



Baptism of the Holy Spirit

- The meaning of the term “baptism”
- Types of baptism in Scripture
- The meaning of the baptism of the Holy Spirit
- Is there a baptism of the Holy Spirit today?
- Today’s believer and the baptism of the Holy Spirit
- The baptism of Fire – What is it?
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Perhaps no other doctrine among professing Christians has been so poorly understood as the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Some claim that it refers to an experience after salvation; that it is associated with an influx of divine power providing the ability to perform certain spiritual gifts such as speaking in tongues. Others claim that it is an indwelling of the Holy Spirit received upon conversion. We can add other variations to these notions. How then do we find our way through the labyrinth of opinions and arrive at the correct doctrine?

There are four things we need to do. Firstly, we must allow the Holy Spirit to be our Teacher. Secondly, we must bow to Scripture and to Scripture only. All too often in such matters we find that there is overpowering authority given to our “experiences” and those of others. Experiences need to be set aside in favour of God’s Word. They are unreliable because of their subjectivity. After all, are not my experiences always more real to me than your experiences are to you? Not only are they unreliable but dependence upon them is unscriptural. Nowhere in God’s Word are we instructed to base our doctrine on our experiences be they common or unique. God has put His Word into our hands and His Spirit into our hearts. All experiences must be examined in the light of Scripture. And, when by the grace of God we are brought to see the plain teaching in Scripture, we must not substitute, “But I have seen” or “But I have experienced,” for “It is written.” The difficulty we sometimes face is not so much in finding the truth, but having to face it. Are we to place more faith in our experiences or in the clear teaching of the Word of God? Thirdly, we must avoid being swayed by ‘popular’ opinion. Truth is never determined by the popularity of those who profess to proclaim it, or by the number who claim to follow it. Fourthly, there is another danger which is particularly evident when the subject of baptism is raised - religious tradition. Centuries of religious custom founded on superstition and expediency has bred terrible error in regard to baptism. “Infant sprinkling” for instance is an invention of man, which appeals to his idea of the Church as an institution embracing certain “sacraments.” Finally, be prepared for a time of spiritual trial, for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers. Remember, greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.

The meaning of the term “baptism”

In order to make headway in our subject, we must first determine what the word “baptism” means. Baptism is essentially a *transliteration* of the Greek *baptizo*.¹ A useful definition is given by K Wuest. Baptism is:

“The introduction or placing of a person or thing into a new environment or into a union with something else so as to alter its condition or its relationship to its previous environment or condition.”²

Perhaps the best illustration of the word and the definition above is in regard to dyeing material. The cloth is thoroughly immersed under the dye in a basin; its altered colour reflects its change in state. Baptism is often associated with a symbol so that we can testify that it has taken place. As in the example of dyeing material, it is also associated with emergence - going into and coming out.

Put simply, baptism, when applied to a person involves putting or immersing that person into something which changes his/her state. In the light of the above we can identify four essential questions relating to baptism generally. The fourth relates to the purpose of the baptism.

1. The **SUBJECT**: Who is being “placed into” (immersed)?
2. The **AGENT**: Who is doing the placing?
3. The **SYMBOL**: What is the evidence at the time?
4. The **NEW STATE** and **SPHERE**: What is the change in their situation?

These four questions find their answers in six types of baptism found in Scripture. These are shown in the table below.

Six Types of Baptism

| Example/ Reference | The Subject | The Agent | The Symbol | The New State and Sphere |
|---|---------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| John’s Baptism Gospels, Acts 1:5;11:16;19:4 | Jews | John the Baptist | Water | Jews entering into a new relationship with God through their repentance. |
| The Son’s Baptism Matthew 3:13-16 | Jesus of Nazareth | John the Baptist | Water | The anointed Son of God entering into His public ministry as the Son of Man. |
| Baptism of fire Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16 | Israel | Christ (Messiah) | Fire | Israel under the judgment of the Lord at His Second Advent |
| The Savior’s Baptism Luke 12: 50 | Jesus of Nazareth | Jesus of Nazareth (voluntary submission) | Fire, Cross | The Lord entering into His suffering as the Sacrifice for sin - as the Sin Bearer. |
| Holy Spirit’s baptism Acts 2; 1 Corinthians 12:13 | Believers in Christ | The Holy Spirit through the ascended Christ | Gentile languages miraculously spoken | Individual believers put into one Body and having a new relationship with Christ the ascended Head. |

¹ Transliteration is not translation. When the Greek word “baptizo” was encountered by the translators, they simply adopted the Greek spelling into the English language – rather than translate the meaning of the word – immersion.

²K. Wuest: *Word Studies - Untranslatable Riches from the Greek New Testament*, Volume 3 p. 85. Wm. B Eerdmans Publishing Company.

| | | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------|-------|--|
| New Testament (believers) Baptism Matthew. 28:19; Acts 8, Rom 6 | Believers in Christ e.g. Ethiopian eunuch | Other believers e.g. Phillip | Water | The believer has a new life in Christ - a public profession of Christ as Lord. |
|--|---|---------------------------------|-------|--|

Immersion

It is clear, from the word itself and the instances in which it is used both in the Bible and in ancient secular records, that baptism means **immersion** – being “put into.” So when we speak of the “baptism of the Holy Spirit,” we are dealing with the action of “putting into” and not “receiving.”

The meaning of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

When we study this matter prayerfully within the sweep of God’s word, we find that the baptism of the Spirit refers to Christ, by the Holy Spirit putting the 120 *believers* gathered in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost into a unity – His Body. The baptism of the Spirit marks the *creation* of the **Body of Christ**, which is the Church. This is not a matter of interpretation. Scripture explicitly links the baptism of the Spirit to the Body of Christ.

“For by one Spirit are [were] we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit” (1 Cor 12:13).³

Here, then, is a statement that is so simple yet so misunderstood. Take it at face value and we need go no further! The baptism of the Spirit refers to the action of being put into the body of Christ. However, we press on, because some have not accepted its plain meaning and because a further discussion of it engages other precious truths.

The “putting-into” the Body

Picture the scene in Acts 1. The Lord is among the believers and He is about to ascend to the Father’s throne. He tells them to wait in Jerusalem for the “promise of the Father” (Acts 1:3). What was this promise?

