

John 7:39

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Analysis

(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) John's parenthetical explanation clarifies that living water symbolizes the Holy Spirit. Believers would receive the Spirit after Jesus's glorification (death, resurrection, ascension). The phrase 'Holy Ghost was not yet given' doesn't mean the Spirit didn't exist, but that Pentecostal outpouring awaited Christ's completed work. Reformed theology emphasizes the *ordo salutis*—Christ's work precedes Spirit's application of redemption.

Historical Context

Old Testament believers had the Spirit's work (regeneration, indwelling of some leaders and prophets), but Pentecost marked a new era—permanent indwelling for all believers, universal empowerment for witness. Jesus promised the Spirit's coming (John 14:16-17, 15:26, 16:7-14), fulfilled in Acts 2. The early church understood their Spirit-empowerment as fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32 and Jesus's promise. Church history shows periods of Spirit-emphasis (Montanism, Pietism, Pentecostalism) alongside periods of neglect.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What changed at Pentecost regarding the Spirit's work?
2. How does Christ's glorification relate to the Spirit's outpouring?
3. What does permanent Spirit indwelling mean for believers today?

Interlinear Text

τοῦτο	δὲ	εἶπεν	περὶ	τοῦ	πνεῦμα	οὐ	ἔμελλον
this	(But	spake he	of	G3588	Ghost	which	should
G5124	G1161	G2036	G4012		G4151	G3739	G3195
λαμβάνειν	οἱ	πιστεύοντες	εἰς	αὐτόν·	οὐπω	γὰρ	ἢν
receive	G3588	they that believe	on	him	not yet	for	was
G2983		G4100	G1519	G846	G3768	G1063	G2258
πνεῦμα	Ἄγιον,	ὅτι	δὲ	Ἰησοῦς	οὐδέπω	ἐδοξάσθη	
Ghost	the Holy	given because	G3588	that Jesus	not yet	glorified	
G4151	G40	G3754		G2424	G3764		G1392

Additional Cross-References

Acts 2:17 (Spirit): And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

Joel 2:28 (Spirit): And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

Acts 2:33 (Holy): Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

Isaiah 32:15 (Spirit): Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest.

Acts 2:4 (Holy): And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

John 12:16 (Glory): These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.

Isaiah 44:3 (Spirit): For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:

Acts 2:38 (Holy): Then Peter said unto them, 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.

Romans 8:9 (Spirit): But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

John 16:7 (Parallel theme): Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.