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THE HOLY GHOST OUTPOURING

ACTS CHAPTER 2

There is a verse in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles which has for many years caused controversy and division, especially in the Pentecostal ranks. It is Acts 2:38 which says (KJV), with Peter speaking to a crowd, ***“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”***

It was on the Day of Pentecost following Jesus’ resurrection and ascension. As He was about to be taken up, Jesus instructed the four hundred disciples (followers) who were present with him to remain in Jerusalem to (Acts 1:4) ***“wait for the promise of the Father,”*** the Comforter (Holy Ghost) of which He had spoken previously (John 16:7).

Out of that 400 only 120 had done so. (Acts 2:1), ***“When the day of Pentecost was fully come...”***. (2:4), ***“...they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues (languages they had never learned) as the (Holy) Spirit gave them utterance.”***

This was such a radically different thing than had ever before occurred and it garnered much attention as the news of it spread like wildfire.

Jerusalem was packed with thousands upon thousands of “out of town” visitors because of the Feast of Pentecost. It was one of the three feast days for which every male who followed the Jewish religion was required to come to the Temple in Jerusalem. This included thousands of “proselytes,” gentiles from other countries who had converted to Judaism.

A huge crowd gathered. Some were mocking the believers. Others were asking in Acts 1:12 (NIV), ***“What does this mean?”*** It was to this question that Peter responded. He stepped up to give the crowd an answer. He started out by speaking of Joel’s prophecy about the foretold outpouring of the Holy Spirit. He continued on to speak of David’s prophecy about his Lord, the Holy One (Messiah). He preached Jesus’ death and resurrection. It pricked their hearts to the point where they also wanted this experience and become followers of the Christ.

This is when Peter gave the words of Acts 2:38 which led to the salvation that day of three thousand Jews and another five thousand the next day. (Acts 4:4.)

This sets the background for tomorrow’s deeper discussion of the often-misunderstood verse of Acts 2:38.