The promise of the Father

The “promise of the Father” speaks generally of the sending of the Holy Spirit or Comforter. In His upper room ministry to his disciples the Lord said He would pray for its fulfillment (Jn 14:16). When the Holy Spirit comes He will perform a specific ministry in relation to the believers. There are separate aspects to His ministry to note in this instance, each having its own purpose regarding believers in this day. The Spirit of God will:

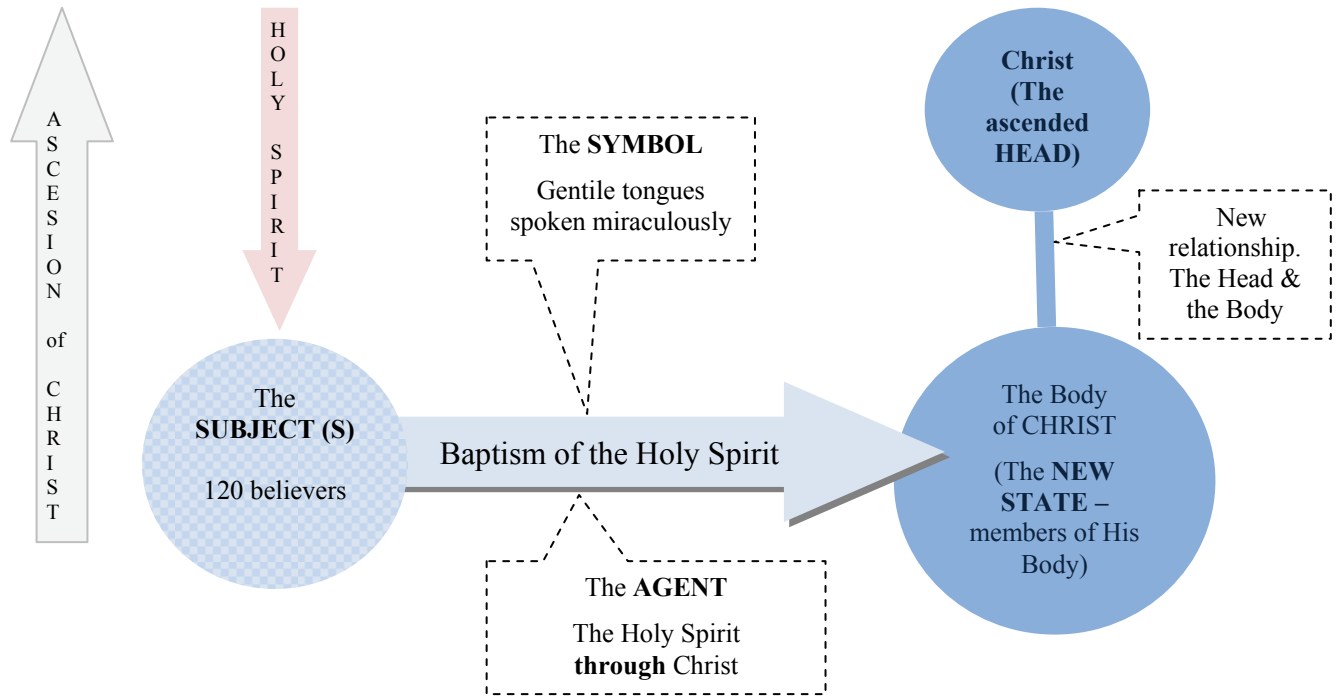
- **indwell** them (the gift of the Spirit)
- **seal** them
- **fill** them
- **baptize** them.

All four took place on the day of Pentecost when the Spirit came as promised. The fact that they were coincident must not cause us to conclude they were one and the same thing. Of particular interest is why the Lord singled out the Spirit’s ministry of baptism in Acts 1:5. “Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”

The answer is simple and wondrous. The Great Shepherd is about to depart. These individuals waiting in Jerusalem constitute 120 precious souls that belong to Him. They are not to be left comfortless or fragmented. They are to be recipients of a monumental act of grace and blessing. They will be placed into a glorious *spiritual unity as members of Christ’s Body* and, further, united to Him as the ascended and glorified **Head** of the Body. “And he is the head of the body, the church” (Col 1:18). How and when was this to happen? It was to be through the baptism of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. This, then, is the baptismal blessing spoken of by the Lord and John the Baptist. It is a

³ “He is the Head of the Body, the Church”; Eph. 1:23; Col. 1:18

divinely timed work of *spiritual incorporation* by the Spirit through the ascended Christ. All 120 believers were commanded to gather in one place to be baptized – to be *put into* a new state as members of the Body of Christ.



1 Corinthians 12:13 - the preposition “in” or “by”?

There is debate over the use of “by the Spirit” or “in the Spirit” in 1 Corinthians 12:13. It is a debate which appears unwarranted if we keep in mind the nature of the Body of Christ and the cooperative nature of the Godhead.

Consider first the expression “are we all baptized into one body.” It is in the aorist tense and passive voice. The aorist tense means that the event spoken of was:

- A *single* event in the *past*
- A *completed* event in the *past*
- A *collective* event in the *past*

The passive voice means that the people involved in that past event were acted upon – something was done *to* them (cf the active voice where the action would be performed *by* them). These grammatical principles mean that the expression must be read as “were we all baptized into one body.”⁴ And so we have the baptism spoken of as a single completed past event which cannot be repeated. Next, there is the expression “baptized into.” It means, as we have noted, to be put into something. There can be no doubt that it is into the Body of Christ. The language of Scripture cannot be plainer. There is nothing here therefore about the Holy Spirit being *put into* individuals. The subjects of the action – the believers, were put into the Body of Christ by the actions of another – the Spirit of God.

