

Why Did the Believers in Acts 8 Not Receive the Holy Ghost?

By Shane Vaughn, First Harvest Ministries

The book of Acts is a historical document that lays out the history of the Christian Church. When you are reading the book of Acts, you must keep in mind that this period of time is a great transitional period. The book of Acts, when you study that book, you have to remember that this is a transition time between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. We at First Harvest Ministries are not like your typical Pentecostals in the fact that we believe that the Holy Spirit is given at the point of baptism. Why do we believe that?

Our primary example: Yahshua, or Jesus as those who know Him by that name, was baptized in water, and at the point of His baptism, He received the Holy Spirit as the dove descended—it was not a dove; the Bible says *it was **as** a dove*—the Holy Spirit descended. This is our prime example of what happens when we are mikvot or baptized. Mikvah is the Hebrew idiom for *baptized*. It is where we get the word baptism from. So, Yahshua is the primary example of the importance of water baptism. At First Harvest Ministries we are huge believers in the necessity of water baptism.

Someone said to me, “Brother Vaughn, are you saying that you have to be baptized to be saved?” No. I am saying that you have to be obedient to Yahweh to be saved, and He commanded all men to repent, and to be baptized. He said in Matthew 28:19: *Go ye into all the world teaching men to observe the commandments, and to be baptized*. Another scripture, Mark 16:16 says: *He who believes and is baptized will be saved*.

Why do we need water baptism? In Acts 2:38 we are told that if we repent and if we are baptized, we SHALL receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. I am sad to report to you that many of My brethren make receiving the Holy Ghost a very difficult process. I grew up in a church where we had people who sought the Lord for years with tears in their eyes. They were at the

altar night after night, revival after revival, seeking for the Holy Ghost. We have turned it into a work-out. You would wear the saints out. The repented person would wear themselves out. They would pray for hours and hours, days, and weeks, and years to receive what is a FREE GIFT!

I want you to think about the ambiguity of that whole situation. If the Holy Ghost is a free gift, and if I have met the requirements of that gift, which is repentance and water baptism, why do I have to wait for days, and years, and centuries before I receive the Holy Ghost? If it is truly a free gift, and I met the requirements from Acts 2:38: REPENT, I should not have to wait. Now that doesn't mean if you come to the altar and cry; if you come to the altar and say you're sorry, because that's not repentance. The word repentance means to *turn around*. Stop breaking the commandments of Yahweh, stop having no regard for His commandments, stop living your own law, and begin to obey Him.

Then in the book of Acts it says that the Holy Ghost is given to those who OBEY HIM. The reason we must be baptized is because it is a test of obedience. The Holy Ghost is only given to those who obey Him. So whenever you humble yourself, you make an about face and decide you will obey Him, and you take yourself down to the watery grave of baptism, it is at that moment, at that mystical moment, when that same dove, if you will, will descend upon you in the waters of baptism. This is why water baptism is an ordinance of the Church. This is why it is so important to be baptized.

Now there is a difference in biblical baptism and getting wet. Anybody can go down to the water, have somebody put their hands on you, and dunk you in the water, and say you are baptized. That doesn't make you baptized, because the prerequisite for baptism is repentance. If you did not truly repent, and you truly are not sorry for the sin in your life, then you are not even a candidate for water baptism. But if you have repented, and if you are baptized, then I promise you brother and sister; I promise you on the authority of Yahweh's Holy Word, that the moment that man of Yahweh—duly ordained and filled with the authority of the Word of

Yahweh—baptizes you into Yahweh’s Church, you SHALL receive the Holy Ghost.

If you look up in your Concordance the word *shall receive* from Acts 2:38, when it says *you shall receive the Holy Spirit*, the Greek word is *lambona*, which means *to take hold of it*. So the Bible says the moment you repent and are baptized, you will take hold of the Holy Ghost. It’s a PROMISE! You don’t even have to wonder, “Have I got it?” *Brother Vaughn, I need some evidence*. I know; this evil generation requires a sign, but when you accept it by FAITH, that is greater than evidence. *Faith is the evidence of things that we hope for*. We believe that when we are baptized, we will receive the Holy Ghost. Let your faith be your evidence!

