

A BIBLE STUDY ON THE BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. INTRODUCTION

As believers in the Lord Jesus, we have to follow His example and obey everything He commanded His disciples to do (Matt. 28:18-20; John. 14:12 & 20:21). The four Gospels and the Book of Acts teach us how the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus, His disciples and new believers in the New Testament Church. There is a clear pattern that is repeated over and over. The coming of the Holy Spirit upon people always followed salvation and preceded ministry and life in the church as a believer.

The Lord Jesus did not start His earthly ministry before He had received the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist baptized Jesus in water, and as He came up out of the water, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him as a dove. Furthermore, the Lord Jesus would not let the church start before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. As He gave His final instructions to the disciples, before He was taken into Heaven, He commanded them to wait in Jerusalem until they had been baptized with the Holy Spirit. (Luke. 24:48-49 & Acts 1:4-8).

We will see in this study that it was a common practice in the early church to make sure that believers were filled with the Holy Spirit after salvation. In the New Testament the coming of the Holy Spirit into a believer's life is referred to as "receiving the Holy Spirit" "filled with the Holy Spirit" or "the baptism with the Holy Spirit". All of these speak of the same encounter with the Holy Spirit.

Many believers come to a place in their walk with the Lord where they realize the lack of the power of God in their lives.

Jesus said:

"you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you" - Acts 1:8

Paul wrote:

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. - Eph. 5:18

We need the infilling of the Spirit so that we can walk in His fullness. It is the Father's desire for us to walk in the power and fullness of the Holy Spirit. Jesus told us in John 14 through 16 that He would send us the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has come! He is ready to touch you

2. BORN AGAIN BY THE SPIRIT

When you get born again, you receive *the Lord Jesus* into your heart, as you put your faith in him:

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God--children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. - John 1:12-13

The Holy Spirit is involved with the process of salvation. It is the Holy Spirit that gives us the new birth:

In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." 'How can a man be born when he is old?' Nicodemus asked. 'Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!' Jesus answered, 'I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.'" - John 3:3-8

"I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a

heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws."
- Ezek 36:25-27

Note: Examine the capitalization of the word 'spirit'. Lower case refers to the human spirit and upper case refers to the Holy Spirit. In John Jesus says Spirit (Holy Spirit) gives birth to spirit (human spirit). In Ezekiel, God says He will put a new spirit in us – that is a new human spirit, which is the new creation we become when we become born again. But then God also says that He will put His Spirit in us. This is the Baptism with the Holy Spirit. In this passage Ezekiel is describing two events:

1. Being Born Again
2. Baptism with the Holy Spirit

We are born again by the Holy Spirit according to John 3:1-7. When we ask the Lord Jesus to come into our hearts, it is the Holy Spirit who creates in us a new heart. He gives us a new spirit by putting in us the new creation, which is the nature of Christ (2 Cor. 5:17-20). Although the Holy Spirit is involved with salvation, there is still a further encounter with the Holy Spirit. This is where the Lord Jesus baptizes a believer with the Holy Spirit.

3. THE FATHER'S PROMISE

Although the Holy Spirit is involved with the new birth, there is much more of the Holy Spirit that the Father promised has us. Jesus said:

¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— ¹⁷the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for *he lives with you and will be in you.*
John 14: 16-17

The Holy Spirit is the Gift the Father promised:

"I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."
Luke 24:49

On one occasion, while he (Jesus) was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.
Acts 1:4-5

The Holy Spirit is the gift of the Father and is received when Jesus baptizes us with the Holy Spirit. On the day of Pentecost, Peter said these words concerning the outpouring of the Holy Spirit:

Exalted to the right hand of God, He has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.
Acts 2:33

After the resurrection and ascension, Jesus received the Holy Spirit from the Father as part of the prize for his obedience and suffering on the cross. Jesus paid the price that we may be baptized with the Holy Spirit. How precious is the baptism with the Holy Spirit!