Returning now to the prepositions “by” or “in.” It is in keeping with Scripture, we believe, to regard the baptism spoken of as **through** Christ **by** the Spirit of God and according to the beneficent will of the **Father**. The Bible preserves the distinctive work of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. For instance, it is unscriptural to say that the Holy Spirit died for our sins. The Son did that. But it *is* scriptural to say that the work He did in regard to sins

⁴ “Were we all baptized into one body” (hêmeis pantes eis hen sôma ebaptisthêmen). First aorist passive indicative of baptizô and so a reference to a definite past event.” A T Robertson *Word Pictures in the NT* Vol. IV . So too W E Vine, *The Collected Writings of W E Vine* Vol. 2 p 140-141.

was vitally through the Spirit of God. “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God” (Heb 9:14). Again, believer’s (water) baptism is in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matt 28:19). And so we have the baptism of the Spirit as the work of the Spirit, but contingent upon and in cooperation with Christ and the Father. This baptism:

- *arrives* according to the Father’s *promise* (Acts 1:4)
- it is *anchored* upon the Son’s *purchase* (Eph 2:16)
- it is *achieved* by the Spirit’s *placement* (1 Cor 12:13).⁵

“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he [Christ] that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with [by the means of] the Holy Ghost, and with fire” (Matt 3:11). In Ephesians the believers are exhorted to “keep the unity of the Spirit.” What is this unity? It is the unity which was *made* by the Spirit at Pentecost, the *one* body, that same *one* body we have in 1 Corinthians 12:13 which Christ enabled through the cross (Eph 2:16; 4:3-4). It is the positional work of the Spirit, to unite us in Christ. This is what we must keep in a practical sense and it is done having before us the unity of the *Body*, which stands firm in Christ. So we have:

- The **SUBJECT**: Who is being “placed into?”
The 120 believers in Christ.
- The **AGENT**: Who is doing the placing?
The Spirit of God through Christ.
- The **SYMBOL**: What is the evidence at the time?
The Gentile tongues spoken miraculously. There were in fact three signs which warrant our notice:
 - an audible sign of the Spirit’s *presence* – the sound of a mighty rushing wind.
 - a visible sign of the Spirit’s *permanence* in His indwelling – the cloven tongues of fire that sat on each.
 - a linguistic sign of the Spirit’s *power* and the Gentile *prospect* - the miraculous speaking of Gentile languages.
- The **NEW STATE** and **SPHERE** of **IMMERSION**: What is the change in their situation?
They were put *into* the one Body of Christ *united* as members and *united* to a risen and ascended Head.

Drinking of one Spirit

The second part of 1 Corinthians 12:13 is also instructive. “And have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” Every believer in the Body has been “given to drink of one Spirit.” The tense and voice is the same as in the expression “were we all baptized into the body of Christ.” It refers to the participation of the Holy Spirit as the Provider for and Possessor of all in the Body. Paul, speaking against the divisions within the believers at Corinth (vv.4-31) calls them to remember that *each* believer has been made to partake of the life of the Spirit of God. All in the Body of Christ have been indwelt by the one same Spirit. “There is one Body, and One Spirit” (Eph 4:4). This same Spirit indwells us all, therefore set aside divisions and feelings of superiority.⁶

Baptized “with” the Spirit

The following verses connect the term baptism with the expression, “with the Spirit,” the meaning of which has already been alluded to.

Matthew 3:11: “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.”

Mark 1:8: “I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.”

Luke 3:16: “John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.”

⁵ “By means of the personal agency of one Spirit,” we are placed in one body.” K. Wuest, *Word Studies - Untranslatable Riches* Volume 3 p. 86.

⁶ Interestingly, it is not said in Scripture that the “Body” is indwelt by the Spirit. Emphasis is upon the Spirit’s formation of it and its unity in the Spirit. However, we have the Spirit’s indwelling, seen in the Church as a totality in the figure of a building. “In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Eph 2:22).

John 1:33: “And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.”

Acts 1:5: “For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”

Acts 11:16: “Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.”

In these verses we have the *promise* of the baptism. In 1 Corinthians 12:13 we have its *process*, and so it is there that we find the interpretation of the preposition “en” to be “with” the Spirit. That is, baptism with the means of the Spirit. He is the instrumental Agent of it (through Christ as already noted). We must be careful not to take the immersion in water as being an argument for an immersion “in” the Spirit. Water in John’s baptism is symbolic. It has no intrinsic value and is part of a ceremonial process in the matter of *profession*. The baptism with the Spirit was not ceremonial but positional – a matter of *placement* into a unity, the Body of Christ. The Spirit is a divine Person and to be put into Him would be opposed to the truth of it, and contradict the meaning of 1 Corinthians 12:13. Some may raise the example of believers being “baptized into Jesus Christ” (Rom 6:3). This offers no support for two reasons. First, Paul is speaking here of the ordinance of water baptism, which is an outward ceremonial act of profession; second, accordingly the proper rendering is “baptized unto Jesus Christ” (also Gal 3:27, “baptized unto Christ”).

Can there be a Baptism of the Holy Spirit today?

In the light of 1 Corinthians 12:13 we know that the baptism of the Spirit was a once and for all event. This is confirmed by the biblical record.⁷ There was no baptism of the Holy Spirit for those saved just after the events of Acts 2:4. In Acts 2:41, we see a multitude saved and baptized (water baptism i.e. “in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,” v 38). “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls” (v.41). There is no “baptism of the Holy Spirit” here for these new converts. The term is not used. Neither could it be in the light of what this baptism means. The promise stated in verses 38-39 refers to the indwelling, the gift of the Spirit - our receiving Him because “He shall be in you.” “Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (Jn 14:17). We must always be alert to the distinction between the baptism of the Spirit and the Spirit’s indwelling (the gift of the Spirit). The former is a corporate work of the Spirit and to do with the Church of Christ; the latter is an individual work and it is to do with conversion to Christ. We read in Scripture of many believing, being baptized in water and continuing steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine, but nothing about the Spirit’s baptism. Nor do we hear of any Spirit baptism (or “second blessing”) in the events recorded in verses 44-46. Where in these halcyon and fervent days of the Holy Spirit, do we see these converts tarrying for a baptism of the Spirit? Where in the zealous teaching given to them by Peter during this inceptive time do we have instruction to pray for a Spirit baptism? Being pricked in the heart, the Jews asked, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (v.37). Faced with such a glorious opportunity and solemn responsibility, we are confident that a Spirit-led Peter would not fail to mention the need for a personal baptism of the Spirit, if indeed it is of such spiritual importance. “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” (v 38). He implores these unsaved people to repent and be baptized in water, according to the great commission of Matthew 28:19. He also declares that they will *receive* the *gift* of the Holy Spirit – His indwelling. Doubtless, by the Spirit of God Peter chooses his words carefully. He does not say anything about a baptism by or in the Holy Spirit. He is speaking about the Lord’s promise given in John 14 – the gift *of* the Spirit, His permanent indwelling within each of them: He “shall be in you.” There is no appeal to expect or pray for a Spirit baptism. There cannot be, because it had *already* taken place and was a *once-and-for-all* event. It was the formation of the Body of Christ by the unifying work of His Spirit.⁸

⁷ Some respected commentators regard Acts 10 as the “second phase” of the once for all baptism of the Spirit – that which marks the Gentile inclusion within the Body (Pentecost relating to the Jews). It is an attractive thought but it runs counter to the teaching of 1 Corinthians 12:13, as does the idea of a baptism of the Spirit upon personal conversion.

