

BAPTISM IN
THE
HOLY SPIRIT
AND
WITH FIRE

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International Ministries

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Bracketed comments following some scriptures assist the reader in understanding the intended meaning of these verses

We acknowledge the additional works of the various Scholars and Bible Commentaries used in conjunction with the College material. This is not to say that we agree with all their theology, but we certainly value their contribution to the Body of Christ.

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BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT AND WITH FIRE

Background Reading: John Chapter 17

It is impossible to overestimate the importance of being baptized in the Holy Spirit - for it is impossible for Christians to meet all the requirements of the day and walk effectively in their callings unless they are baptized in the Holy Spirit. This is why Jesus said:

LUKE 24:49 “And behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry (wait) in the city of Jerusalem, until you be endued (clothed) with power from on high.”

Because:

ACTS 1:8 “ . . . you shall receive power (ability, efficiency and might) after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and you shall be (effective) witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

In these scriptures, Jesus was referring to the mighty Baptism in the Holy Spirit. During His ministry He taught that in order to be effectual witnesses for Him, we need the power and the giftings which accompany the Spirit Baptism.

In this teaching we will cover various questions which people often raise concerning the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. There has been much controversy surrounding this subject, and it is important to discover or at least reaffirm what God’s Word really teaches on the matter.

“ . . . It is impossible for Christians to meet all the requirements of the day and walk effectively in their callings unless they are baptized in the Holy Spirit. . . ”

Like other vital doctrines, the Baptism in the Holy Spirit has been under much attack from the enemy, with Satan trying continually to surround this doctrine with as much confusion, doubt and unbelief as he can. His purpose in this is to discredit the Spirit Baptism so that people are prevented from knowing the fullness and power of the Holy Spirit. Satan knows that if Believers could fully comprehend and take hold of this promise, his reign on earth would be extremely restricted. So he and his forces work tirelessly to instigate much wrong teaching concerning this subject, examples of which are as follows: “This experience is not for today,” “Speaking in tongues is of the devil,” “The Spirit Baptism passed away with the Apostles,” and so on.

As Christians, it is vitally important that we are well versed in the truth of God’s Word so that we can discern truth from error and not be led down a pathway of ignorance, confusion and doubt. Amen.

GOD IS LIGHT

1 JOHN 1:5 This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is Light (as to His nature, essence, and character; God is Light: E.S.B.), and in Him is no (spiritual) darkness at all.

The Light described here is not light as we know it, the kind of light that comes when the electricity is turned on. This Light is power and goodness as well as light - and it dispels spiritual darkness. Indeed, as the scripture declares, “*God is Light*,” and this

holy Light contains the essence of God - Who He is. Part of this Light or that contained in it, i.e. part of His essence, God has chosen to share with His creation, man (1 Peter 2:9). For example, love is a grace that has come from God to man. God gives us the ability to love, but He wants to take us from a love that just loves those who love us to a love that is even able to love its enemies. This is “agape” love, God-type love. Jesus demonstrated this love by even dying for His enemies.

JOHN 1:5 And the Light shines in darkness (this refers to the Incarnation); and the darkness comprehended (overcame) it not (should have been translated, “apprehended it not”); it means that Satan, even though he tried with all his might, could not stop “the Light”; today it shines all over the world, and one day soon, there will be nothing left but that “Light”. (E.S.B.)

JOHN 1:6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John (John the Baptist - there was no greater Prophet: Luke 7:28).

JOHN 1:7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light (this was John’s mission), that all men through Him (Jesus) might believe.

JOHN 1:8 He (John) was not that Light (Jesus is the only Light), but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

JOHN 1:9 That was the true Light (there are many false lights; Jesus is the only True Light), which lights every man who comes into the world (if man is to find Light, it will be only in Christ, and it is for “every man”). (E.S.B.)

As we see from the scriptures, **God is Light - His nature, essence and character is this Light.** Therefore His Divine Nature is contained in this holy Light. It is His Divine Nature which gives man the capacity to love (with agape love) like God - when the grace of the Divine Nature infuses into our human nature. In fact in this

process we become alive to the things of God through connection and experience. To love in this capacity, without God, is impossible.

“ . . . This Light is power and goodness as well as light - and it dispels spiritual darkness. . . ”

Without a connection to God through Christ, man will live in a dark shell with no real power or spiritual light in it. We then live only in the shadow of the image of God in which we were created. Even at this level we can love in a human way, which is far inferior to the potential we now have in Christ. Yet this is still good, and helps the world have a little “goodness” in it. Without Christ in our life, however, that is all it will be, good but very limited. For example, we have all seen couples who are so in love one year, but who fall out of love the next year and even start to hate each other. This occurs all around the world on a daily basis, but how can this be? It happens because, as we have said, this love of man operates at a much lower level than God’s unconditional love. Thank God, however, that this love of man is on the earth, or it wouldn’t be a pleasant place in which to live!

God has thus allowed a little of His image to come through man, even unsaved man. But it is only a shadow of His image. It is like the aftermath of the original creation of man. Thank God that He has allowed man in his fallen state to retain this ability to love - making man’s life bearable in the midst of dire circumstances. Indeed we are, by design, emotional creatures who can love and care for others - but without any real purpose until we find Christ.

“ . . . Without a connection to God through Christ, man will live in a dark shell with no real power or spiritual light in it. . . ”

Man is responsible for seeking God's Truth. This is only found in Christ, and only in Him can we progress to reach our proper potential as God has designed. As a Christian, to live in God's will, we must develop our relationship with our Saviour - and the Holy Spirit is the only Person Who can help us do this. He is the Revealer of Truth, He is the Empowerer, He is the One Who takes us to Christ and reveals the depths of His love for us. Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, speaks to us, directs us, and brings us to the Father. It is the work of the Spirit to equip and ready us emotionally and spiritually to worship God in spirit and in truth (John 4:23). Without the mighty grace of the Spirit Baptism, however, we simply will not get there. We will stumble around, saved, yes, but yet experientially in the dark, not knowing about the deep things of God, the things that would cause us to reach our potential (or somewhere near it) in Christ. It may not be every day we walk in or reach our potential, but in the days we give of ourselves to God, He will do much with what He is given, namely us, as we yield to Him! What He is able to do with us is usually dependent upon how much of His Word we have allowed Him to store and develop in our hearts - for His Word will direct us to the secret place of God's heart and His will for our lives. Indeed the Word constitutes the filter through which every thought and intent should pass (Hebrews 4:12; 5:14). Amen.

WHAT IS "THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT" ?

Background Reading: Acts 1:1-8

Upon salvation, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit come and make Their abode with us (John 14:23), and we become united with God so that we are able to cry "*Abba Father*" (Romans 8:9; Galatians 4:6). After regeneration, however, there is a further experience which immerses the Believer in the power of God. This, the Spirit Baptism, can enable the Believer, as God wills, to operate in a greater measure of the Spirit's power.

Many Christians, even some who are already baptized in the Holy Spirit, ask, "What exactly is the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, and how does it happen?"

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the “clothing of power from on high” which equips Christians, potentially, to be used of God in a greater way. This happens when the Holy Spirit anoints Believers to empower them for Christian service. Also, the enriched spiritual atmosphere which the Spirit Baptism affords, helps the child of God to grow in the graces of God so that they can become more Christ-like in character.

In the Gospel of Luke, the word translated from the Greek word “enduo” as “endued” (Luke 24:49, KJV) means “to be clothed,” “to put on,” “to enter into,” “to get into.” So in the context of this verse it means to slip into, or to enter into an atmosphere that helps the Christian better absorb the graces they need, graces which constitute power. The Christian then has the ability in Christ to do God’s will completely at all levels, privately and publicly.

Publicly we need to be prepared for service. Because we have the ministry of reconciliation, when we share Christ and His love with others, we need our words to be anointed of God (2 Corinthians 5:18).

Privately we are a “work in progress.” This means that ongoing sanctification will be the order of the day until we go to be with the Lord.

Therefore in both arenas and on a daily basis we need the enriched Holy Spirit atmosphere that comes from the Spirit Baptism. This atmosphere can help us better absorb the graces we need from God to become the person He wants us to be. We need these graces so that we can take up our cross and follow our Lord completely - in His strength and not ours i.e. via willpower.