4. JESUS - THE BAPTIZER WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

Let us start at the beginning of the Gospels. John the Baptist was preaching repentance and baptizing those who confessed their sins in the River Jordan by immersion. John said two very important things about Jesus:

John 1:29 The next day, he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" ³⁰ This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who is preferred before me, for he was before me.' ³¹ I didn't know him, but for this reason I came baptizing in water: that he would be revealed to Israel." ³² John testified, saying, "I have seen the Spirit descending like a dove out of heaven, and it remained on him. ³³ I didn't recognize him,

but he who sent me to baptize in water, he said to me, 'On whomever you will see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.' 34 I have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God."

I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Matt. 3:11 (NIV)

I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit. John 1:33(NIV)

John the Baptist announces Jesus as the Lamb of God (Savior) and as the Baptizer with the Holy Spirit. We must know Jesus in both these ways

The last command Jesus gave to the disciples was to wait in Jerusalem for the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." Acts 1:4-5

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. Acts 1: 8 -9

To be baptized with the Holy Spirit is a command of Jesus. Jesus commanded His disciples not to do anything until they were baptized with the Holy Spirit. Later on in the Book of Acts Peter said:

"We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him." Acts 5:32

We love Jesus by obeying His commands: "If you love me, you will obey what I command." John 14:15

So let us obey the command of Jesus and receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Paul also instructs us, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit: "Be filled with the Spirit". Eph. 5:18

Therefore whether you call this experience the Baptism of the Holy Spirit or the infilling of the Holy Spirit, make sure you receive it.

5. THE BOOK OF ACTS

In each instance in the Book of Acts, the Holy Spirit was received *after* salvation:

5.1 THE DAY OF PENTECOST

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Acts 2:1-4

The 120 believers were 'all filled with the Holy Spirit'. The result was that 'they spoke in tongues as the Spirit enabled them.'

5.2 THE SAMARITANS

In Acts 8 Philip goes to Samaria and preaches the Gospel. Many believed the Good News and were baptized by Philip in water. After this Peter and John came from Jerusalem.

When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them*; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit." Acts 8:15-17

*One of the meanings of the Greek word ‘come upon’ is ‘to seize with violence.’ This means that the Holy Spirit comes upon people with great force and power. Although specific manifestations of the Holy Spirit are not listed in this passage, something visible must have happened, because Simon the sorcerer saw something that he was willing to pay money for:

When Simon *saw* that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." Acts 8:18-19

5.3 PAUL

On the road to Damascus Paul encounters the Lord Jesus and gets radically saved.

Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord - Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here - has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Acts 9:17

Note that Ananias was just a regular believer, not one of the twelve apostles, and he knew to lay hands on Paul for him to receive the Holy Spirit. Paul later on writes about how he speaks in tongues:

I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. I Cor. 14:18

5.4 CORNELIUS

Peter went to the house of Cornelius and preached the Gospel to them.

"While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." Acts 10:44-47

In Acts 11 Peter returns to Jerusalem and reports to the apostles what happened.

"Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?" Acts 11:16

Note that in this passage different terms are used for the baptism with the Holy Spirit, depending on from what viewpoint the experience is described:

The Holy Spirit came on all. The gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out. They received the Holy Spirit. You will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. God (the Father) gave them the gift.

5.5 BELIEVERS IN EPHEBUS

Paul went to Ephesus where he found a group of disciples.

He asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied." Acts 19:2 & 6

- These believers received correct teaching about the Holy Spirit long after their conversion, and then received the baptism with the Holy Spirit as Paul laid hands on them.
- Paul did not start the Church of Ephesus without making sure everyone was baptized with the Holy Spirit.
- Baptism with the Holy Spirit was a common experience in the Church that believers everywhere encountered after they became believers in the Lord Jesus.
- Later, Paul in writes the Letter to the Ephesians:

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. *(This refers to their salvation)* Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory. *(This refers to when they were baptized with the Holy Spirit)* Ephesians 1:13-14

This deposit of the Holy Spirit is literally a down payment or earnest of heaven and the powers of the age to come. (Heb. 6:4). The blood of Jesus is the seal of our eternal life.