⁸Some ask “Have you tarried for your Pentecost?” Well if a person is to tarry according to the command of the risen Christ (Acts 2), then it must be done according to His complete instruction, and they should go to the city of David. Christ expressly enjoined the disciples to wait for (not pray for, for He was

The Believer today and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

We noted above that in 1 Corinthians 12:13, Paul refers to the Spirit's baptism as a *past* and *completed* event. "By one Spirit are [were] we all baptized into one body."⁹ Paul does not say by one Spirit we *are* baptized into one Body or by one Spirit we *shall be* baptized into one Body. Both would mean the baptism of the Holy Spirit is repeatable and available today. Further, he does not speak of it as a number of past events i.e., individual baptisms, but of *one* event in the past. Paul says we all were involved in this past one event – this includes the Corinthians and every other believer since Pentecost. When he writes to the Corinthians of this event Paul includes himself as being part of that event at Pentecost, even though he was saved at a later date.

Now the question arises, "If the baptism of the Spirit was a one off event, then how do I relate to it?" The important thing to remember is what the Holy Spirit did on that occasion. He placed 120 believers *into* a unity - the Body of Christ - the Church. His Body came into *existence* at that moment. The moment you and I are saved we become part of the Body of Christ automatically as it were - by virtue of our spiritual birth and the Spirit of God indwelling us. As born of the Spirit, we become personally and practically connected with the unity the Spirit made at Pentecost. Otherwise there must be a "re-incorporation," another Pentecost and a Spirit baptism every time a person is saved –which is not heard of in Scripture.

An illustration

Perhaps a simple illustration will help. A man and a woman marry and have a child. They are a family – an organic unity has come into existence. Now if another child is born to them he/she automatically becomes a member of that family and its unity. It does so by virtue of its *natural* birth. The new child does not have to be "put into it" and, neither is there need to re-constitute the whole family. Any future children are prospectively members of that family and they become members in reality upon their natural birth. At Pentecost, a spiritual unity or Body was formed by the Holy Spirit. All subsequent children *born of the Spirit*, that is, upon their *spiritual* birth, become members of it and part of that unity that was made *by the Spirit*. We have in Scripture a corporate spiritual Body and our individual membership of it is by our spiritual birth.

Now there are other examples in Scripture that show that people are regarded as being part of a completed event well before their time. In Romans chapter 5 Paul makes it abundantly clear we are all part of Adam's initial act of sin. When he declares in verse 12, that "death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," he means that we all sinned when Adam sinned. See also Romans 3:23. "For all have sinned, [aorist - a single completed past event] and come short [because of it] of the glory of God." Again in Romans 5:19 we have, "For by one man's disobedience [Adam's sin, the Fall], [the] many were made sinners." There are examples relating to Israel. We read of the Israelites being baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. Again we have events completed in the past. Yet, the baptism into the cloud and the sea is said to have been partaken of by all the fathers, including those after the event. "And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor 10:2).¹⁰

They were "added" – not baptized into the Body

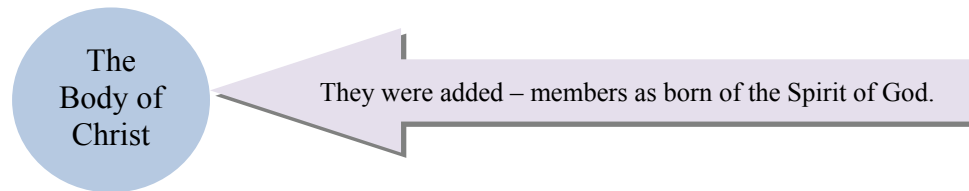
We read in Acts 2:41 of three thousand new converts being "added" - *prosethêsan* (not baptized – put into). Added to what? Something had to have existed for them to be added to it. It was the Body of Christ that was

already promised) the promise of the Father *at Jerusalem*, not at Bethlehem, Damascus, Jericho or Nazareth. Further, not just to tarry at a certain place, but also at a time coincident with the Jewish Feast of Pentecost. When God determines to move among men, He always chooses an appointed time and place. How apt a time and place for God to manifest his grace and judgment. These conditions cannot now or ever again be fulfilled, which confirms the teaching of Scripture that Pentecost was a once-and-for-all event. We have no Scriptural warrant to tarry for the receiving of the Holy Spirit. Such practices open the flood gates to be swayed by "other spirits."

⁹A. T. Robertson *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Volume IV p. 171. "A reference to a definite act in the past." Note here, reference is to a past event not past events (plural).

¹⁰The grammar is very instructive here. The expression "were all baptized" is again in the aorist tense and passive voice. The aorist tense means the event is a past and a completed event. The passive voice means that for those involved - "all the fathers," the action spoken of – baptism in the sea, was involuntary. They are regarded as automatically part of it even though they lived many years later. This is the same grammatical construction that we have in 1 Corinthians 12:13. "Were we all baptized" as we noted above. The saved of every generation involuntarily (automatically) become part of what took place many years ago – Pentecost. We saw this illustrated in our example of the family.

formed on the day of Pentecost. So too, the new-born child is added to the existing family upon its natural birth. We have the spiritual principle declared in verse 47. "And the Lord added [*prostithemi*] to the Church daily such as should be saved [i.e. added to the Lord, His Body]."¹¹ You cannot add to something if it does not exist. The Church, His Body must have existed for such additions to take place. When then did it come into existence? The Body of Christ came into being between the events of Acts 2:1 and Acts 2:41. We know precisely when this was, Acts 2:2 – the day of Pentecost. We also know the means by which it came into existence – the baptism of the Spirit. Although vital to its coming, the incarnation, the resurrection and the ascension of Christ did not *bring* the Body of Christ into being. This was to be the work of the Spirit of God through Christ.¹² His Spirit was to be sent and the faithful were to wait to be baptized with the Holy Ghost - the baptism of the Spirit, as promised by Christ in each Gospel and taught by Paul in I Corinthians 12:13.