*“ . . .The enriched spiritual atmosphere
which the Spirit Baptism affords, helps
the child of God to grow in the graces of
God. . . ”*

Just as the Disciples were empowered on the Day of Pentecost, so too, Christians today can be empowered for witnessing and service. The Spirit Baptism, along with knowledge of the Word of God, can provide us with the power and direction needed to spread the light of the Gospel to a world darkened by sin, and help us meet the needs of people who are seeking assistance from God. Remember that the Baptism in the Spirit, as recorded in Acts 2:1-4, changed the timid and fearful Disciples to dynamic and courageous messengers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ! Instead of hiding away in fear of the Jews, the Disciples came out into the streets and openly preached the Gospel - with amazing results (Acts 2:5-41).

Potentially, it also gives us a spiritually enriched atmosphere in which the energies and graces of God's Divine Nature are better able to flow through our very being.

2 PETER 1:4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises (refers to the Word of God): that by these (promises) you might be partakers of the Divine Nature (the Divine Nature implanted in the inner being of the believing sinner becomes the source of our new life and actions; it comes to everyone at the moment of being "Born-Again": E.S.B.), having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust (speaks of salvation and ongoing sanctification).

The potential offered by the Spirit Baptism is that greater power is available to us (than without the Spirit Baptism). This includes, of course, the flow of the gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:4-11). But the spiritual atmosphere which this grace provides also enables us to become more at one with the Divine Nature, as it enmeshes with our human nature. Through this process, as we have learned, we gain the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16). In other words we are able to think as He thinks. This means that the potential of the Spirit Baptism is that we are more able, in more areas of our life, to be at one with the Lord - to think like Him, to act like Him, to believe like Him - at a deeper level and to a greater degree. In this way the Spirit Baptism thus gives us greater potential to get closer to the Lord. Therefore Christians continue to need this vital

life-changing experience with the Holy Spirit today.

***“ . . . The Baptism in the Spirit changed
the timid and fearful Disciples to
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the Gospel of Jesus Christ. . . ”***

Nevertheless, it should be said at this point that the Spirit Baptism should not simply be regarded as a goal which Christians desire to arrive at. It is rather a gateway to a whole new world of deeper spiritual perception and understanding by which we can become more effective servants of the Lord. Through the Spirit Baptism, which is part of our journey of faith, a deeper, richer relationship with our Lord should also develop, along with many ensuing personal benefits which we will discuss later in this study. But we need first and foremost to view the Spirit Baptism as a door by which the Lord can accomplish much in our lives, not merely as an end in itself. It is part of the journey by which we are meant to progress in the knowledge and love of God. Without the wonderful experience of the Holy Spirit Baptism, we will be hindered in this progression.

A NEW SPIRITUAL ATMOSPHERE

Through the Spirit Baptism, as we have said, we are brought into an enriched spiritual atmosphere that can help us absorb more easily the graces of God - so that His will can be done in our lives. This of course is the potential that comes through the Spirit Baptism.

At salvation the Holy Spirit brings the saving presence of God around our spirit. In fact the marvellous Light of His presence goes from the outside to the inside of our spirit, thereby eradicating all darkness so that by this process we become regenerated - made new creatures in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). The old man is no more, and behold we are made a new man with and by the Light (the presence) of God. Amen. Yes God makes His abode with us (John

14:23), all those who put their trust in Christ through the Cross. However when we receive the wonderful grace of the Spirit Baptism, the Holy Spirit creates a new spiritual atmosphere around our spirit. How? He does this by centering His position, and making His abode an “in to out” experience instead of an “out to in” experience. From this position, He is able to do far more for us and through us as we flow with Him. In fact this results in a new internal climate, that of a spiritually-charged, holy atmosphere - which gives us the potential to take greater advantage of the graces we need to do the Father’s will.

No matter what internal atmosphere exists, however, we will always need to go through the Cross as the object of our faith in all things (Galatians 2:20-21). All that we have, or are able to receive from God, is available to us exclusively because of Christ’s completed work at Calvary and our faith in it. We need to let God develop this foundation in our hearts. Anything good in our lives is to come through Him in us and us in Him, no division, only oneness with the Father. This unity can only come through the Holy Spirit’s work - which is based on Christ’s atoning work at Calvary.

Victory only comes into our lives and the lives of others when we, as Christians, seek God’s will, find it and embrace it with all that we have - 100% of our spirit, 100% of our soul and 100% of our body. Without the Spirit of Truth, Who reveals all truth (John 16:13), none of us will find God’s will for our lives - and without the Holy Spirit empowering us, we will never walk in it! It is the Spirit Who is the Teacher of all that is true and good. Daily therefore we need to get closer to the front of the classroom of life and hear what the Spirit, our Teacher, is saying about Jesus and the Father’s will. And the Spirit Baptism is so essential if we are to progress in our relationship with the Lord. In fact, we will be stunted without it and we will not be able to move on to where God wants us to be. All that we can do without the Spirit Baptism is hold on without moving on (Acts 1:8).

“. . .When we receive the wonderful grace of the Spirit Baptism, the Holy Spirit creates a new spiritual atmosphere, making His abode an “in to out” experience instead of an “out to in” experience. . .”

Christianity is about relationship. And this is not to be a passive, holding on, “head just out of the water” affair. Our relationship with Christ is meant to cause us not to sink into life’s waters so that we must dog-paddle all day long. No, by faith and God’s empowerment, we are meant to rise above life’s circumstances and walk on the water in Jesus’ Name, being led by the Spirit of Truth. This is to live in the abundant life promised by Jesus, *“I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly”* (John 10:10).

Take the natural example of the sun and its attributes being enjoyed by man. The sun has a quality known as heat which is not visible but which we on earth can feel. This is because we are in the right atmosphere to absorb this life-sustaining property of the sun. However, if we were to position ourselves in outer space, the same solar heat rays would be present, but because we would not be in the right atmosphere in this situation, we would not be able to make use of or absorb this heat. We need the earth’s atmosphere to absorb the heat from the sun’s rays.

Similarly, only with the Baptism of the Holy Spirit can we gain the atmosphere we need in order to absorb the graces required to heat up our spirit-man so that spiritually speaking, our human nature will be thawed out. In this atmosphere, we will be better able to move with God and be at one with Him, even having a greater passion for the things of the Lord. It is in this new atmosphere that the Divine Nature infuses into and can energize and thaw our human nature to the greater degree needed for God’s will to be done in our life.

In fact without the energies and graces of the Divine Nature flowing in and through us, we (our human nature) will always be

cold and icy in regard to the things of God. Or we could say that if we are cold and icy (i.e. our human nature), then we will be self-centred. With self-centredness comes darkness, for if we are absorbed by our own thoughts and emotions, then God in His love cannot force Himself (His graces) upon us, even if it would be good for us. When holy Light is not given permission to enter, then darkness remains - for love will never force us to accept anything. God created us as free-willed beings, able to choose our own pathway. In this we become the unique individuals that we are - for the good or the bad. But Christ at the Cross made a way back to God for us - so that we can choose life and not stay in death in any area of our life.

“ . . . It is in this new atmosphere that the Divine Nature infuses into and can energize and thaw our human nature to the greater degree needed for God’s will to be done in our life. . . ”

We were designed to absorb the passionate spiritual heat of God’s Light so that we can walk at one with Him. Again the Spirit Baptism increases our potential to absorb the graces contained in the Light of God. Daily we need the Holy Spirit’s graces to lead and strengthen us so that we may walk in righteousness. In relation to service, we need this atmosphere so we are better able to absorb the graces needed to be used of God in ministering to the lost - as He directs (2 Corinthians 5:18).

THE BIBLE’S DESCRIPTION

The Bible describes the Spirit Baptism in several different ways. For example, in Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:4 it is called “*the promise of the Father.*” Luke 24:49 also refers to being baptized in the Spirit as being “*endued with power from on high.*” Other terms for this experience are as follows: being “*baptized with the Holy*

Spirit” (Acts 1:5), being “*filled with the Holy Spirit*” (Acts 2:4) and “*received the Holy Spirit*” (Acts 19:2). In Acts 10:44 the Spirit Baptism is described in these terms: “*the Holy Spirit fell on them;*” and in Acts 10:45 it is described as “*the gift of the Holy Spirit.*” So we see that the Bible uses many different terms to describe the same experience. Whether we use the term Baptism in the Holy Spirit or Baptism with the Holy Spirit or any others we have mentioned, they all mean the same thing - that which we know as the Spirit Baptism, “*the promise of the Father.*”

RECEIVING THE HOLY SPIRIT

Background Reading: John 14:15-26

Some Christians erroneously teach that unless you are baptized in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues, you do not have the Holy Spirit and therefore you are not saved. This doctrine is erroneous, and creates division within the Body of Christ. Those who profess it confuse the Spirit Baptism with the work of the Holy Spirit at conversion. Christians who have felt threatened by this teaching have protested, saying “Didn’t we receive the Holy Spirit when we believed and aren’t we now saved?” Yes, they did and they are. We are saved when we first receive Jesus and make Him Lord. At this time we receive a saving “measure” of the Holy Spirit, that being God’s saving presence surrounding our spirit and filling our spirit from the outside to the inside - for without the work of the Holy Spirit, we could never be saved (1 Corinthians 6:11; 12:13). Romans 8:14-16 tells us that we “*have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, ‘Abba Father,’*” the Holy Spirit bearing witness with our regenerated spirit that we are indeed the children of God. Thus we have become the temple of the Holy Spirit as 1 Corinthians 3:16 states:

1 CORINTHIANS 3:16 Know you not that you are the Temple of God (where the Holy Spirit abides), and that the Spirit of God dwells in you (you are His home)?