6. HOW DO WE RECEIVE THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT?

As believers we need to have a desire to receive everything that the Father has for us. We should have an expectation that everything He said in His Word is true. He is a good Father, Who is faithful to fulfill His promises to us. He gives without finding fault and He is no respecter of person. See James 1:5 & 17 & Acts 10:34

6.1 BE THIRSTY

On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. John 7:37-39

6.2 ASK

"Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? "If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who *ask* him!" Luke 11:11-13

We must ask the Father to give us the promised Holy Spirit. He is a good Father that gives good and perfect gifts: Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. James 1:17

We must ask the Lord Jesus to baptize us with the Holy Spirit. We must ask the Holy Spirit to come and fill us with His power and give us a new language to worship the Father with.

6.3 LAYING ON OF HANDS

In the Book of Acts we see believers receiving the Holy Spirit through prayer and the laying on of hands. Read Acts 8:15-17, 9:17 & 19:6

6.4 WE MUST RECEIVE BY FAITH

In the same way that salvation comes by faith, so also everything else. Paul reminds the Galatians:

Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? Gal. 3:2

And then tells them:

...that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit. Gal. 3:14

Please read Gal. 3:1-14 to get the full understanding of what the Holy Spirit is speaking to us. It is very clear from these verses that we do not receive the Holy Spirit by our good works or striving, but only through faith.

"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." Heb 11:6

Jesus said: "Have faith in God... Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours." Mark 11:22 & 24

By the Blood of Jesus every believer has been made worthy to receive everything God has for them. Therefore ask Him and He will do it, because He desires to bless you.

Jesus said, "And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it." John 14:13-14

"I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete." John 16:23-24

Paul explains to the Galatians that receiving the Holy Spirit does not come by obeying the law, but through faith in Christ: "Let me ask you this one question: Did you receive the Holy Spirit by trying to keep the Jewish laws? Of course not, for the Holy Spirit came upon you only after you heard about Christ and trusted him to save you. I ask you again, does God give you the power of the Holy Spirit and work miracles among you as a result of your trying to obey the Jewish laws? No, of course not. It is when you believe in Christ and fully trust him. Now God can bless the Gentiles, too, with this same blessing he promised to Abraham; and all of us as Christians can have the promised Holy Spirit through this faith." -The Living Bible Gal. 3:2, 5 & 14

7. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GET BAPTIZED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT?

7.1 YOU RECEIVE POWER

Jesus said: "... You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses Acts 1:8

The Supernatural POWER of the Holy Spirit will come upon you and you will walk as a believer in His power and not your own strength. This supernatural power will equip you for ministry.

7.2 YOU RECEIVE TONGUES

The first mention of 'speaking in tongues' in the New Testament is when Jesus said that we will speak in tongues: And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well." Mark 16:17

On the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 the Holy Spirit fell and:

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Acts 2:4

This also happened in Caesarea at Cornelius's house:

The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Acts 10:45-46

And in Ephesus:

When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. Acts 19:6

Paul spoke in tongues: I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you.

I Cor. 14:18

Paul encourages everyone to speak in tongues: I would like every one of you to speak in tongues I Cor. 14:5

... and do not forbid anyone to speak in tongues.

I Cor. 14:39

7.3 YOU WILL PROPHECY AND SEE VISIONS & DREAMS

In his sermon on the day of Pentecost Peter quotes from Joel 2:28: 'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophecy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophecy.' Acts 2:17

The Believers in Ephesus prophesied: When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. Acts 19:6

You can expect ALL of the above to happen to you!