Before we leave this line of truth we should note further instructive aspects of it. First note what is *not* being taught. Scripture does not say that the Holy Spirit added but that the *Lord* added. The meaning is "kept on adding."¹³ This work is the Lord's as the Lord of the Harvest (co-operatively with His Spirit). He adds to His Body, which is also figured in Scripture as a building. "I will build My Church" (Matt 16:18). The epistles add further teaching in regard to it. "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Eph 2:20-22).

Unity of the Body – one baptism

In an exhortation for unity among the saints at Ephesus (Eph 4:4-6), Paul reminds them of their membership in One Body through one baptism. The expression "one baptism" means a collective "placing into" which took place at Pentecost.¹⁴ We were all part of this baptism as explained earlier. Some believe Paul is referring to water baptism. However, water baptism, apart from being an individual baptism is merely an *expression* of unity, not the substance of it, not a basis for it. What of those who are saved yet for whatever reason have not undergone water baptism? Are they not part of the unity in Christ – His Body? We must be careful not to align ourselves with the error of Rome and the cults believing that water baptism is a requirement for membership in the Body of Christ. Further, the seven-fold basis of unity identified in verses 4-6 comes under the province of the "the unity of the Spirit" (v.3) - that oneness which *was made* by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost - the baptism by the Spirit, which we are to *keep* or guard.¹⁵ Water baptism as an expression of unity is also seen in Galatians 3:27, based on the common public identification with Christ.

¹¹The Body of Christ comprises all who are saved through Him from Pentecost to the Rapture of the Church.

¹²Beautifully prefigured in Gen. 24. Abraham (the Father) sent his servant who was the custodian of all his possessions (the Spirit of God), to seek and secure a bride for his son Isaac (the Son of God). It was not for the son to seek and seal the bride, but the servant. So too, the Holy Spirit, the Vicar of Christ in regard to the Body and Bride of Christ - the Church.

¹³"The Lord added together such as would be saved" is the correct reading. Imperfect active and the same as in verse 41 for the 3000 added i.e., kept on adding - together. A. T. Robertson *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Volume III p. 40. See also Matt. 16:18; "I will build My Church".

¹⁴"*hen baptisma*" - one common placing into the Body. K Wuest *Word Studies*, Ephesians, Volume 1 p. 96-97.

¹⁵ One - Body; Spirit; hope; Lord; faith; baptism; God and Father.

The historical and prophetic setting

Another often neglected matter in the baptism of the Spirit is the historical and prophetic background. The Lord came to Israel as its Messiah-King. He, and the Baptist before Him, offered the nation the kingdom of God. But the nation rejected the offer and rejected its King. “We will not have this man to reign over us.” Accordingly, God set aside the nation in judgment and in a new dispensation or administration of grace He brought in the Church, the unique feature of which is that both saved Jews and Gentiles are united in one body. Paul identifies this body as “one new man” in Christ (not “a” new man). “That he might reconcile both [Jews and Gentiles] unto God in one body by the cross” (Eph 2:16). This *one* body – and here we are careful to note, is a spiritual *unity* which is the work of the Spirit of God (Eph 4:3). This unity – the unity of the Body of Christ was made *by* the Spirit.

We can see the overriding divine hand in that this body would come into being on the day of Pentecost. The *Passover Feast* was one of the seven Feasts of Jehovah. It celebrated Israel's deliverance from bondage by the blood of the Passover lamb (Ex 12:1-30). This Feast foreshadowed Christ and His death. The NT refers to Him as “Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us” (1 Cor 5:7). The third feast was the *Feast of Firstfruits*. It required the firstfruits of the *barley* harvest to be waved before God (Lev 23:10-14). No Israelite was permitted to partake of the harvest before the firstfruits had been offered to Jehovah. This feast was celebrated on the third day after the slaying of the Passover lamb. It foreshadowed the resurrection of Christ, who rose triumphant on the third day after his death (Passover). This is acknowledged in the NT. He arose as One “risen from [among] the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept” (1 Cor 15:20). Next we come to the Feast of Pentecost, the fourth of the seven. It was celebrated nationally at Jerusalem 50 days after the Passover. It celebrated the *wheat* harvest, the in-gathering and featured *two* loaves of wheat. How fitting were the Lord's words, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit” (Jn 12:24).

What do we learn here? First, we note the divine timing and nature of this Feast. Christ was on earth 40 days after His death prior to His ascension (Acts 1:3). The 120 were required to wait 10 days after His ascension for the coming of the promise of the Father – the Spirit of God and His baptism (Acts 1:4). Fifty days after the Passover (Christ's death) the Holy Spirit descends, when the “Feast of Pentecost was fully come” (Acts 2:1). How marvelous! Second we have the two loaves. These anticipate the bringing forth of much fruit, the Gospel harvest, which brings the saved Jew and Gentile united as one in the Body of Christ. We have this in Acts 10, with the conversion of the Gentile Cornelius and his house. “When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life” (Acts 11:18). As we have noted, the day of Pentecost marks a new period, one of matchless grace, the beginning of the Church period when God brings the Gentiles into blessing. And, we remark in passing, how fitting were the tongues spoken on that occasion. They were Gentiles languages, miraculously spoken as a sign to the Jews that the Gentiles would be brought into this body.

Its timing

Let us dwell on this a little more, because it not only touches upon Christ's victory and His relationship to us, but brings before us the fact that the baptism of the Spirit cannot be prayed for today (or in any day).¹⁶ Note that the 120 had to wait together until the Lord ascended. Why was this? It was because the Body, His Church needs a risen and glorified Head. Why a risen Head? Because a risen Head speaks of life and victory over sin and death. Why a glorified Head? Because the union between His Body and the Head is in heaven. Paul speaks of this blessed truth to the Ephesian believers. “And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph 2:6). It is not an earthly union.¹⁷ It cannot be because the Head is enthroned at the right hand of God. We note here the distinction between the New and Old Testament saints in regard to the Spirit's operation. The OT saints were never united in such a Body or to such a Head. Further, where was the Spirit of God *by* whom they must be united to the Head in heaven? The Spirit of God had to come, to be sent for this purpose once Christ had

¹⁶Nowhere in the Bible are we asked to pray for a baptism of the Holy Spirit. The only time prayer is associated with it is when Christ prayed for it as part of the promise of the Father.