We must believe that water baptism is for the remission of our sins; it’s for the putting away of our PAST sins. Not our future sins. Go look at what Paul said: *It is for the remission of sins that are past, not future*. When you are baptized, you will receive the Holy Ghost. I preach it. I believe it. I declare it! I don’t care what evidence you did or didn’t get. You better believe the Word of Yahweh rather than man-made doctrines that will tell you that you don’t have the Holy Ghost, when you are living a more godly life than those who say they have it because of some evidence.

Here is the EVIDENCE: The Bible says the Holy Ghost comes to give you power over sin. When you come out of the waters of baptism, and you experience a new life free from breaking Yahweh’s commandments, that IS the evidence that you have the Holy Ghost. The devil talks in tongues. If you’ve got the Holy Ghost and want real evidence, it is your faith. That’s what we believe, teach, and preach at First Harvest, but there is a scripture in the book of Acts that seems to say the opposite of what we just said.

That’s the scripture I want to deal with right now. It’s found in the book of Acts, chapter eight. It talks about a group of believers called the Samaritans. Before I explain this verse to you, let me explain who the Samaritans were. The Samaritans were to the Jews what the slaves used to be to the American people. They were considered a lower class. They were

almost considered sub-human. They were in fact enemies to the Jewish people. The Jewish people considered them dogs. They considered them to be Yahweh haters. Before we go any further, you need to understand that in the book of Acts, the Samaritans were despised by the Jews.

There's an evangelist by the name of Philip that goes down to Samaria. Remember this: Philip is not an apostle, because he has no authority to establish a new church; especially a Samaritan church. He's not an apostle. Remember, Yahshua gave the keys to the Kingdom to the apostles. They were the only ones with the authority to open and close the Kingdom of Yahweh to different people groups. Before the days of the apostles, the Kingdom was only open to the Jews; the tribe of Judah. But Yahweh gave authority to Peter and the apostles, to establish His Church; to build His Church on a Rock.

So here goes Philip, down to Samaria. While he is there, he begins to preach, and he baptizes a bunch of these Samaritan believers, but they did not receive the Holy Ghost. *Brother Vaughn, if you're teaching that the Holy Ghost is given at baptism, why did these Samaritans not receive the Holy Ghost at baptism? Why did they have to wait for the apostles to come and lay hands on them so that they could receive the Holy Ghost? I'm going to make it so plain that a child can understand it.*

Yahweh is a God that respects authority and order. The Bible said that Yahweh told Peter and the apostles, "You have the keys; you have the power to open up an entrance into the Kingdom of Yahweh. You have that power." Philip is not an apostle. Philip is an evangelist. But in those days where we are transitioning between the old covenant and the new covenant, every church had to be set in order by an apostle. So Yahweh in His sovereignty did not recognize Philip's authority to establish this work in Samaria without the apostles. Therefore, He withheld the baptism, until a legitimate apostle could come and set that church in order by the laying on of hands.

You see, unlike the modern Church, the early Apostolic Church recognized the authority in the men of Yahweh. They did not think of those men as

regular men. They recognized them in their authority with Yahweh. So Philip baptizes the Samaritans, and they don't receive the Holy Spirit. Some of you are questioning how that can be. I'll tell you how. Yahweh has a set order. He has a set establishment and He abides by that order. If Yahweh makes the rule, only Yahweh can make the exception to that rule. The rule is Acts 2:38. The rule is: Repent, Be Baptized, and Receive the Holy Ghost at that moment. That is the rule. That is the only thing I can preach; the rule!

But does Yahweh make exceptions to the rule? The answer is: Absolutely! There are some things that Yahweh has the privilege to interject for His purposes. For example, when you go into a court of law, that judge can take the law as it is written, and he must abide by that law EXCEPT for extenuating circumstances. If the circumstance is so extenuating that the written law does not cover it, then that judge can interject his best judgment. Yahweh created a law in Acts 2:38: Repent, be baptized, and receive the Holy Ghost.

But for these believers in Samaria, they had to get it by apostolic authority. Therefore, John and Peter came down to Samaria and they laid hands on them. Some scholars believe that reference *laid hands on them* meant that they baptized them again. It is believed that the apostles came and baptized the Samaritan believers to set that church in order, and it was then that the Father smiled upon that direct apostolic authority, and they did indeed receive the Holy Ghost.