However, this does not necessarily mean that we have the fullness of the Spirit (as pertaining to this wonderful grace of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit) - for Jesus, as recorded in Luke 24:49, told the Disciples, who had already accepted Him as Saviour and Lord (e.g. John 20:28), to “*tarry in the city of Jerusalem, until you be endued with power from on high.*” This refers to an experience beyond salvation.

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Let us be clear, however, that there is no such thing as a second class Christian. Each Christian, saved by the precious Blood of Christ, is a first class Christian - whether baptized in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of tongues or not. All God’s Saints are first class citizens of the Kingdom (Philippians 3:20) because all are in Christ, clothed with His righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21). Amen.

RECEIVING THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Background Reading: Luke 11:9-13

There is a vast difference between being “*born of . . . the Spirit*” (John 3:3-8) which is to be regenerated, and being “*baptized with the . . . Spirit*” (Acts 1:4-5). The Spirit Baptism is a distinct and separate experience which occurs subsequent to salvation and not before. Salvation is God’s gift to the world, whereas the Spirit Baptism is God’s gift to His children. Only after a person has received Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour according to Romans 10:9-10 are they eligible to receive the gift of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Let us examine some scriptures concerning this distinction. In

John 20:19-21 the Disciples were saved, for they accepted Jesus as Lord and were exceedingly glad. Then in verse 22 Jesus said “*Receive ye (the promise of) the Holy Spirit,*” which is a direct reference to Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:4 where Jesus commanded them to wait in Jerusalem for the power from on high. The Expositor’s Study Bible comments on this verse as follows:

JOHN 20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said unto them, “Receive ye the Holy Spirit” (in essence, Jesus is saying to them that what He did at Calvary will now make it possible for them and all Believers to “receive” or to be Baptized with the Holy Spirit [John 7:39; Acts 2:4]). (E.S.B.)

Also in Acts 8:14-17, we can see that after the Samaritans were converted, Peter and John were sent from Jerusalem that they might receive the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. See also Acts 9:1-20; 10:44-48; 19:2-6.

***“ . . . Salvation is God’s gift to the world,
whereas the Spirit Baptism is God’s gift
to His children. . . ”***

The second prerequisite for receiving this gift is to be open, and to have an expectation and a desire to receive. This expectation comes from the knowledge that it is God’s will for each Christian to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. As Luke 11:13 states:

LUKE 11:13 If you 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 who ask Him?

Scripture never urges the unbeliever to receive the Holy Spirit, for salvation comes about through receiving Jesus, even though it is the Holy Spirit Who causes the union to take place. Therefore this

scripture is not referring to salvation. This is clearly seen because it is speaking to those already saved, those who already know God as their “*Heavenly Father.*”

Note: Although the Spirit Baptism is always subsequent to spiritual regeneration, in some cases it appears to occur almost simultaneously. Nevertheless, it always follows salvation.

At salvation the Spirit of God comes and makes His abode with us - His presence permeating us from the outside to the inside, and so indwelling our very being. But when we are baptized in the Holy Spirit, we are allowing the Spirit to infill us and so bring us into a deeper union with Christ, His presence permeating us from the inside to the outside. This doesn't make us more saved, but gives us greater potential to be empowered so as to do God's will.

As we have said, the Spirit Baptism causes an enriched, spiritually-charged atmosphere to be developed in which the Divine Nature, of which we are now partakers, is better able to work within us. This takes place as, of course, we yield to the Holy Spirit. Therefore it makes sense that potentially the Spirit-filled Believer is better positioned to commune with and to serve God than a person not baptized in the Holy Spirit - even though both are equally saved by the Blood of Christ and clothed with His righteousness. Potentially the Spirit-filled Believer can be more fully led and empowered as they daily take up their cross of self-denial and seek to follow the leading of the Spirit, as Jesus instructed.

MATTHEW 16:24 Then said Jesus unto His Disciples, “If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself (his goals, plans and ideas), and take up his cross (of self-denial so that God's will may be done in his life), and follow Me.”

This attitude and action is needed if the potentials of the Spirit Baptism are to be realized in the Christian's life.

“. . .Therefore it makes sense that potentially the Spirit-filled Believer is better positioned to commune with and to serve God than a person not baptized in the Holy Spirit. . .”

With the born-again experience, the Holy Spirit, from the outside to the inside, fills our spirit with His presence, protecting us from spiritual darkness, having cleansed us and surrounded our spirit by His saving presence. Our spirit is now translucent with the Light of God and we are fully saved, as saved as we will ever be. However He is still teaching us and guiding us as best He can from the outside to the inside. God’s power flows from the outside to the inside, and this is wonderful but not where we are meant to remain in God. This is the beginning of the new birth in Christ. Yes He is in us (John 14:23), but His Light, His presence, flows from the outside to the inside. He desires to come and position Himself on the inside so that His power and graces can flow from the inside to the outside. Really this is what the Spirit Baptism is about, the Spirit centering Himself within the spirit of man. From this position He is better able to help us and empower us to live according to His will.

When this takes place, the graces and power of the Holy Spirit are available to the Believer in a way that wasn’t possible before. Our mind can be more easily influenced, we will potentially be better able to hear the voice of God and communicate with Him, and the gifts of the Spirit can flow - from the inside to the outside as we yield to the Spirit of Truth. The capacities and potentials available through the Spirit Baptism are beyond any comparison to those available to the Christian who lives without this grace. But again, without a yielded consecrated life and proper spiritual focus, these wonderful spiritual benefits can neither be appropriated nor enjoyed.

It does seem strange that the Holy Spirit, Who is filling us with His presence from the outside to the inside, needs to ask our

permission to centre Himself within our spirit. Or if you want to put it another way, He needs to ask for our permission to bring us into another depth of heaven's atmosphere. Then it will be God in us, working through us, and not just us in God as our refuge. Concerning the Spirit Baptism, if you cannot conceptualize "in to out" and "out to in," then look at the Spirit bringing the saved Saint into the next level of progression and an oxygen-enriched atmosphere. The Saint can then climb the mountains in his life aided by this new God-given atmosphere. This means that no matter how high the mountain or how thin the air, God's supply for him is enough to climb - and conquer all things which would present themselves as a hindrance or an obstacle to doing God's will in his life.

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and proper spiritual focus, the wonderful
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enjoyed. . . ”***

THE PROMISE GIVEN

Many have asked, "Is there any reference to the promise of the Spirit Baptism in the Old Testament?" There are several prophecies in the Old Testament which speak of an outpouring of God's Spirit in the last days, (e.g. Isaiah 32:15 and 44:3, and Ezekiel 39:29). But the most explicit account can be found in Joel 2:28-29, scriptures which Peter quotes directly in Acts 2:17-18.

JOEL 2:28 *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: (Notice that this scripture reflects the New Testament where the Gospel is freely available to all, regardless of*

sex, age, social position or race: Galatians 3:28. In other words, there is no distinction, all are equal.)

JOEL 2:29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids (means Believers) in those days will I pour out My Spirit.

Note: These scriptures began to be fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost, as Peter pointed out. However, we find in Joel Ch. 2 that the Prophet was actually addressing Israel, and so the final and ultimate fulfillment of these verses will occur in the Kingdom Age, when born-again Jews will take the Gospel to the ends of the earth (Isaiah 66:19). Joel's prophecy thus concerns both the Church's present and Israel's future.

John the Baptist shed more light upon this promise when he said that the One Who would come after him would baptize “*with the Holy Spirit and with fire*” (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16 and John 1:33). He was of course referring to Jesus.

What did Jesus Himself teach in regard to this subject? Jesus was speaking of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit in John 7:37-39 when He invited those who were thirsty to come to Him and drink of the Spirit.