¹⁷How irrelevant and misguided then are the attempts by man to form the Church which is His Body into some earthly union! We will leave it to the unholy trinity of Revelation to unite a world church.

ascended. Once all this was in place only then could the Spirit of God descend and form the Body of Christ.¹⁸ We can see why it is unscriptural to pray for a repeat of all this. Christ died once, arose from the dead once, ascended once and His Spirit formed His Body once, at the time of Pentecost. In 1 Corinthians 12:13 Paul looks *back* to Pentecost and tells us what the “baptism of the Holy Spirit” *was*.¹⁹ The action of the verb is plain enough for all to see – believers put **into** one body. It also tells us what the baptism of the Spirit is *not* – a person *receiving* the Spirit i.e., the gift of the Spirit or a believer being invested with supernatural power. The prepositions *by* and *into*, agree with the aspects of baptism stated above. “For by [in virtue of] One Spirit [the Agent, through Christ] are [were] we all [every believer] baptized into one body [the new state].”

Not Israel but the Body of Christ – the Church

The baptism of the Spirit has nothing to do with the nation of Israel. Israel has now been set aside in judgment. The Church has been bought into being through a new work of grace. It comprises a redeemed people – saved Jews and Gentiles *together as One New Man in Christ*. Ephesians 3:3-6 presents and confirms this truth which was in the past a mystery or hidden. “Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body [the Church], and partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel.”

The Church – its witness

There is another reason why the Lord focuses on the baptism of the Spirit in Acts 1:4-5. His presence will no longer grace and temper the scene of time. No longer will His blessed footsteps carry the Father’s commission. Who is to do this when He is gone? “Spirit-filled believers” we say, for we do read they will receive power after the Holy Ghost is come upon them (Acts 1:8), that is, the filling of the Spirit. The Lord also makes reference to the filling of the Spirit (clothed with power) in His closing words (Luke 24:49). He does this because He speaks of the need for Spirit-led witnessing (v.48). These references are to the individual and the filling of the Spirit; but here in Acts it is the Church and its witness. We must not diminish the sanctifying influence of the Church. Spirit-filled evangelizing men were not something new. We hear of many filled prior to Pentecost. It is the Church which, when assembled in various localities as “body of Christ,” that is to testify of God. “To the intent that **now** unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.”²⁰ It is the presence of this Body that is to hallow fallen creation and is this is part of the reason for the Lord recalling the Father’s promise. We know, that when the Church and the Spirit of God in the sense that He now indwells, are taken out of this world at the Rapture (the Lord’s coming for His Church), a great tide of evil will roll over the earth.²¹ And so the Lord heralds the new dispensation. It is defined by the coming of His Spirit (the Restrainer) and His Body formed by His Spirit. “Ye shall be baptized [incorporated] with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”

Explaining the mistaken ideas

If all this is so, then why do many fail to see it? We come back to the danger of interpreting Scripture by our experiences or those of others, and failing to rightly divide the word of Truth. These experiences are often associated with “speaking in tongues” which, sadly, reinforces the wrongful teaching regarding the Spirit’s baptism. The grip of emotional experiences is often so strong that the mind is shut to the biblical principle of “what saith the Scriptures?”

Denial of Christ and the Spirit

Vital though it is, getting biblical doctrine “right” is not an end in itself. The value of correct doctrine must be evident in our practical lives as disciples of Christ and as worshippers of God. If Satan can persuade us to believe

¹⁸The very coming of the Spirit of God in this age and therefore all aspects of His mission within it had to await the glorification of Christ! See John 7:39 below.

¹⁹ It is also clear from the sequence of events (i.e., the rejection of Christ by the Jews, His rejection of them, the preaching of the gospel to all men) that the Lord is looking *forward* to Pentecost in Acts 1:5.

²⁰Ephesians 3:10. In this a solemn responsibility devolves upon the local churches.

²¹2 Thessalonians 2: 6-7

that the baptism of the Spirit is the *receiving* of the Spirit for power and gifts, then he directs our focus away from the amazing truth of the Body of Christ and all that is associated with it, i.e., the unique work of the Spirit of God in regard to it; its unity as the One New Man in Christ and, most of all, its relationship to Christ, its risen and glorified Head. How neglected this relationship is today! We hear a good deal concerning the relationship between God the Father and His children which is always profitable; but how often do we hear teaching on the Head and His Body; the Bride and the Bridegroom; Headship and Lordship; the responsibility of the local church to show forth the manifold wisdom of God?

Many confuse the receiving of the Spirit with His work of baptism. This has led to the idea that a “baptism of the Spirit” is the ultimate personal spiritual attainment, which is evidenced by speaking in tongues and other spectacular “gifts” of the Spirit. Understandably, this drives many sincere believers to wait and pray for such an experience. They do indeed get an experience; but it is not according to Scripture. Fearfully, it is either a psychological aberration or a manifestation of another spirit. Some remain disbelieving. Observe however the increasing number of Roman Catholics who claim a baptism in the Spirit. They manifest the same supernatural evidences of it as Protestants and, yet, they hold to false doctrine such as transubstantiation, purgatory and the intercession of “saints.” “Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet 1:13). Finally, there is the fatal teaching that the baptism of the Spirit is one of a number of steps *to* salvation.²² “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee” (1 Tim 4:16).

The Baptism of Fire – What is it?

Many claim to have had a “baptism of fire” – a spiritual influx that energizes the soul giving rise to speaking in tongues and other charismata. They take this to be associated with or the same thing as the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The expression “baptism of fire” is not in Scripture, though the sense of it is found in various passages. There are many references to “fire” in the Bible. The following are two that relate to our subject.

Matthew 3:11: “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.”

Luke 3:16: “John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.”

In Scripture “fire” is often associated with divine judgment. The last mention of it in the OT – which is of vital significance in the light of our subject, is in Malachi 3:2. It speaks of judgment. “But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap.” The prophet Malachi is referring to the Tribulation and Second Advent when the nation of Israel is placed under a refiner's fire. This will occur after the Church period (Mal. 3:2-3; 4:1; Isa. 4:4 etc.). Israel will pass through the Lord's refining hand of judgment - a “baptism of fire,” with some saved as wheat and others burnt as chaff.

Now let us return to Luke 3:16 and note carefully the context the Spirit of God places before us. It is defined by the very next verse (17). “Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” Who and what is the Spirit speaking of here? It is the nation Israel and its future spiritual refining under the judicial hand of the Lord. The expression “corn of my floor” is interpreted by Isaiah as Israel, in relation to another, but now, past day of national testing. “O my threshing, and the corn of my floor: that which I have heard of the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you” (Isa. 21:10). The threshing refers to the looming trials under Babylonian captivity in the 6th century BC to be experienced by Israel – the “corn [son] of my floor.”

