:3: (KJV) Birth is a dramatic event, filled with awe towards the miracle of life. So it was at the birth of this, the true church, the consecrated (set apart for holy service), the bride of Christ.



Pentecost by Soichi Watanabe (Japan)

Acts 2:4: (KJV) If the gospel was to be preached throughout the world, there had to be a way to communicate. They could transcend natural barriers. This was such a significant sign of what was happening here.

One last marked change occurring at this baptism

Luke 22:31-32: (KJV) Jesus already had Simon Peter following him for a long time. But Jesus is saying, "When you are converted..." Jesus knew that Peter wasn't yet strong enough until this event of Pentecost. Peter becomes the spokesman at this event, "strengthening thy brethren," just as previously instructed.

Acts 2:12-16: (KJV) There was some measure of chaos and the apostles were accused of drunkenness. Peter, imbued with the Holy Spirit, is transformed from follower to leader, from questioner to teacher, from human mindedness to spirit mindedness. The baptism of the Spirit was a one-time event, signifying the birth of the body of Christ. It would never again be repeated, for the Spirit would abide with, comfort, and teach those chosen followers throughout the entire Gospel age.

2. Does the Holy Spirit actually have a voice?

Let's backtrack to Jesus prophesying about the arrival of the Spirit:

John 16:8-11: (NKJV) *"And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: ⁹of sin, because they do not believe in Me; ¹⁰of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; ¹¹of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged."*

Jesus is talking about this helper coming, and it sounds like a person will convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment.

Let's go back to our context of when the spirit came:

Pentecost! Reading only selected verses of

Acts 2:14-43: (NKJV)

Verse 14: *"But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words."*

These next verses show the Spirit (through Peter speaking) convicting the world of sin because they do not believe;

Verses 22-24: The Apostle Peter is convicting the world of sin because they did not believe. Jesus predicted this would happen by the Spirit.

These next verses show the Spirit (through Peter speaking) convicting the world of righteousness by the raising of Jesus to power with the Father:

Verses 32-33: The world was shown righteousness because Jesus was raised.

These next verses show the Spirit (through Peter speaking) convicting this world of judgment because the ruler of this world is judged:

Verses 34-36: The Apostle Peter is speaking the words that convict the world of judgment because the ruler of this world (Satan) is judged.

Who is speaking the words? Peter.

Who prophesied the words would be spoken? Jesus.

How did Jesus say they would be spoken? Through the Holy Spirit.

This tells us how the Spirit works. How does the Spirit say all of these things? Through the words and explanations of the Apostle Peter regarding events and prophecies! This gives us a huge clue as to how the Spirit - the power and influence of God - was to work in the Christian age - it would work through the hearts, minds, words and actions of the begotten...the spirit does not have a voice of its own - it is the power and influence of God expressed through prophecy or a begotten one!

Spirit: Strong's #4151 *pneuma* (pnyoo'-mah); a current of air, i.e. breath (blast) or a breeze

The word "spirit" gives you a sense of something that has power but can't be seen. When you think of wind as an example, wind is very powerful but it can't be seen.

A few of the varied uses of this word:

Mark 2:8: *"And immediately when Jesus perceived in his **spirit** <4151> that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?"*

Romans 1:9: *"For God is my witness, whom I serve with my **spirit** <4151> in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;"*



British library Pentecost Description: (Whole folio) The descent of the Holy Spirit, in the form of a large flattened dove flying down directly over the head of the Virgin and the twelve apostles. In the foreground, the Virgin and St. John are seated on a stone bench Title of Work: Psalter of Robert de Lisle Author: - Illustrator: Majesty Master Production: England [London?]; 1330-1340 www.art-bible.net



2 Timothy 1:7: "For God hath not given us the **spirit <4151>** of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

What is the "spirit of fear?" Is it an individual? Or is it a power that overwhelmingly pushes you in a different direction.

Romans 8:15: "For ye have not received the **spirit <4151>** of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the **Spirit <4151>** of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."

What is the "spirit of bondage?" It is a power that binds you and is in direct comparison with the "spirit of adoption" that frees you.

We learn by choosing which spirits (influences) we listen to:

1 John 4:1-3: (ASV) How do we listen to these spirits/influences? Sometimes things "speak to us" without words. Here's a great example - dessert! Have you ever heard cookies calling you?

Can a piece of chocolate cheesecake tempt you using literal words? These foods have no voice or will of their own - it is our will (or lack thereof) that gives them a voice!



This helps us to understand that the Holy Spirit does not need to have a physical voice for it to provide a spiritual conscience. Is the human spirit a being within a being? Are we willing to say that the spirit of the world is a being within a being? No, yet we can choose to learn from them.

1 Corinthians 2:9-16: (NRSV) What is the spirit of the world? It is the sense of carnality that directs us in our daily human, physical lives. It is not a separate entity, but it is the power and influence of worldliness. This is being directly compared with the spirit that is from God.

What does it mean, "*But we have the mind of Christ.*" Does it mean that we have Christ's literal brain transplanted into our bodies? Not at all. We have the mind of Christ because the power and influence of God works within us and gives us a sense of understanding what the mind of Christ was all about - the sacrifice, the devotion, the spirituality, and doing the will of God rather than our own will.

God's spirit given to the body of true Christianity is great ability (through no ability of our own) to help direct us. We don't want to crowd out that spiritual conscience and ignore it.

Here are some expressions we use that give things a voice: "Experience is the best teacher!" "Boy, did I learn from that mistake!" "Losing taught me how to win!"

Now let's put the idea of the Spirit speaking through individuals to the test:

Acts 28:24-27: (KJV) Paul is quoting Isaiah, so let's go back to the actual quote from the Old Testament. Isaiah heard the voice of the Lord speaking: Isaiah 6:8-11: (KJV)

Hebrews 3:7-8: (NIV) Our theme text is quoted from the following verses in the Old Testament and refers to the voice of God: Psalms 95:6-11 (NIV)

Hebrews 10:15-18: (NIV) Here is another New Testament verse talks about the Holy Spirit speaking, but the original quote shows it was the voice of God Himself. That helps us to understand how the Holy Spirit works. It finds a voice through the sanctified conscience of the true followers of Christ. Jeremiah 31:31-33: (NIV)

However you define the Holy Spirit, it is something so great, deep, and comprehensive; that influence is working in the life of a true Christian only by God's grace.

The Spirit of God is something that is a life changing thing. By its coming at Pentecost, it forever changed the course of humanity and it could only do that because of the life, death, resurrection and sacrifice of Jesus. This would give the true followers to overcome the world that would otherwise be impossible. The power of God's own character is in us and we become "new creatures." By that power we are able to be Christ-like.

*So does the Holy Spirit speak?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*