JOHN 7:37 In the last day, that great day of the Feast (eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles), Jesus stood and cried (in a loud voice) saying, “If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.

JOHN 7:38 He who believes on Me, as the scripture has said, out of his belly (innermost being) shall flow rivers of living water.”

JOHN 7:39 (But this spoke He of (about) the Spirit (Holy Spirit), which they who believe on Him should receive (from the Day of Pentecost onwards): for the Holy Spirit was not yet given (at this point); because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

In Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:4-8, Jesus commanded the Disciples to wait for the promise of the Father before undertaking the Great Commission. As we know, the promise of the Father was the Baptism in the Spirit, first given to the Disciples on the Day of Pentecost.

It is important to realize that although some Old Testament Saints were anointed of the Spirit, the actual Spirit Baptism was not available until Jesus was raised from the dead (John 7:39) and sat down at the right hand of the Father. Note also that the Anointing of the Spirit in Old Testament times was not the same Anointing of the Spirit that we see in the New Testament. In Old Covenant times, the Spirit came upon the outside of man - prophets, kings, leaders, etc. - influencing them and empowering them to some extent to do His will in certain areas, (e.g. 1 Samuel 11:6; 16:12-14). The Spirit was unable, however, to enter their hearts (Jeremiah 31:33-34) because the Blood of Jesus had not been shed, and they were still unregenerated.

“. . . It is important to realize that although some Old Testament Saints were anointed of the Spirit, the actual Spirit Baptism was not available until Jesus was raised from the dead and sat down at the right hand of the Father. . . ”

Today, under the New Covenant, when men and women become regenerated, they become citizens of heaven while living on earth, with the Holy Spirit residing within (1 Corinthians 3:16). As heavenly citizens and servants of God, we need empowerment to do His will. Jesus told the Disciples they would be “*witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth*” (Acts 1:8). In order to receive the necessary power, first they had to wait for the promise. Today there

is no longer any need to wait for it is Jesus, now raised from the dead and seated at the Father's right hand, Who baptizes the New Testament Saints (Christians) with the Holy Spirit (John 1:33).

Today the Lord no longer comes upon the Christian, as He did with the Old Testament Saints. Today He anoints from within to do a work. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit potentially gives us a greater "spirit-to-Spirit" relationship if we yield to His leading and have proper spiritual focus. But we must seek Him wholeheartedly, taking up our cross daily. Many think that God will tell them, if it's important enough, which way to go - to the left or to the right. Many therefore sit in a corner, waiting for God to rain down manna from heaven to supply their needs. We in the New Testament are meant to be progressive in our relationship with the Lord, not passive, wait-in-the-corner Christians. The Spirit Baptism gives us a vital grace which will continue with us in all that we do in Christ. The potential it brings is greater growth in every area of our walk and relationship with God. How? It is through the graces that the Baptism brings us into (e.g. greater revelation, greater empowerment, the gifts of the Spirit, deeper levels of communication), so that we are not only able to see with our minds, but more importantly we can begin to see and feel from our hearts (Matthew 12:35).

When we are anointed of the Spirit to do a work, it is from within that He now anoints in this New Testament age. The greater the union and relationship with the Lord, the greater the potential, through the Spirit Baptism, is the Anointing for service - for as soldiers of the Cross we need to be equipped to do the Lord's work in His strength. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit was a promise given by Jesus so we could be effectual in our Christian faith, serving the Lord in the way He desires. The Spirit Baptism also provides us with the potential to develop in our relationship with the Lord through the graces it brings, particularly in relation to knowing Him at a deeper level through means of deeper communication - the ability, potentially, to better hear His voice because of the environment established by the presence of the Holy Spirit on the inside of the Believer.

“...When we are anointed of the Spirit to do a work, it is from within that He now anoints in this New Testament age...”

Note: Looking back at Jesus’ Words in John 16:7, we can see that it was only after Jesus had been glorified and had sat down at the right hand of the Father that the Spirit could be sent to the earth as “*the Comforter*.” And only then did the Baptism in the Spirit become possible.

JOHN 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away (the Mission and Ministry of the Holy Spirit to the Body of Christ depended upon the return of Christ to the Father): for if I go not away, the Comforter (Holy Spirit) will not come unto you (concerns the respective Office Work of Both Jesus and the Holy Spirit - Jesus as the Saviour of men, and the Holy Spirit as the Power of the Church); but if I depart, I will send Him unto you (a Finished Work on the Cross was demanded of Christ, before the Holy Spirit could be sent). (E.S.B.)

THE PROMISE FULFILLED

Background Reading: Acts 2:1-21

We can see in the Book of Acts that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit first occurred on the Day of Pentecost, which was fifty days after Passover:

ACTS 2:1 And when the Day of Pentecost was fully come (the Feast of Pentecost, one of the seven great Feasts ordained by God and practised by Israel yearly; it took place fifty days after Passover), they were all with

one accord in one place (not the Upper Room where they had been previously meeting, but rather the Temple [Luke 24:53; Acts 2:46]) (E.S.B.).

***ACTS 2:2** And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting (they were probably in the court of the Gentiles: E.S.B.).*

***ACTS 2:3** And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them (all who were there, not just the 12 Apostles).*

***ACTS 2:4** And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues (this is the physical evidence of the Spirit Baptism), as the Spirit gave them utterance (in languages not known to the speakers).*

Since that day, the Baptism in the Holy Spirit has been available to all Christians who believe and receive according to the Word.

From that day forth, miracles and mighty signs and wonders have followed the proclamation of the Gospel, and this still continues today. Indeed when Jesus gave the Great Commission in Mark Ch.16, He said that signs would follow the preaching of the Gospel and that these signs would confirm the Word being preached, taught or shared.

***MARK 16:15** And He (Jesus) said unto them, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature (all creation - the whole human race).”*

MARK 16:20** And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word (the Word of God, what He had said, that being preached or taught) **with signs** (healings, deliverances, etc.: Mark 16:17) **following. Amen.

The scriptures clearly show that the promise has been fulfilled, for they demonstrate that the power of the Spirit had been poured out upon the Disciples to preach, heal and perform miracles among the people. And it is clear that just as the Disciples needed the Spirit Baptism to make them bold witnesses for Christ, so every Christian today needs the power and fullness of the Spirit to do the work that they are called to do. It goes without saying, of course, that each Christian also needs to know and have faith in the Word of God if they are to be effective in their walk and service.

IS THERE ANY PHYSICAL EVIDENCE OF BEING BAPTIZED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT ?

Background Reading: Acts 10:34-46

Yes, scripture clearly shows that there is a physical manifestation which accompanies the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. This physical manifestation is the God-given ability to speak in tongues, the private prayer language by which the Believer speaks mysteries to God. For Acts 2:4 states:

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

There are other instances of this physical manifestation recorded in the New Testament. For example, in Acts 10:46 Cornelius' household received the word which Peter preached and the Jewish Believers who were with Peter were astonished because "*they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.*" Also, when the Apostle Paul laid hands on the Disciples at Ephesus, "*the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spoke with tongues, and prophesied*" (Acts 19:6). Paul himself also declared in 1 Corinthians 14:18, "*I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all.*" Jesus also stated in Mark 16:17:

MARK 16:17 And these signs shall follow them who believe; In My Name shall they cast out devils (demons); they shall speak with new tongues (the evidence of the Spirit Baptism)

Note: “Private” tongues, which is what we are speaking of here, refers to the devotional tongues given to every Believer baptized in the Spirit. “Private” tongues is to be distinguished from the gift of public tongues which is one of the nine gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:7-11). To understand this distinction, however, and indeed any of God’s truths, we may need to put aside any bias and any preconceived ideas so that we may approach God’s Word with an open heart.

“. . . Just as the Disciples needed the Spirit Baptism to make them bold witnesses for Christ, so every Christian today needs the power and fullness of the Spirit to do the work that they are called to do. . .”

Some people are uncomfortable with the concept of a “manifestation” accompanying the Spirit Baptism. However scripture states with remarkable clarity that speaking in other tongues is the physical evidence which accompanies the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

IS THE SPIRIT BAPTISM FOR EVERYONE ?

Background Reading: Acts 2:38-39

Some people declare that the Spirit Baptism with the evidence of speaking in tongues is not for them, usually out of either fear or ignorance. God’s Word, however, makes it clear that the promise of the power of the Spirit is for every Believer, excluding none. Indeed

without it we will be extremely limited in our effectiveness in Christian service. Luke 11:13 shows that the gift of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is available to all Believers who ask, i.e. those who already know God as Father.