What then does all this mean in regard to the expression “with fire” in Luke and Matthew? The first thing to bear in mind is that it refers to divine *judgment* and not divine blessing. It cannot therefore refer to the work of the Spirit

²²Torry's “seven steps” to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. R. A. Torrey, *The Holy Spirit*; Revell.

of God in baptism – which is a promise associated with divine blessing in the coming and unity of the Body of Christ. Second, we note that though the expression “with fire” is mentioned by Luke in his *Gospel*, he *omits* it in his parallel passage in *Acts*. Again the context provides the explanation. The passage in Luke’s Gospel brings the Church into view with the baptism of the Spirit but it also has a special message for Israel. The disciples here represent both the Church in regard to the Spirit’s baptism and also the nation of Israel in regard to the baptism of fire. It was at the time when the kingdom was on offer to Israel. And so we have in verse 17 as noted above, fire signaling the judgment of that nation under the refining hand of the Lord at His Second Advent. It connects with the OT prophecy relating to Israel given in Malachi. Matthew’s Gospel we know is essentially Jewish and so there, too, we have the expression “with fire” and its signal of future judgment on Israel. Not so the book of Acts (and John’s Gospel). It is primarily concerned with the coming Church and the unity between Jews and Gentiles in Christ as His Body. Israel was set aside. The coming of the Church, Christ’s Body was imminent and a new day of grace was to dawn for Jews and Gentiles. So when the Spirit of God inspired Luke to write the account in Acts 1, He omitted any reference to the expression “with fire.” He merely contrasts John’s baptism with the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. “For John truly baptized with water; **but** ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence” (Acts 1:5).

Tongues of Fire – What are they?

From the above study it is apparent that the “baptism of fire” does not refer to the “tongues of fire” in Acts 2, as some believe. In addition to symbolizing divine judgment, fire in Scripture signals the *presence* of God and His holiness (Ex. 3:2, 13:21, 19:18, 24:17; Deut. 5:4). The tongues as of fire parted as they rested on each person signifying unity and the presence of the Holy Spirit. They are never seen again. Never prayed or tarried for. They were a visible sign of:

- The Spirit of God who came as *promised*.
- His *indwelling* each believer on that occasion – the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- His *filling* of each believer on that occasion – the empowerment by the Holy Spirit.
- The unity that He had made – the Body of Christ – the tongues spoken (actual Gentiles, languages signifying that the Gentiles who were once “unclean” would also be part of this unity).

Key Texts Explained

In this section we take a closer look at some of the key verses relating to our subject. We begin with four that bear specifically on the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 3:11: “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance but he that cometh after me [Christ] is mightier than I...he [Christ] shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.”

Mark 1:8: “I indeed have baptized you with water but he [Christ] shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.”

Luke 3:16: “I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh [Christ].....he [Christ] shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.”

John 1:33: “the same is he [Christ] which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost”.

In these Gospel passages, baptism means “immersion” or “putting into.” We have here the Holy Spirit’s agency in cooperation with the will and supplication of Christ. All Gospels refer to Christ as the Originator of the baptism of the Spirit. What is being said here is that, He (Christ) will baptize (immerse) you with (by the means or agency of) the Spirit of God.²³ Christ ascended to His rightful place at the right hand of God. His Vicar, the Spirit of God had to

²³This voids any notion that men can impart a ‘baptism of the Spirit’ or any other work of the Holy Spirit. Some disagree quoting Paul’s desire to impart a spiritual gift to the Romans (Rom. 1:11). The word impart however means to share. *Metadidomi*, “to give a share of, impart” (meta, “with”), as distinct from “giving.” The apostle Paul speaks of “sharing” some spiritual gift with Christians at Rome, Rom. 1:11, “that I may impart,” and exhorts those who minister in things temporal, to do so as “sharing,” and that generously, 12:8, “he that giveth”; so in Eph. 4:28; Luke 3:11; in 1 Thess. 2:8 he speaks of himself and his fellow missionaries as having been well pleased to impart to the converts both God’s gospel and their own selves (i.e., so “sharing” those with them as to spend themselves and spend out their lives for them).” W. E. Vine: “*Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*,” p. 149.

be sent to perform the work of incorporating the 120 believers into His Body. In this we have the harmonious cooperation of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:5: “For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”

The Lord asked them to *wait* for the promise of the Father (never to pray for it). They had to wait together in obedience to the Lord’s command in order to be:

- permanently *indwelt* by the Holy Spirit as promised (John 14:17)²⁴
- permanently *sealed* by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13-14)
- *baptized* by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ (Acts 1:5; Gospels; 1 Cor 12:13)
- *filled* with the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; Eph. 5:18)

The case of the 120 believers at Pentecost was unique, in that they were the first subjects of the new dispensation upon whom the Spirit of God would undertake His ministry. This meant they were involved in *all* four works of the Spirit noted above - simultaneously, the *permanent indwelling, sealing, filling and baptism*.

Luke 11:13: “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?”

Again, it is a matter of rightly dividing the Word of God. This was a time *before* Pentecost characterized by the conditions under the Old Testament, when the Holy Spirit came upon individuals and also left them. David knew that the Spirit of God could depart from him and prayed He would not do so. The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul and, in the case of Samson, He came upon him when special works were needed.

Luke 24:49: “And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”

Here the Lord’s words speak of the need to wait at Jerusalem for the promise of the Father. There is no baptism of the Spirit mentioned. The emphasis is upon preaching the Gospel to all nations (v.48) and so He refers to his disciples being “clothed with power” from on high. It refers to the *filling or empowerment* by the Spirit who would come to dwell within.

John 7:37-39: “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (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).”

The Lord speaks here of the promise of the Spirit who was about to be given to those who believe in Him as Lord and Saviour. The promise is general, and embraces all four works of the Spirit noted above – His *permanent indwelling, sealing, baptism and filling*, which took place simultaneously in regard to the 120 believers at Pentecost. This was to occur after He was glorified in heaven. Note, here too, the reference is to Pentecost and there is no instruction to pray for the Spirit - He was to be *given*, predetermined by the will of God and predicated upon His Son being glorified.