There's another exception to the rule. The House of Cornelius—the Gentiles. Only Peter could be there and bring the keys to open up the Kingdom to those Gentiles. That's why they received the Holy Ghost without ever being baptized. How can that be? Acts 2:38 says you must be baptized to receive the Holy Ghost, yet Cornelius was not baptized. Nobody in his house was baptized. Did Yahweh make an exception to the rule? He Absolutely Did! He's God, and there are certain circumstances where His mercy and His grace must intervene for His purposes to be fulfilled.

Yahweh can make exceptions, but we must preach the rule. Everyone else in the book of Acts received the Holy Ghost at the point of baptism.

Remember what the Ethiopian eunuch said: *Here is water. What prevents me from being baptized?* Baptism is so important! You must be! Let me say it again: You MUST be baptized in the Only Name that gives it meaning. A title does not give baptism meaning, because authority is vested in the name of whomever the authority rests in. If you are in England and the police are chasing you, they'll say, "Stop in the name of the Queen!" They are acting in her name, or in her authority.

When you are baptized in the Name of Yahshua, you are being baptized in the Name of the Father and the Son. I'm going to explain that to you. The Name Yahweh is the Name of the Father, right? The Name of the Son is Yahshua, but let me explain to you what the Name of the Son is. Yahshua said, *I came in My Father's Name*. How can that be? YAH is the Name of the Father, and Yahshua is *also* the Name of the Father, oh yes it is.

Because Yah is the noun, Shua is the verb. The Name Yahshua is a compound name; it is a noun and a verb. Because Yah, is the Father's Name, and Shua is what the Father DOES: *Sends His Son to save me*. Therefore, Yahweh is my salvation. When you say the Name YAHSHUA in water baptism, you are saying YAHWEH SAVES ME!

When we say, "I baptize you in the Name of Yahshua the Messiah—YAH is the Father. The Son is SHUA; Salvation—WHAT the Father sent. *The Son was my salvation. The Father sent Him to save me.* The Holy Spirit is the Father. The point I'm making, is when you are baptized in the Name of Yahshua the Messiah, you have had an apostolic baptism. You must be baptized in His Name!

Here is another point that we must consider: If Yahweh chooses to save you without doing any of that, you and I have no authority to question the sovereign works of Yahweh. He did not tell you to preach the exceptions. He told you to preach the rules. This is what we preach: If you repent, and if you are baptized, you shall take hold of the Holy Ghost at that moment. Are the Samaritan believers the exception to the rule? Not really, because the

baptism had to be done at the hands of the apostles to open up that Samaritan church.

Here's why. If the apostles had not gone to Samaria and baptized them with apostolic authority, then the Jews would never, ever have accepted the Samaritans into Yahweh's Church. The apostles never would have accepted them. Just like the Apostle Peter would never have accepted Cornelius. No one would have, except for the fact that Peter was there, and now he has apostolic authority to welcome the Gentiles into the One New Man. The Samaritans would never have been legitimate co-heirs in the household of faith, had they not gone and baptized them and set that church in order the way that it should have been.

Now a lot of people say they've received the Holy Ghost before they got baptized. I accept that, if in fact that was what you received. *Brother Vaughn, don't tell me that's not what I received. I spoke in tongues.* So do the witches all over the world; that doesn't impress anybody. But did you start keeping the commandments? Did you turn from that lifestyle of sin? Then you may not have got what you thought you got. Just because you got a bunch of babbling; just because your tongue got tripped up some, doesn't mean you got anything. My Lord. I know people living in shackled up situations, speaking in tongues beautifully.

I'm going to tell you something. Tongues impress Pentecostals a lot more than they impress Yahweh. If you want to impress Yahweh, live HOLY. I'll say it again. I know I'm messing with Pentecostal golden calves right now, but the very last Gift of the Spirit is speaking in tongues. You walk in some churches and it goes to the top of the list; it's super special. I'm like Paul. I thank Yahweh that I speak in tongues, but I'll tell you one thing: that's not the proof that I've got the Holy Ghost. No, no, no, no. Do you really think that Yahweh would choose something that the devil could imitate so easily like tongues, to be the evidence of the Holy Spirit?