LUKE 11:13 If you 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 who ask Him?

Therefore we can be sure it is God's will for every Christian to receive this precious promise from God's Word.

WHAT BENEFITS COME FROM BEING BAPTIZED IN THE SPIRIT ?

Background Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

When Believers are baptized in the Holy Spirit, they gain the potential to operate in the power of God in a greater way - so that God's will can be done on earth. There are two aspects to this power. The Spirit Baptism can provide an enriched atmosphere in which we are better able to be infused with the graces of God's Divine Nature so that, for instance, we can love as God loves. The other aspect of this power is that which becomes available through the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit as outlined in 1 Corinthians 12:1-11.

Both love and the gifts of the Spirit are important, both being derived from the same source, the Lord Himself.

Many have taken 1 Corinthians 12:31, "*But covet (desire) earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way,*" out of context, reasoning that the gifts of the Spirit are not important, and love is to be our focus. However:

"The phrase, "And desire Spiritual Gifts," completely repudiates the teaching that "Gifts" are of no significance, but rather Love. The idea is, as is overly obvious, that we be a proper vessel through which the Gifts of the Spirit can operate, which can only be if we are motivated by love. It is not one or the other, but rather both.

“Desire” in the Greek is “zeloo,” and means “to have warmth of feeling for; covet, be zealous.”

So, the Believer should desire, even strongly so, that the Holy Spirit would use him (or her) in these Gifts, for the simple reason that they are very much needed in the Church.”¹

(underlines added)

***“. . . There are two aspects to this power:
an enriched atmosphere and the nine
gifts of the Holy Spirit as outlined in 1
Corinthians 12:1-11. . . ”***

The gifts of the Spirit are listed and described as follows: the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge and the discerning of spirits which are known as the revelation gifts, given to assist Christians in ministering effectively to and on behalf of others; “*divers*” (various) kinds of (public) tongues, interpretation of (public) tongues and prophecy which are known as the vocal gifts, given to provide direction to the Church on both corporate and personal levels; the gifts of healings, the working of miracles, and the gift of faith which are known as the power gifts, and these are used as their titles indicate. Thus we have:

(a) The Revelation Gifts:-

1. The word of knowledge: information from God regarding people or situations - information not contained in the Bible.

2. The word of wisdom: wisdom from God, often given to help people know how to deal with the knowledge He has already given.

3. The discerning of spirits: involves gaining supernatural insight into the spirit realm, often in regard to the operation of evil spirits.

(b) The Vocal Gifts:-

1. Public tongues: this is a public message from God given to an individual to be spoken out in a corporate meeting.
2. Interpretation of tongues: the means by which this public message is interpreted into the language of those present.
3. Prophecy: a supernatural utterance or message given in a known language to a Believer, to be spoken out primarily in corporate meetings.

(c) The Power Gifts:-

1. Gifts of healings: a supernatural manifestation of God's power to heal, usually ministered through the laying on of hands.
2. The working of miracles: a powerful and supernatural interruption of natural states and conditions, involving both people and situations, e.g. replacement of lost limbs, Jesus walking on water.
3. Gift of faith: a special impartation of God's faith which usually affects something or someone miraculously or powerfully.

To operate in any of the gifts of the Spirit is, in a general sense, to operate in the power of God - for along with His Word, God has given the gifts of the Spirit to help the Body of Christ:

1. To overcome the enemy in spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:12).
2. To be built up so they are led, given direction and empowered to do His will here on earth e.g. 1 Corinthians 14:3-4.

However, God will only allow the gifts to operate as He wills, for He is in control of His power (1 Corinthians 12:11).

It is important to note that the ability to operate in the gifts of the Spirit alone will not accurately indicate the level of a person's spiritual maturity. This attribute will be more clearly revealed through indicators such as lifestyle, speech, conduct, works of faith and love, etc. Many have been led astray into thinking they or other Christians are spiritually mature, simply because they may operate in some of the gifts of the Spirit. We are told, however, that *"by their fruits you shall know them"* (Matthew 7:20), not by their gifts. The fruits being referred to are, of course, love, goodness, faithfulness, self-control, etc. as outlined in Galatians 5:22-23.

“. . .Both love and the gifts of the Spirit are important, both being derived from the same source, the Lord Himself. . .”

In relation to the benefits which come through the Spirit Baptism, God can potentially reveal His Word in a greater measure to Spirit-filled Believers. This can result in more rapid spiritual growth and, comparatively speaking, a more profound increase in spiritual understanding. This will of course be dependent upon people studying God's Word properly and yielding to it, being dedicated to God and open to the Spirit. Indeed only as people lead committed Christian lives will they be able to take full advantage of the benefits which the Spirit Baptism offers.

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit also equips us, potentially, to be more effective in our witnessing - to be able, through the gifts, to discern what is needed and when, and to share the Gospel with boldness and in wisdom, allowing God to work through us.

The Holy Spirit not only gives the potential for a greater level of power in witnessing, He can also better help the Believer gain victory in his or her own life as well. Furthermore, Spirit-filled Believers can experience a greater love for God's Word than ever before. New insights and knowledge can replace former blindness. The reality of Jesus Christ and the Word of God usually becomes greater as we allow the Holy Spirit to work with and through us. Also, a new joy, peace and liberty, plus a heightened desire and

ability to praise, can accompany the Spirit Baptism or develop quickly after. Our fellowship with Jesus can also become much more intense and personal as we are able to experience His presence in a greater way. And being able to communicate with Him more freely and directly gives us the potential to develop in our relationship with Him.

Also, potentially, worship at a greater depth is possible when a Believer is Spirit-baptized and they are flowing in the graces of God's Divine Nature of which we, in Christ, are now partakers. The enriched spiritual atmosphere provided by the Spirit Baptism gives greater potential to the consecrated worshipper who has proper focus.

We need to remember, however, that in order to take advantage of the potentials brought to us through the Spirit Baptism, we must first be yielding to the leading of the Holy Spirit so that His Divine Nature may be energizing our human nature within. Through this grace, our walk will be pleasing to the Lord, and therefore beneficial to us and others.

THE BENEFITS OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES

First Corinthians Ch.14 tells us that speaking in tongues is using a prayer language by which we speak mysteries to God. This can edify the Believer who does so and lift up the faith within their heart (Jude 1:20). Tongues can also be used as a singing and praise language, and when prayed in faith, can be an effectual spiritual weapon (Ephesians 6:18).

Again we need to always remember, however, that tongues will be of no use to us without a consecrated Christian lifestyle. This is clearly evidenced in scripture:

***1 CORINTHIANS 13:1** Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal (in other words, it will be worth nothing).*

Also it should be noted that even though Believers may be baptized in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in other tongues, this will not secure their salvation. Indeed Believers must maintain Jesus' Lordship in their lives until physical death. It is not guaranteed that a person who is able to speak in tongues (or what seems like tongues) is saved. All this tells us, particularly if the person's salvation is dubious (because of their lifestyle or confession) is that they were once saved (1 Corinthians 13:1, Romans 11:29).

“ . . . The Holy Spirit not only gives the potential for a greater level of power in witnessing, He can also better help the Believer gain victory in his or her own life as well. . . ”

As stated, speaking in tongues has the potential to edify the Believer.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:4 He who speaks in an unknown tongue edifies himself . . .

“*Edifies himself*” may be better understood if we say “he who speaks in an unknown tongue edifies, or charges or builds himself up like a battery.”

Let us be clear, however, that there can be a quantity of the unknown tongue in a baptized Believer's life without there being a quality of the unknown tongue in a baptized Believer's life. What is the difference? Well firstly, “speaking in tongues” can refer to a Believer just going through the motions without any real, life-changing yieldedness to the Holy Spirit. The tongue, although “perfect” in terms of wording, then becomes just words without focus or power. It constitutes quantity not quality. We can also pray in tongues, having surrendered to the Holy Spirit and obtained the

moral and spiritual empowerment, which comes through the graces of the Divine Nature, to live this surrendered life. The tongue can then become both a perfect and effectual prayer, inspired and empowered by the Holy Spirit to obtain a holy result.

