

# Acts 1:4-8 The promise of the Father

October 04, 2009

Unless otherwise stated, all scripture references are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Please turn to Acts chapter 1 and verse 4.

Page | 1

So far in our look at Acts we have seen that Jesus had appeared to the disciples over a 40 day period shortly after his resurrection from the dead and he was speaking with them about the Kingdom of God, but there was much more to come.

## Verse 4

**And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me;**

One of the most frustrating things in life is having to wait for things to take place but also it can be one of the most exciting things.

Can you remember as kids having to wait for Christmas or a birthday and getting that new bike that you always wanted?

My mum and dad had a unique way of putting out our Christmas presents each Christmas Eve that every year created a huge amount of expectation and excitement in us as kids.

Because there were 5 of us kids, rather than wrap each present individually they would lay them out on the couch unwrapped or on the floor in 5 separate groups for each kid.

We were told that the earliest we could get up Christmas morning was 7am but that rarely happened and come around 6 in the morning we were all up and what we saw was appeared to us to be a huge amount of presents laid out all over the place and squeals of excitement.

I have a feeling that the disciples may have felt some of this sort excitement even though they would have had no idea what was about to take place in a few days time.

If there wasn't already enough excitement and wonder in them not long having their dead saviour miraculously raised from the dead and the incredible experience of not only seeing him alive once or twice, but talking, eating and walking with him as he spoke about Kingdom of God over a period of 40 days.

What more was to come?  
 Can you imagine what must have been going through their heads?  
 And what was it that the Father had promised?

### Verse 5

**for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”**

Just imagine if we were one of those disciples? We wouldn't have to wait long - just a few days, but also this must have been a mystery to them that the promise of the father was they were going to be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

What exactly did that mean?

They knew about being baptized in water, a simple enough process. You find enough water so that you can be immersed or submerged in, but what did it mean to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. How was it going to take place?  
 Was there a Holy Spirit pool somewhere where they could be immersed?

It was all a bit mysterious, but none the less they should have been very comforted by this promise, because they must surely have remembered Jesus words that he spoke to them.

### **John 16:5-7**

5 But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?'

6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.

7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

Over the next few days and months all of what Jesus had said was going to come into clear focus.

This is an encouragement to all of us. How many times have you studied things only say I don't get it, it isn't sinking in and then to find out that soon enough if you are patient and persevere then all of a sudden things begin to make sense, everything comes together, all those fragments of information come together like a giant jigsaw puzzle.

This is exactly what the disciples were about to experience although not just yet.

## Verse 6

**So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”**

Even though Jesus had said to them that they were to wait for the promise of the father, it appears that all they had on their mind was when will you - the messiah - the promised one of Israel overthrow our enemies and restore the Kingdom back to Israel. Surely this is why you came isn't it?

After spending three years living and being taught by Jesus they still didn't get that the benefit of his appearing was not ONLY or EXCLUSIVELY for the sake of Israel, but also for the sake of the whole world. For, God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world but that through Jesus the world might be saved.

There will no doubt be a time when Jesus comes again in judgment, but this is not that time. This is the time of salvation, the time of being rescued from God's judgement.

If you are not sure where you stand on this, whether you have the assurance that Jesus has rescued you then can I urge you to find out quickly. Don't delay. Cry out to Jesus to save you.

### **Romans 10:13**

For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Now back to the kingdom of Israel.

## Verse 7

**He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority.**

Instead of denying that the kingdom was going to be restored to Israel he directs them to leave all of these dates and times in the father's hands and not to question these things.

With this warning in scripture, I am amazed that so called Christian groups and pseudo Christian groups have tried to pinpoint the exact time that Jesus would come back and restore the kingdom.

There is a lesson for us here also in that we will often come up against mystery in the bible and as humans we don't like mystery.

We want ALL the answers solved, we want the tension resolved, but Jesus said that one day it will happen, but it is not for us to know. We need to simply trust that God has it all in control.

After that little aside, Jesus now brings them back from the future to focus on the present and the reason for the promise of the father that they were to be baptized or immersed in the Holy Spirit.

### Verse 8

**But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."**

So what is the reason for the promise of the father?  
So that they would receive power, dunamis in the Greek - essentially dynamite miracle working power and for what reason?

That they would be Jesus' witnesses beginning at home in Jerusalem, but continuing to ends of the earth.

What does it mean to be a witness for Jesus?

Chuck Smith says the following about the Greek word for witness

It is interesting that the word witness in Greek is the word *martus* from where we get our word *martyr*. And in Greek it does mean *martyr*. A witness is one who not only proclaims what he believes, he lives what he believes, he is what he believes, and he believes it so strongly, that if necessary, he'll die for what he believes. That's how strong is his belief. He's a *martus*. You can't stop him. He's not afraid to die for what he believes.

And this is exactly the reason we need the continual baptism, infilling and overflowing of the Holy Spirit in our lives so that we have the power to be His witnesses both in life and death.

Let's pray