8. MORE ABOUT TONGUES

Let us take a closer look at what the Word of God says about tongues. There are three distinct usages of tongues in the New Testament:

8.1 TONGUES ARE A SIGN TO UNBELIEVERS

Paul writes: Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers;

1 Cor. 14:22

This is what happened in the day of Pentecost. The disciples started to speak in tongues and the (as yet unsaved) crowd understood what they were saying. - Acts 2:1-12

8.2 THE GIFT OF TONGUES

In 1 Cor 12:10 Paul lists the gift of tongues as one of the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit and in 1 Cor. 14:26-28 he gives instructions on how the gift of tongues should operate in the church, i.e. followed by an interpretation. Here the whole church is addressed through a message of tongues. The understanding of the message is given through an interpretation.

This passage is part of a whole section from I Cor. 11:17 through I Cor 14:17 where Paul brings order to the undisciplined way in which the Corinthians conducted their services. The Corinthians were getting drunk at the Lord's Supper (!) and were using tongues in a confusing way. Paul instructs them how to do these things in a way that builds up the body and honors the Lord. He encourages them to eagerly desire to operate in spiritual gifts in a meeting. Where he says 'Do all speak in tongues' (I Cor. 12:30), Paul is referring to those with a ministry of bringing a message in tongues to the whole church, followed by an interpretation. Chapter 13 communicates the attitude of love in which ministry should take place.

8.3 TONGUES AS A PRAYER LANGUAGE

This is the most common occurrence of tongues in the life of a believer. Paul talks about 'praying in the Spirit.' Here the believer speaks to God as he prays in tongues. No interpretation is necessary, because God understands tongues perfectly!

For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit. I Cor. 14:2

He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself

I Cor. 14:4

For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind.

I Cor. 14:14-15

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions

Eph. 6:18

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will. Rom. 8:26-27

But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. Jude 20

- Paul encourages us to pray in the Spirit - 1 Cor.14:14-15 & Eph. 6:18
- You communicate with God when you speak in tongues - 1 Cor. 14:2
- You edify yourself when you pray in tongues - 1 Cor. 14:4
- You can worship the Lord by speaking in tongues - 1 Cor. 14:15
- When we pray in tongues, the Holy Spirit helps us to intercede - Rom. 8:26-27
- You build up your faith by praying in the Spirit - Jude 20

8.4 IS TONGUES FOR EVERYONE?

The answer is YES! Jesus said: "And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; ... they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."

Mark 16:17-18

This is for every believer. Paul encourages all of us to speak in tongues when he writes: I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, ... Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. 1 Cor. 14:5, 39

9. MINISTERING THE BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. Pray this Prayer: If you have accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior, ask the Father for the baptism with the Holy Spirit by praying this prayer:

Father, I come to you in the Name of Jesus.
 Thank You for Your promised gift of the Holy Spirit.
 Lord Jesus, baptize me now with the Holy Spirit.
 Holy Spirit, I receive You now.
 And I renounce any allegiance with any wrong spirits or any wrong doctrines.
 Fill me with Your power now and enable me to speak in tongues.
 And I renounce any reliance on any wrong spirits or wrong doctrines in the Name of Jesus
 I thank and praise You. Amen.

Lift your hands in a prayerful attitude as someone who is baptized with the Holy Spirit lays hands on you. Receive by faith, expect to speak in tongues.

2. Receiving Tongues

Scripture says "*They* spoke in tongues." (Acts 19:6) Although the gift of tongues is supernatural, *you* still have to speak. As hands are laid upon you, the Holy Spirit will put strange sounds in your mind. Start mouthing these sounds. At first it may sound like babble or groanings, but as you continue the words and sentences will become more distinct. Some people receive only a few words or sentences, while others gush forth in a more complete language. Be thankful for what the Holy Spirit has given you and use it often. As you use your prayer language, new words often come. The gift of tongues comes supernaturally; the everyday use of your prayer language is natural. This means that you can speak in tongues at will, wherever you desire to pray in tongues. The more you use your prayer language; you will gain confidence and boldness in your prayer life.

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