Have you ever been to a voodoo ritual? I live near New Orleans and there is voodoo on every hand practically. They speak in tongues all through their

services. Do you really think Yahweh would choose something so easily inimitable to be evidence that you have received the Ruach Hakodesh; the Holy Ghost? *Oh Brother Vaughn, in the book of Acts it says in chapter two, verse four that they all spoke in tongues.*

No it doesn't. It says they spoke in other (foreign) languages. I've been in Pentecost for forty-five years and I've never seen a Pentecostal experience. I know there are some missionaries who say they saw it, but I have never seen it. I've never seen a Pentecostal experience—ever. All you Pentecostal preachers listening to me right now, I will give you the opportunity to present evidence right now of anybody in your church supernaturally speaking in foreign languages.

Acts 2:4 When they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other languages, as the Spirit gave them to speak out.

That's what happened in Pentecost. There were no unknown tongues in that day. That was foreign languages. Acts 2:4 says they spoke in other languages. It says other languages, not unknown languages. Unknown languages are just for yourself. It's not supposed to be for the church to be honest with you, unless someone interprets it. Oh my. I've stepped into it now. My inbox is blowing up. Oh HalleluYah. But I am going to preach truth whether it harelips the devil. I don't care. There is only ONE evidence that you've got the Holy Ghost: If you've been CHANGED! If you're a holiness living, commandment keeping, child of Yahweh. There's only one thing the devil cannot imitate, and it is HOLINESS.

Now listen to me. I'm not talking about that stupid holiness. I'm not talking about that made up holiness. I'm talking about Bible Holiness. I'm talking about Bible Holiness: the Ten Commandments of Yahweh. If you are not living by those, I don't care if you talk in tongues on four different octaves. You don't have the Holy Ghost. Many folks have learned how to get their lips to start stammering. That's another thing that is so funny; stammering lips. Go back and find out what that word stammering lips means. We need

some education in Yahweh's Church. You will receive the Holy Ghost when you're baptized! It's promised to you! You don't have to beg for a free gift. You just have to meet the requirements.

Listen everybody. If we say we're Pentecostal, what happened on the Day of Pentecost was the greatest missionary endeavor in the history of the world. It was a day of missionary outreach. Supernatural languages were given to reach the nations that were assembled in Jerusalem. So we've got to understand the infilling of the Holy Ghost is a LIFE CHANGING experience! When you truly get it by faith, then you shall have a different life. You will become obedient.

Let me ask you something one more time. I want everybody to give me a yes or no answer. Are you ready? Can Satan imitate speaking in tongues? Yes. Witches and satanists can imitate speaking in tongues; so the answer is yes. Can Satan imitate obedience to Yahweh? Can Satan imitate obedience to the commandments of Yahweh? No. Satan cannot be obedient to the commandments of Yahweh.

If you want to show someone the evidence of the Holy Ghost, you become a commandment keeping child of Yahweh. *Brother Vaughn, nobody can keep the commandments.* Bull! I want to tell you the craziest thing I've ever heard: Yahweh gave us a set of commandments because He knew we couldn't keep them! How messed up is that? How psychotic is that? How messed up would it be to give your child a set of chores you knew they couldn't do? And yet the whole Christian Church will preach this Sunday that God gave those Ten Commandments, "but don't worry, He knew you couldn't keep them."

Brother Jared, you said that Satan can keep the commandments. I've never heard that Satan could obey Yahweh willingly from his heart, and do His commandments, because Satan is a rebel. The Bible said that he is rebellious in all his ways. Rebellion is in his heart. But to the truly conceived child of Yahweh, rebellion has been cast out, and we become obedient. The Bible said, "If you love Me, prove it; keep My

commandments.” But the Church said God gave us a bunch of commandments we can’t keep. If the God you serve gives you a bunch of commandments knowing you can’t keep them, you might want to find another God. Even a parent wouldn’t do that to a child.

No, Yahweh gave you a set of commands to prove whether you had His Spirit in you or not. So brothers and sisters, if you don’t have the Holy Ghost, find a true, anointed man of Yahweh that’s obeying the Word of Yahweh, and have him baptize you in the water in the Name above every name: Yahshua the Messiah! I promise you that you shall receive the gift of the indwelling presence of the Father and the Son. Share this. Let’s get this truth out to the world.

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