In relation to prayer in general, we will examine the following verse:

JUDE 1:20 But you, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit

“Building up” is ερκοδομεῶ (ἐρκοδομεω), “to build upon, build up,” to finish the structure of which the foundation has already been laid, metaphorically, “to give constant increase in Christian knowledge and in a life conformed thereto” (Thayer). The papyri afford the following example, “build on it (a sound foundation) your firmness and unshaken resolve” (Moulton and Milligan). “Faith” does not refer to faith as exercised by the saint, for it is described as “most holy,” but to the Christian faith, Christianity. The saints are exhorted to build up their Christian lives on the foundation of all that God has done for them in salvation, such as making them a partaker of the divine nature and giving them the indwelling Holy Spirit, together with the Word of God.”²

(underlines added)

“. . . Let us be clear, however, that there can be a quantity of the unknown tongue in a baptized Believer’s life without there being a quality of the unknown tongue in a baptized Believer’s life. . .”

The foundation is that on which we are building our lives. This foundation that has already been laid by God is in fact Christ (Isaiah 28:16, Matthew 21:42).

1 CORINTHIANS 3:10 *According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder (here Paul is speaking of his work in the Lord which essentially founded the Church), I have laid the foundation (which is “Jesus Christ and Him crucified”: 1 Corinthians 2:2), and another builds thereon (speaks of all Preachers who followed thereafter, even unto this very moment, and have built upon this Foundation: E.S.B.). But let every man take heed how he builds thereupon.*

1 CORINTHIANS 3:11 *For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid (any other foundation is false), which is Jesus Christ (Who He is, God manifest in the flesh, and What He did, Redemption through the Cross: E.S.B.).*

For our life to be built up on our “most holy faith” we must therefore be built in and on Christ. This is to be done firstly by coming to the knowledge of God’s Word more and more each day, then by being led and empowered by the Holy Spirit in all that we do.

2 PETER 3:18 *But grow in grace (in dependence upon God’s grace which is the only way we can grow), and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (pertains to Who He is and what He did). To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen.*

JUDE 1:20 *But you, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost*

“The words, “praying in the Holy Ghost” show how the saints are to build themselves up on their most holy faith. That is, prayer is the vital factor in the Christian life which activates all the other departments of the Christian experience. “Ghost” is the translation of *pneuma* (πνευμα), the word in other places rendered “Spirit.” “Ghost” is obsolete English as used here for the word “spirit.” “In the Holy Ghost” is locative of sphere. That is, all true prayer is

exercised in the sphere of the Holy Spirit, motivated and empowered by Him. That means that if the saint expects to really pray, he must be Spirit-filled or Spirit-controlled. The fullness of the Holy Spirit is the prerequisite to effectual praying. The Spirit, when yielded to, leads us in our petitions and generates within us the faith necessary to acceptable and answered prayer. The expression “praying in the Holy Ghost” is also instrumental of means. We pray by means of the Holy Spirit, in dependence upon Him.”

*Translation of Jude 20. But, as for you, divinely-loved ones, building yourselves up constantly in the sphere of and by means of your most holy Faith, and as constantly praying in the sphere of and by means of the Holy Spirit*³

(underlines added)

“ . . . All true prayer is exercised in the sphere of the Holy Spirit, motivated and empowered by Him . . . if the saint expects to really pray, he must be Spirit-filled or Spirit-controlled. . . ”

So the second part of this verse is really pointing Believers towards having a quality prayer life in the Holy Spirit, in other words, being Spirit-directed and empowered in our praying. This refers both to the prayer prayed in one’s native language, and the language given by the Spirit, i.e. tongues.

The question then arises, “How?” The answer comes when one yields to the Spirit of Grace Who makes us partakers of the Divine Nature. In other words, we must go through or become one with this grace of the Spirit that we are now partakers of in Christ. We must not pray from the head but the heart, with the grace of God’s Divine Nature at work in us, energizing our human nature to bring us to a position of faith and love (agape). Only when we have a heart that is truly surrendered to the Spirit can this begin to happen. Surrendered and properly focused, our faith must be in the finished work of Christ and the promised works of grace that the Comforter brings to us, e.g.

the gifts of the Spirit, the knowledge of our calling, daily direction, etc. With this proper focus, the Spirit can bring a quality to our prayer life, whether tongues or normal prayer, that causes our prayer to be holy and effective. Then the Holy Spirit will be working through and in us, inspiring our prayer and empowering us to pray in the bonds of love - as readied vessels fit for our Master's use.

Hundreds of years before this wonderful gift was given at Pentecost, Isaiah wrote the following by the inspiration of God:

ISAIAH 28:11 *For with stammering lips and another tongue will He speak to this people. (The phrase, "stammering lips," refers to a proper language being spoken, but yet the people hearing it would not understand it. Paul quoted this same Passage as it regards the Gift of Tongues as a sign to unbelievers [1 Corinthians 14:21-22] : E.S.B.)*

ISAIAH 28:12 *To whom He said, "This is the rest wherewith you may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing." Yet they would not hear. (Coupled with Verse 11, this tells us that speaking with other tongues brings about a "rest" from the tiredness of the journey of life. As well, speaking with other tongues brings about a "refreshing," which rejuvenates the person. Many people ask, "What good is there in speaking with other tongues?" This mentioned by Isaiah presents two blessings, of which there are many: E.S.B.)*

Speaking in tongues, as we can see, can also give us "rest" and bring a spiritual "refreshing." From this we can be recharged and energized spiritually for the journey that lies ahead in our Christian walk.

The potential for the Spirit-baptized Saint is that as they speak in private tongues, they (the spirit-man) can be warmed to the things of God in a greater way than non-baptized Believers. In this warming can then come the joy of the Lord which scripture tells us is the Saint's strength (Nehemiah 8:10). This can take place because at

this time, our spirit-man can come to sense, to a greater degree, a oneness with God as the Lord. At this time His graces can thaw our mind and heart in relation to the things of God, giving us an appreciation of the faithfulness of our God Who has placed in our hearts the Word that we have heard or studied.

“ . . . With proper focus, the Spirit can bring a quality to our prayer life, whether tongues or normal prayer, that causes our prayer to be holy and effective. . . ”

The amount of the grace (spiritual heat) that we can absorb will depend on the amount of stored Word in our hearts. This is Word revealed by the Holy Spirit - not head-knowledge but heart-revelation. Indeed the Holy Spirit uses this Word to build up Spirit-baptized Believers, stirring up the faith within them. If we position ourselves for this benefit, then the Holy Spirit can cause this edification to take place within us on a daily basis. Remember that as God's children, we should be walking with God and listening to Him - for Christ has given us the opportunity to again have a garden experience like Adam had before the Fall.

Therefore you as Christians at this time are:

JUDE 1:20 . . . building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit (our prayers must be exercised in the sphere of the Holy Spirit, motivated and empowered by Him)

Private tongues is thus firstly about relationship - being spiritually warmed (according to the amount of revealed or digested Word within us) or allowing a thawing of ourselves - so that the Father can be spiritually intimate with us. From faith being built up within us comes joy, then true appreciation of God in which we are able to worship Him in spirit and in truth, either silently or vocally. We then gain a true spiritual sense of belonging to God and abiding

in Him, through Him and by Him.

*“Praying in the Holy Spirit” really describes all true prayer. As we have said, this “prayer is exercised in the sphere of the Holy Spirit, motivated and empowered by Him. This means that if the Saint expects to really pray, he must be Spirit-filled or Spirit-controlled”*⁴

So whether one prays in one’s own language or a Holy Spirit given tongue, if one is to be effective in one’s prayer life, one needs, by yielding to Him completely, to be Spirit-empowered and so Spirit-controlled. The Spirit Baptism is essential if the Saint is to be brought into a completely balanced prayer life, and to partake of the graces needed for the fight of faith (1 Timothy 6:12).

“. . .The potential for the Spirit-baptized Saint is that as they speak in private tongues, they (the spirit-man) can be warmed to the things of God in a greater way than non-baptized Believers. . .”

However be warned as Paul, by the Spirit, warned us in 1 Corinthians 13:1 that tongues without God’s Word and love (faith) working in us, producing Christ-like character, will produce no gain in our lives at all. In fact, as we have said, *“it profits me nothing,”* even if all the gifts of the Spirit are at work through us.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:2 And though I have the Gift of Prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all Faith, so that I could remove mountains (tells us that the Gifts of the Spirit can be had by less than perfect people, as should be obvious), and have not charity (love), I am nothing. (We now see

the basis on which everything must be built - it is love. If not, we are nothing! (E.S.B.)