The Lord identifies Himself as the Source of living water unto salvation. “If any man thirst, let Him come unto Me, and drink.” How reminiscent of His offer to the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well (John 4:10). He then speaks of that wonderful portion of those who drink of His life-giving salvation. “He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow the rivers of living water.” The focus here is not something that is received by a believer, but something that flows from the believer. This was to be the result of the *indwelling* of the Spirit of God - an indwelling *never* to be prayed for because it was *promised* by Christ, as we have seen. The Lord refers to the outflow of grace and truth from those who have drunk of Him, He who came with an infinite well of “grace and truth” (John 1:17).²⁵

²⁴Being believers in Christ prior to Pentecost, they would have been indwelt by the Spirit of God according to the manner of the OT. This indwelling now is of a permanent nature and inextricably associated with the Spirit’s sealing.

²⁵Some take the statement “out of his belly” to refer to Christ and not to the believer. The context furnished by 7:39 would put beyond doubt that the reference is to the believer and his receiving of the Spirit of God *through* which he would manifest the grace and truth of Christ.

John 20:22: “And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.”

This verse does not refer to the Holy Spirit being received – His permanent indwelling, as at Pentecost. This is pre-Pentecost and so the Spirit had not come as promised. The coming of the Spirit of God upon them *collectively* and His *permanent indwelling* of each had to wait until the Lord ascended. Here the Lord breathed on them to indicate that the Spirit that was within them (as He was upon others in the manner before Pentecost), is now associated with His resurrection glory.²⁶ It is in the power of the Spirit, now seen as co-operative in the resurrection of Christ that they were to go forth as His disciples. The Lord’s breathing here, indeed the whole scene is symbolic and anticipatory of the Church which was to begin at Pentecost. We see the saints gathered, the Lord as the risen Head in the midst, the Holy Spirit given and all on resurrection ground.²⁷

Acts 1:8: “Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you and ye shall be witnesses unto me.”

Note once more, they “shall receive.” It was according to promise, divinely decreed and vouchsafed through grace, and not to be prayed for. This power was to be the result of the Holy Spirit’s indwelling and filling (not the baptism of the Spirit - the putting into the Body of Christ).

Acts 11:16: “Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.”

Up to this point in time the Holy Spirit had only come upon Jews and they alone were in the Body of Christ. But now, we have Gentiles converted - those who the Jews regarded as spiritually unclean. Through a vision Peter had to learn that “what God hath cleansed, that call not thou common” (Acts 10:15). The Church which was incorporated at Pentecost we noted was to include saved Jews *and* saved Gentiles united in Christ (typified by the two loaves in the Feast of Pentecost). Would the sign-seeking Jews accept this truth? What confirmation would God give? Well these Gentile converts began to speak in tongues just like the Jews did at Pentecost when the Body of Christ was formed. This showed that these converted Gentiles received the gift of the Spirit – His indwelling (v.47). Listen to their admission. “And they of the circumcision [the Jews] which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.” All this convinced Peter’s Jewish brethren that “God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life” (11:18).²⁸ It confirmed that the baptism of the Spirit, the Body of Christ that was formed at Pentecost, was not just to include saved Jews, but saved Gentiles as well, a people who were once “without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world” (Eph 2:12). Again we see the nature and significance of the tongues – the Gentiles languages miraculously spoken on the Day of Pentecost.

Galatians 3:27: “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

The baptism referred to here is water baptism and the proper rendering is “baptized unto Christ.” Water baptism is an expression of unity. In verse 26 Paul reminds the Galatians that they became united in Christ through faith in Him. Their baptism in water is the *expression* of this unity – not its substance.

Hebrews 6:2: “Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.”

Many have taken this verse out of its context and ignored the grammar. The word “baptisms” is in the plural and is *baptismos*, which properly means “washings” and *not* immersions. The same Greek word is actually translated as “washings” by the AV in Hebrews 9:10. “Only (with meats and drinks and divers washings) carnal ordinances, imposed until a time of reformation.” The context refers to the ceremonial washings of purity conducted under the

²⁶The same word is used as in the breathing of natural life into man in Genesis 2:7.

²⁷The symbolism deepens when we consider the absence of Thomas on this first meeting. He symbolizes the Jewish remnant by his absence and words, “Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails.....I will not believe”. In the next gathering he is present and views the imprint of the nails, figurative of that future day when the remnant shall see Him.

²⁸The manifestation of the Spirit’s indwelling them is stated as He “fell” upon them, not literally of course, but metaphorically. The sign-gift of tongues displayed by these Gentile converts were the same as those received at Pentecost by Peter and the other Jews.

ordinances of Jewish law in regard to the priest and the holy utensils. So, too, the laying on of hands refers to the OT practice of laying hands on the various sacrifices. These were, as the writer says to the Christian Jews, rudimentary in that they pointed to better things to come.²⁹

The Baptism of the Spirit and the Gift of the Spirit

It will be apparent from what we have observed from the Word of God that the **baptism** of the Spirit is not the same thing as the **gift** of the Spirit. The latter refers to the Holy Spirit *Himself* bring *given* to each and every believer at the time of salvation in Christ. This gift was promised by the Lord and refers to the Spirit's permanent indwelling in the believer. "Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for He dwelleth **with** you, and **shall be in** you" (Jn 14:17). Paul speaks of it in Romans. "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" (Rom 8:9).

Conclusion

When we study the matter of the baptism of the Holy Spirit with a mind unencumbered by our experiences and preconceptions, we will see that the baptism of the Spirit as taught in Scripture refers to the never-again-to-be repeated event which took place at Pentecost. It marked the formation of the Body of Christ. Every saved person becomes a member of it at the moment of conversion. It was never to be prayed for and it is quite distinct to the indwelling, sealing and filling of the Spirit. It is vital to distinguish between the baptism of the Spirit which was done once *for* us and the manifestation of the Spirit *by* us, empowered because of His dwelling *in* us. Many incorrectly associate the baptism of the Spirit with an infusion of "power." They fail to see that the filling of the Spirit simply coincided with the Spirit's baptism on that occasion. They are themselves quite separate things. After all, the bestowing of "spiritual power" was nothing new. Many OT saints and NT saints were recipients of it before Pentecost and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Elizabeth and Zacharias for instance were filled with the Spirit before Pentecost (Luke 1:41; 67).

May the Spirit of God enable us to study to show ourselves approved unto God, "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Ti m2:15).

²⁹There is ample evidence in the Bible of the "laying on of hands" both in the OT and in the NT. In each case it was to do with *identification, recognition or confirmation*. It was of itself never about bestowing anything.