

The GIFT of God

Sunday, May 5, 2019
10:30 AM

I want to begin a 5 Week series leading up to Pentecost Sunday that follows the life of Samson but focuses on the Gift of The Holy Spirit. Each week we will look at a different response to The GIFT of God as evidenced in the story of Samson.

Several months ago God began speaking to my heart about Samson's life being an illustration, a shadow if you will, of the gift of the Holy Spirit. We need to remember that the Holy Spirit was active in the Old Testament. Even though the Holy Spirit had not yet been poured out, he did move upon people's lives. The difference being that he would "come upon them" for specific purposes rather than being resident within them. Just as there are types and shadows of Jesus Christ and His work in the Old Testament, there are Old Testament types and shadows of The Holy Spirit and His work as well. In this New Covenant we have the privilege of receiving the fullness of this Gift of God

Consider these New Testament promises...

Luke 11:11-13 New International Version (NIV)

11 "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? **12** Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? **13** If you then, though you are evil, know how to give **good gifts** to your children, **how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!**"

Acts 1:1-5 New International Version (NIV)

1 In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach **2** until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. **3** After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. **4** On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but **wait for the gift my Father promised**, which you have heard me speak about. **5** For John baptized with[a] water, but in a few days you will be baptized with[b] the Holy Spirit."

Now let's go to judges chapter 13 and look at this gift of God given to the children of Israel through His work in Samson's life.

Judges 13 New International Version (NIV)

13 Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord, so the Lord delivered them into the hands of the Philistines for forty years.

2 A certain man of Zorah, named Manoah, from the clan of the Danites, had a wife who was childless, unable to give birth. **3** The angel of the Lord appeared to her and said, “You are barren and childless, but you are going to become pregnant and give birth to a son. **4** Now see to it that you drink no wine or other fermented drink and that you do not eat anything unclean. **5** You will become pregnant and have a son whose head is never to be touched by a razor because the boy is to be a Nazirite, dedicated to God from the womb. He will take the lead in delivering Israel from the hands of the Philistines.”

6 Then the woman went to her husband and told him, “A man of God came to me. He looked like an angel of God, very awesome. I didn’t ask him where he came from, and he didn’t tell me his name. **7** But he said to me, ‘You will become pregnant and have a son. Now then, drink no wine or other fermented drink and do not eat anything unclean, because the boy will be a Nazirite of God from the womb until the day of his death.’”

8 Then Manoah prayed to the Lord: “Pardon your servant, Lord. I beg you to let the man of God you sent to us come again to teach us how to bring up the boy who is to be born.”

9 God heard Manoah, and the angel of God came again to the woman while she was out in the field; but her husband Manoah was not with her. **10** The woman hurried to tell her husband, “He’s here! The man who appeared to me the other day!”

11 Manoah got up and followed his wife. When he came to the man, he said, “Are you the man who talked to my wife?”

“I am,” he said.

12 So Manoah asked him, “When your words are fulfilled, what is to be the rule that governs the boy’s life and work?”

13 The angel of the Lord answered, “Your wife must do all that I have told her. **14** She must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, nor drink any wine or other fermented drink nor eat anything unclean. She must do everything I have commanded her.”

15 Manoah said to the angel of the Lord, “We would like you to stay until we prepare a young goat for you.”

16 The angel of the Lord replied, “Even though you detain me, I will not eat any of your food. But if you prepare a burnt offering, offer it to the Lord.” (Manoah did not realize that it was the angel of the Lord.)

17 Then Manoah inquired of the angel of the Lord, “What is your name, so that we may honor you when your word comes true?”

18 He replied, “Why do you ask my name? It is beyond understanding.[a]” 19 Then Manoah took a young goat, together with the grain offering, and sacrificed it on a rock to the Lord. And the Lord did an amazing thing while Manoah and his wife watched:

20 As the flame blazed up from the altar toward heaven, the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame. Seeing this, Manoah and his wife fell with their faces to the ground.

21 When the angel of the Lord did not show himself again to Manoah and his wife, Manoah realized that it was the angel of the Lord.

22 “We are doomed to die!” he said to his wife. “We have seen God!”

23 But his wife answered, “If the Lord had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted a burnt offering and grain offering from our hands, nor shown us all these things or now told us this.”