1 CORINTHIANS 13:3 *And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned (the focus now shifts from “gifts” to “works,” but the same principle holds), and have not love (if the love of God does not motivate and empower me), it profits me nothing (and is of no eternal value).*

THE SPIRIT BAPTISM AND THE FIRE OF PENTECOST

The Spirit Baptism gives the potential for the graces of the Divine Nature to better flourish in the life of the Saint. Indeed, it can create an atmosphere that allows the Divine Nature to work at a higher level in the Spirit-baptized Believer than in a Believer who is not Spirit-baptized. Of course this is the potential. The actual or experiential is conditional upon the Believer yielding to the Spirit and trusting in Him. When this takes place, one’s relationship with the Lord can deepen, far more than without this great grace.

Along with this grace comes the “*fire*” of Pentecost that, if allowed, will burn at a higher level, for those who are Spirit-baptized, on the outside of these Saints for sanctification purposes. This is the fire spoken of by John the Baptist:

MATTHEW 3:11 *“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance (water baptism was an outward action displaying an inner work that had already taken place): but He Who comes after me is mightier than I, Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire”*

Salvation makes the “fire” available on the outside to all Christians. But those without the Spirit Baptism will only experience this outside flame at a “pilot light” level. For those who are Spirit-baptized, the potential of the flame, even on the outside, is far greater, being of much greater intensity. However the intensity of the flame will always be governed by the Saint’s openness to God’s

truth and power.

There is a flame that is given to the Saint at conversion because the Holy Spirit is with and in them (out to in). The Holy Spirit ministers this flame for the purpose of bringing sanctification at an experiential level to the Saint.

Positionally, in Christ, the Saint is sanctified, but our thinking and motives do not always match our position. God has therefore sent the Holy Spirit to minister His grace in this flame so that the Saint would know God's Word and will, not only to gain understanding, but to warm to His Word and will, and even with God's empowerment to be at one with Him in these two areas.

***“. . . Along with this grace of the Spirit
Baptism comes the “fire” of Pentecost
that, if allowed, will burn at a higher
level, for those who are Spirit-
baptized. . .”***

Without the Spirit Baptism, this holy flame (and the graces it brings) can only minister at a low (“pilot light”) level to cause all this to take place. This is because of a lack of openness on the Saint's part to the Holy Spirit. However the potential for the Saint who is Spirit-baptized - to become more Christ-like and to be used for service - becomes, with this holy flame, much greater, no matter what the Saint's calling may be.

This flame on the outside illuminates the truth of God's Word so that the Saint can be convicted of sin in order to repent and put it under the Blood. With this they can then be readied (in whatever way is needed) to partake of God's graces which will cause a transformation of character. This will depend on how much Word they have, with the help of the Holy Spirit, digested, allowing His Divine Nature to empower them to believe and trust (to have faith) in that which they have digested. The external flame that the Spirit

brings to all Believers can only, to a certain degree, thaw the hearts of non Spirit-baptized Believers. But when Spirit-baptized, the Believer's potential to be thawed and transformed becomes so much greater.

So the external fire will help us with "daily ongoing sanctification." This fire can then move to the inside to give us the fiery passion of God that would cause us to be motivated to do not our will but the Father's, just as Jesus did. This fire on the inside gives people the holy passion to do God's will, even if it means death. The fire on the inside is only available through the Spirit Baptism.

Such holy passion comes from the spiritual heat that this flame from the Spirit gives to those who would receive it. In this holy heat, the graces and energies of His Divine Nature are best able to work in us at the highest level, producing the fruit of a holy life consecrated unto God. Hallelujah. This atmosphere that is supernaturally heated with the very breath of God can only be brought to us as a wonderful grace of the Spirit Baptism.

Of course the fuel for this holy fire is Divine truth, being the knowledge of God (through Christ), founded on His wisdom and love. Only as we seek, find and yield so as to embrace God's truth, and we digest and then assimilate aspects of such truth through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, can we then be readied to burn on the inside for God.

It is God's grace of truth that is the fuel for the flame. But for us to burn this fuel, the truth must be part of us, having been taken into our heart. God can only ignite that which is holy, and this is His truth, dwelling in those who have become one (by assimilation) with it, causing us to have faith (belief and trust) in the very truth we have digested by the graces of the Holy Spirit.

“ . . . This fire can then move to the inside to give us the fiery passion of God that would cause us to be motivated to do not our will but the Father’s, just as Jesus did. . . ”

Once the flame of Pentecost is lit in the heart of the Saint, in this position and so condition the Holy Spirit is given the fullest latitude (in accordance with the Saint’s calling and faith) to use this man or woman of God to do His will on the earth. God has been able to do many a great thing once He has readied and anointed His vessel of honour who has been made fit for His service (2 Timothy 2:20-21).

The normal Christian called to the ministry of reconciliation and the Five Fold Minister and their support ministries can all experience this fiery passion, being God’s truth lit in their hearts and minds. This then allows a transformation of character to take place through the energies of the Divine Nature - in accordance with those areas of embraced truth. Another effect of this holy fire, this wonderful grace of the Spirit, is that the Christian can have a greater Anointing than without it, and can therefore be more effective for the Lord in His service.

The operation of the fire of Pentecost within is evidenced by the scriptural terms “*being full of the Holy Spirit*” and “*filled with the Holy Spirit.*” For example, Stephen, as he was stoned, pronounced words of forgiveness to his tormentors:

ACTS 7:55 But he, being full of the Holy Spirit (the second time this is said of him [Acts 6:5]), looked up steadfastly into Heaven (means that Stephen saw something in Heaven which immediately seized his attention), and saw the Glory of God (he saw the Throne of God), and Jesus standing on the Right Hand of God (Christ is usually presented as sitting at the Right Hand

of God [Hebrews 1:3], but here He is seen standing, as rising to welcome His Faithful martyr and to place on his head the Crown of Life), (E.S.B.)

ACTS 7:59 *And they (the religious leaders of Israel) stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” (presents Stephen rendering Divine Worship to Jesus Christ in the most sublime form, and in the most solemn moment of his life: E.S.B.)*

ACTS 7:60 *And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge (presents him dying on his knees, without malice toward his murderers: E.S.B.).” And when he had said this, he fell asleep (died, his spirit and soul going immediately to be with the Lord).*

Stephen spoke God’s words to the men who were in the process of killing him without justification. In this amazing situation, the operation of the fire within is in evidence as He was empowered to forgive his tormentors, just as Jesus did.

“. . .The normal Christian called to the ministry of reconciliation and the Five Fold Minister and their support ministries can all experience this fiery passion, being God’s truth lit in their hearts and minds. . .”

Again the passion derived from the flame of the Spirit is evidenced in Peter’s bold witness to the Jewish Council, the same men who had succeeded in their plot to have Jesus executed.

ACTS 4:8 *Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said unto them, “You rulers of the people, and elders of*

Israel (once again, the religious leaders),

ACTS 4:9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man (referring to the healing of the crippled man at the gate of the Temple: Acts 3:1-10), by what means he is made whole;

ACTS 4:10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth (he desired that there be no mistake as it regards the One of Whom He was speaking; since the Baptism with the Holy Spirit, Peter is not the same man he was when he denied Christ even before a young maiden; he will now boldly stand up for Christ in front of the entirety of the ruling body of Israel: E.S.B), Whom you crucified (Peter here lays the sin of crucifying the Lord Jesus directly on them), Whom God raised from the dead, even by Him does this man stand here before you whole (the healed man was obviously with them).

ACTS 4:11 This is the Stone (Jesus is that Stone) which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the Head of the corner (despite His rejection by the Jews).

ACTS 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

ACTS 4:13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John (pertains not only to what was spoken, but to the power with which it was spoken as well), and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled (means they had not studied in the Rabbinical Schools; in fact, they were not “unlearned and ignorant,” but rather the very opposite!); and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus (this explained it all). (E.S.B.)

Paul also flowed in the Holy Spirit, showing forth the fire within that burned with the passion of God:

ACTS 13:9 Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Spirit, (and as led by the Spirit) set his eyes on him,

ACTS 13:10 And said (to Elymas, the sorcerer and false prophet), “O full of all subtilty and all mischief, you child of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? (strong words spoken to one who claimed to be of God, but was really of Satan)

ACTS 13:11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon (or against) you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a season.” And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

ACTS 13:12 Then the deputy (Roman Governor of Cyprus), when he saw what was done, believed (accepted Jesus as Saviour), being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord (and the power which went with it).

Therefore it is through the fire of Pentecost burning within that fully consecrated Christians are given the power to speak God’s words as He would speak them. In this holy heat the Divine Nature is best able to work, producing holy fruit at the highest level. See also Acts 4:31-32; Acts 13:52. In this supercharged spiritual atmosphere, by Holy Spirit empowerment, the Saint and the Spirit can move and dwell together as one in thought and purpose at the maximum level of unity possible. This is the great potential that is available to those who would be led and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

HOW TO RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Background Reading: Mark 11:23-26

The Spirit Baptism is a gift from God which is received in the same manner as salvation. In Luke Ch.11, Jesus gave us instructions concerning this:

LUKE 11:9 “And I say unto you, Ask (believing), and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it (the door) shall be opened unto you.

