



Speaking in Tongues in the Book of Acts

Acts 2 The 12 and/or 120	Acts 2 Jews (3,000)	Acts 8 Samaritans	Acts 10 Gentiles	Acts 19 Disciples of John
They were already believers following Jesus.	Repentance (vs 38)	Faith (vs 5-6)	Faith while Peter is preaching (vs 44)	Faith (vs 5-6) John's message – "believe in the one who was to come"
As best we understand they had all been baptized in water.	Spirit Baptism (vs 38) "repent and you will receive λαμβάνω (lambano) the gift of the Holy Spirit"	Water baptism (vs 12)	Spirit Baptism (vs 44-46) "while Peter is preaching the Holy Spirit fell..." "they were hearing them speak in tongues"	Rebaptized in water (vs 5) "on hearing this they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus"
On the evening of resurrection morning, we read this (Joh 20:22): "22 And when he (Jesus) had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, Receive λαμβάνω (lambano) the Holy Spirit."	Water baptism (Vs 41) "those who received ἀποδέχομαι (apodechomai) the word were baptized"	Apostles sent from Jerusalem to Samaria (vs 14-15) "prayed that they might receive λαμβάνω (lambano) the Holy Spirit"	(Vs 45) "And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles."	(vs 6) "And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came ἐρχομαι (erchomai) on them, and..."
		Peter and John laid their hands on them (vs 15-17)	Water baptism (vs 47-48)	Spirit Baptism (vs 6) "they begin speaking in tongues..."
In (vs 4) "And they were all filled πλήθω (pletho) with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues..."		And they received Spirit Baptism (vs 17) "... they received λαμβάνω (lambano) the Holy Spirit"		
The 12 or the 120 spoke in tongues when the Spirit fell at Pentecost.	* No mention of any of the 3,000 speaking in tongues.	Although tongues are not mentioned most scholars believe, by implication, that is the gift that Simon tried to purchase.	These Gentiles, we would assume, were saved as Peter preached, and they spoke in tongues.	These Jews, who were baptized by John, had not heard of Jesus, placed faith in him, received the spirit, and spoke in tongues.

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE BOOK OF ACTS:

First, In Acts chapter 2 we see the 12 or the 120 (and scholars disagree), but on the day of Pentecost we see this group filled with the Spirit and they spoke with other tongues. This group would have been all Jews.

Second, at that same sermon we see 3,000 (likely all Jews and Jewish proselytes), all at the temple who hear Peter's sermon and give their lives to Jesus Christ and are saved. Peter tells them: "And Peter said to them, "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." (Ac 2:38 ESV)

Notice, if they repent, they will receive the "gift of the Holy Spirit." Then a few verses later we read: "So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls." (Ac 2:41 ESV)

Yet, there is no mention of any of these Jews speaking in tongues as part of their salvation experience.

In fact, we will see many more Jews and Jewish proselytes come to faith in Jesus, yet it will never be recorded again that speaking in tongues was part of that experience (for Jews and Jewish proselytes).

Third, in Acts chapter 8 we observed how Phillip went to Samaria and preached the gospel, and many came to faith in Jesus and were baptized (vs 12), yet there is no mention of them speaking in tongues. Then word got back to Jerusalem that the Samaritans are getting saved and they send Peter and John (vs 14). Upon their arrival Peter and John prayed for the new believers that they might receive the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit fell on them, and scholars believe (based on what Simon the magician did) that they then spoke with other tongues (vs 15-18).

There will be no other examples where Samaritans spoke in tongues as part of the salvation experience, only this first group.

Fourth, in Acts chapter 10 the Holy Spirit sent Peter to the home of Cornelius to preach to those present the good news of Jesus. Peter took Jewish believers and headed to Caesarea to Cornelius' home. Once there he shared the good news of Jesus and we read: "44 ¶ While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. 45 And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. 46 For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared," (Ac 10:44-46 ESV)

Here we see Gentiles, as part of their salvation experience, hear the gospel, repent and place faith in Jesus and God gives the gift of tongues as part of their salvation experience.

By the way, we will observe a host of Gentiles come to salvation in the book of Acts, yet never again will Luke record that they spoke in tongues as part of the salvation experience.

Fifth, we will see this very unique group of 12 men who had been baptized into John, it seems they knew a little bit about what John taught and were waiting with anticipation for the one John promised would come. Paul explains to them that the Messiah had come, Jesus of Nazareth, and they believed on Him and were baptized and we read: "And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying." (Ac 19:6 ESV)

OVERALL OBSERVATIONS:

- 1) As part of the salvation experience, once the Jews spoke in tongues, once the Samaritans spoke in tongues, once the Gentiles spoke in tongues, and once men who followed John but had not heard about Jesus spoke in tongues. Although people from all of the groups (for sure the first three) would continue to come to faith in Jesus (as recorded here in the book of Acts), never again would it be recorded that any spoke in tongues.
- 2) In Samaria, although Phillip was preaching Jesus and people were believing in Jesus, it took two apostles (Peter and John) showing up before the Spirit was given and the Samaritans spoke in tongues.

REASONABLE CONCLUSIONS:

- 1) It seems, as the door of the gospel was opened to each unique people group, evidence of that door being opened to that people group is provided in the form of the first from that people group speaking in tongues as part of their salvation experience.
- 2) The gift of tongues is never repeated with a people group, this seems to indicate that once the door of the gospel is opened to a particular people group, the miracle is no longer necessary.
- 3) It seems the door of the gospel being opening required an apostle, remember what happened in Samaria with Phillip.
- 4) What we see in the book of Acts appears to be different that the indivial gift of tongues that we read about in the New Testament. Paul for example when he was saved it is not recorded that he spoke in tongues as part of his salvation experience (the door had already been opened to the Jews), yet Paul did speak in tongues and on more than one occasion: “18 I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. 19 Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue.” (1Co 14:18-19 ESV)

As we consider all of this one cannot help but wonder if this had something to do with what Jesus told Peter: “19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” 20 Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.” (Mt 16:19-20 ESV)