24 The woman gave birth to a boy and named him Samson. He grew and the Lord blessed him, 25 and the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him while he was in Mahaneh Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

The story of Samson it’s all about the Holy Spirit. Here at the end of chapter 1 we are introduced to the spirits work in Sampson’s life. But the gift begins much earlier in this chapter and is received by faith or belief.

The first thing that Samson’s life reveals to us about the gift of the Holy Spirit is that...

WE MUST BELIEVE IN THE GIFT

Sampson, empowered by the Spirit of God, is a gift from God to Manoah and his wife - and the children of Israel. The purpose of this gift was to bring power and deliverance. Sampson was to himself be dedicated to God, I believe, so that he could be an example of what God wanted from all the children of Israel – hearts that would be completely dedicated to God. Samson’s power was to be used to break the yoke of the enemy and bring deliverance for God’s people

Likewise, the gift of the Holy Spirit for New Testament believers is meant to empower us, causing us to have a greater love of and dedication to God and giving us power over the enemy as witnesses that bring forth the salvation and deliverance of God

8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

7. THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT (From 16 Fundamental Truths)

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian Church. With it comes the endowment of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry.

This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth.

With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as:

- *an overflowing fullness of the Spirit*
- *a deepened reverence for God*
- *an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work*
- *and a more active love for Christ, for His Word and for the lost*

The Gift begins with our belief in the Gift. Do you believe in the Gift of The Holy Spirit? Do you desire that gift in your life?

1. Believe The Gift Is From God

Many believe that “The Angel of The Lord” is a preincarnate manifestation of Jesus. When Manoah asks for his name The Angel says it is “beyond understanding” or more literally “wonderful” a name also given to The Messiah (Isaiah 9:6)

I also find it interesting that the angel ascended in the flame of the offering foreshadowing Jesus ascension to heaven before the outpouring of The Holy Spirit (tongues of fire)

Just as Jesus promised the gift of The Holy Spirit, The Angel of The Lord promised the gift of the birth of Samson and his subsequent anointing to lead the children of Israel, delivering them from the hand of the Philistines

Manoah struggled at first to believe this gift was from God. Today many struggle to believe that the Gift of The Holy Spirit is from God

Some believe it is simply a concoction of the mind of man

Others believe that all we have of the Holy Spirit comes at salvation, that there is no additional baptism or receiving of the gift

Some believe that the gift(s) is no longer necessary

Some blasphemously contend that any such gift (especially speaking in tongues) is from the devil

But let us believe that this indeed is a gift from God

2. Believe The Gift Is For Us

Acts 2:38-39 New International Version (NIV)

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."

Many struggle to believe that the gift is for them.... Only certain people can have it, they think. I am not worthy, I am not doing something right.

Notice in our story that neither Manoah nor his wife initiated this encounter. It was the grace and mercy of God that prompted this gift. God's gift of The Holy Spirit is prompted by his Grace and Mercy and His desire for us to bear fruit (to not be barren)

Notice how much time and patience God takes to help them understand and believe in the Gift

God has also made sure to teach us about The Gift of The Holy Spirit and preserve that teaching throughout the New Testament. In fact a quick word search in a concordance will reveal nearly 100 verses that directly speak about The Holy Spirit and His work

If you are struggling to believe in the gift, I challenge you to do a study of The Holy Spirit in the New Testament - Read through it, asking God (like Manoah did) to open your eyes to the Gift and give you understanding.

3. Believe The Gift Will Empower Us... To be faithful and to break the power of the enemy

When Mary was told about the gift that would be given to her by the power of the Holy Spirit...The word says that she believed

Luke 1:35-38 New International Version (NIV)

³⁵ The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called [a] the Son of God. ³⁶ Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. ³⁷ For no word from God will ever fail."

³⁸ "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

Luke 1:45 New International Version (NIV)

⁴⁵ Blessed is **she who has believed** that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"

God is asking you to believe today in His Power. He wants us to believe that The gift of The Holy Spirit will come upon us. That he has, and continues to pour out His Spirit on all flesh. That we will be immersed in his presence, baptized by His Spirit, filled to overflowing with streams of living water that will flow from within us. He wants to take away our barrenness. He wants to give us power to live the New Life that salvation has given us.

CONCLUSION

Is God stirring your heart about the Gift of The Holy Spirit? Has it been a long time since you have felt the presence of and utilized that gift in your life? Let's pray this morning for a fresh revelation of the Gift and reach out to God in faith, asking Him to give us a new outpouring of The Holy Spirit in our lives.... And then Believe him for it.