LUKE 11:10 For every one who asks (believing) receives; and he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks it shall be opened.

LUKE 11:11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent (snake)?

LUKE 11:12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

LUKE 11:13 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children (earthly parents, though sinners, would not respond to their children’s requests like this): how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?”

To receive this gift the Christian should ask the Father in Jesus’ Name. They cannot receive the gift of the Holy Spirit if Jesus is not involved, for this gift comes through Him and Him alone (Matthew 3:11, Luke 24:49).

Again, in order to receive this gift of God, all preconceived and biased ideas must be set aside. There must be an openness to receive, and a knowledge that it is God’s will for the Christian to have this gift. They need to come prayerfully, really desiring and expecting to receive. Quite often the laying on of hands by a mature Christian can

help another to receive (Acts 8:14-17).

Primarily it is a matter after salvation of receiving at an experiential level that which is already given to the Christian by inheritance. So the seeker of the Baptism does not have to have hands laid on them, or anyone pray for them. It has been found, however, that the prayer of others is usually a great help in this area to most Christians. In fact most seem not to receive the Spirit Baptism without the help of a servant of God. Indeed we are to come to the table of the Lord with a humble heart and a contrite spirit, and He will give to those who ask that which is already theirs by inheritance.

***“ . . . It is through the fire of Pentecost
burning within that fully consecrated
Christians are given the power to speak
God’s words as He would speak them. . . ”***

Note: We need to remember that whenever hands are laid upon us or we lay hands on another in prayer, we should always believe and thank God for the spiritual protection He has provided through the blood covering. As we have learned, when this form of protection is applied by faith, spiritual problems will be prevented from being transferred from one person to another.

IS IT NECESSARY TO WAIT FOR THIS GIFT ?

Over the years, many have struggled, laboured and agonized, waiting to receive the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. But there is no reason to wait or to “tarry,” for the waiting period is over.

Jesus gave the Disciples the commandment to wait for the promise in the city of Jerusalem because He had to be seated at the right hand of the Father before He could send the Comforter (John 16:7). Today Jesus is still at the right hand of the Father, and Christians need only ask in order to receive the glorious clothing of power from on high.

HINDRANCES TO RECEIVING THIS GIFT

Man's enemy, the devil, will try to prevent Christians receiving the Baptism in the Holy Spirit because of the potential power that accompanies this experience. He tries to do this by encouraging Christians to:

1. Operate in pride and refuse to yield to God's Word.
2. Hold fast to erroneous doctrine that says the Spirit Baptism is not for today.
3. Remain ignorant and unbelieving concerning many aspects of God's Word.
4. Remain in confusion.
5. Be embarrassed by this strange thing!

Anyone who seeks the Baptism in the Holy Spirit while still having thoughts of doubt concerning the reality of this promise, will have problems receiving - for God requires faith and/or openness (being acceptance) in order to fulfill His promises (Hebrews 11:6).

“. . .Man's enemy, the devil, will try to prevent Christians receiving the Baptism in the Holy Spirit because of the potential power that accompanies this experience. . .”

Further hindrances which may prevent people receiving this gift can be: unconfessed sin, a lack of true repentance, having unforgiveness or resentment towards others, involvement in witchcraft or other forms of occultism which include organizations such as freemasonry, druids, etc. The individual concerned must

repent of sin according to 1 John 1:9, and receive forgiveness and cleansing. Sins such as these may block people from receiving the glorious Baptism in the Holy Spirit. However, it is usually anxiety or a lack of knowledge of how to receive the Spirit Baptism which hinders people from doing so.

PREPARATION FOR RECEIVING THE SPIRIT BAPTISM

It is God's will that all His children receive the blessed gift of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, for He desires us all to operate in His power and to grow and mature into the people of faith He has called us to be. To be sure of receiving the gift of the Spirit, people will need to have:

1. Acknowledged and confessed Jesus as their Lord according to Romans 10:9-10.

2. Repented of sin and if needed, renounced any occult involvement in Jesus' Name (receiving forgiveness and the cleansing of the results of sin according to 1 John 1:9).

If this has been done then seeking Christians need to come to God with an open heart, really desiring and expecting to receive this wonderful gift.

“ . . . It is God's will that all His children receive the blessed gift of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. . . ”

Concerning speaking in tongues, the Holy Spirit will give the words, but **IT IS OUR PART TO OPEN OUR MOUTHS AND USE OUR VOICES**. Christians will need to resist any temptation to speak in a language they understand.

It is also important to relax and not be tense or nervous. Tension can easily block the Holy Spirit for He will never force Himself on anyone. A simple prayer of asking in faith will be

sufficient to bring people through in private tongues. Prayer by a mature Christian can also be beneficial, and in most cases will be needed.

PRAYER FOR THE SPIRIT BAPTISM

I come before You Heavenly Father in Jesus' Name. I believe Jesus died for my sins and was raised from the dead by the power of God, and I confess Him as my Lord. I believe that I am born again (Romans 10:9-10), and that I am Your child. I now ask You Jesus to baptize me in the Holy Spirit, clothing me with power from on high.

According to Your Word, Lord (Luke 11:13; Acts 2:38-39), I believe I have now received this precious gift and that I am baptized in the Holy Spirit. As I begin to praise You now Lord, I fully expect, as I yield to the Holy Spirit, to praise You in tongues as the Holy Spirit gives me the words to do so.

As you begin to praise God, thank Him that you are baptized in the Holy Spirit - because scripture said that you would be when you ask this way. Then begin to speak out the words of your new heavenly language, even though the syllables may seem a little strange at first. Continue to speak in tongues until the flow of the language becomes fluent. Speaking aloud will help you gain confidence and bring freedom of expression. After this, spend time daily speaking in tongues, communicating with God in the Spirit, knowing that this, a gift from our loving Heavenly Father, is beneficial and effectual.

Some people may need to thank the Lord that they have received the Spirit Baptism before there is any physical evidence. So if you do not appear to have received tongues after you have prayed for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, do not become frustrated or disheartened. Continue to believe that you received the Baptism when you prayed, and continue to thank the Lord for the ability to speak in tongues. Often people who go away and remain prayerful, believing and expectant, find that during the next 48 hours or so, they are able to speak in the new language which God has given them. Sometimes, too, people may initially receive only a few words in

tongues. They need to keep speaking out these words in faith, believing that they will eventually become fluent in their new heavenly language. If you continue to have problems speaking in tongues, however, review the promises in scripture and, if needed, seek out a mature Christian for prayer and whatever other assistance is required.

Remember too that the enemy will attempt to rob you of this experience and discredit it, particularly in the initial stages when you first begin to speak in tongues. In order to counter any such attacks, do not try to analyze the gift of tongues intellectually, and continue to believe that this gift is precious, effectual and given by the Father to His children according to His own will and pleasure. As we have seen, it is God's will for all His children to receive the mighty Baptism in the Holy Spirit so that each one can gain greater potential to operate in God's power, as the Spirit wills.

***“. . .Remember: It is important to relax
and not be tense or nervous. So ask,
believe and receive, in Jesus' Name. . .”***

If tongues do not come then continue to seek, study and be prayed for, as led, until the Baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in other tongues becomes apparent. Don't give up, feel embarrassed or doubt. God said it, and He will do this work in you as you continue to seek and never give up (Matthew 7:7-8). The Spirit Baptism with the evidence of other tongues is His will for every Believer, none being excluded. We need the Baptism in order to progress in the faith and our relationship with God, as He intends. It is a gateway through which we can develop so much more spiritual understanding, a gateway into a deeper, richer relationship with the Lord. As such it is much too important to neglect or abandon.

God bless you and may you have the victory in Christ. Amen.

For further information or teaching material to help you grow in the Christian faith, please visit:

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- 1 S.B.C. Vol.13, 1 Corinthians, pg. 465.
- 2 Wuest, K.S., Word Studies From The Greek New Testament, Jude 1:20.
- 3 Wuest, K.S., Word Studies From The Greek New Testament, Jude 1:20.
- 4 Wuest, K.S., Word Studies From The Greek New Testament, Jude 1:20.

*"We have a vision
to see people living
in abundant life
by the power of God
through Jesus Christ"*



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