



THE HOLY SPIRIT

Just as water baptism is an immersion in water, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is an immersion in the Spirit. The initial Baptism of the Spirit (on the day of Pentecost..Acts 2:1-4) was actually prophesied long before by the prophet Joel (refer to Joel 2:28-32), whose prophecy was quoted by Peter in his sermon on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:16-21).

John the Baptist also foretold the Baptism of the Holy Spirit by speaking the following to the crowds that came out to see him: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me (Jesus) is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (Matthew 3:11)."

Jesus also referred to the coming of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, telling His disciples that they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5) also calling it the "Promise of the Father" (Luke 24:49). Jesus also explained very concisely the purpose of this baptism: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8)."

When Jesus' prophecy of the coming of the promise of the Father was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, the events of that special day are described in Acts 2:1-41 and include many unusual occurrences that have been the subject of serious debate (sometimes heated) among believers for many decades. There was a sound from heaven similar to a very strong wind and which filled the upper room where the believers were assembled; there were tongues like fire sitting on each of those in that assembly; each believer who was present spoke in languages that they did not know but which the Holy Spirit gave them the ability to speak.

Of all these occurrences that were part of that initial coming of the Holy Spirit, the one now causing the most controversy is the speaking in unknown languages by present day believers as they are being filled with the Holy Spirit. Many churches today teach that speaking in tongues (speaking in a language that is unknown to the one speaking) is not valid today.

However, near the end of Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, Peter said this: "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call (Acts 2:39)." The Holy Spirit clearly said

through Peter that we too are eligible to be recipients of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, complete with the evidence of our baptism by the ability to speak in an unknown language. (Question for you: (1) Are you one who was "afar off" as referred here? (and 2.) Are you one the Lord has called? Therefore: Does this qualify you?)

Why is it important for us to be able to speak in an unknown language (tongues)? Because it is a language making it possible to communicate directly with God's Spirit from our spirit; a language that we do not understand but that the Holy Spirit understands. when we are speaking the language given to us by the Holy Spirit, we have no reason to fear that it is from an evil spirit because to receive the Holy Spirit (and the language He gives us) we must first ask God for the Holy Spirit. Jesus makes it clear that if a son asks his father for bread will the father give him a stone? If a son asks his father for a fish, will the father give him a snake? Or if a son asks for an egg, will his father give him a scorpion? The answer to these questions is obviously "NO." So, Jesus said, "If you then, being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those that ASK HIM!" (Luke 11:13)

There are hindrances to receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Some of them are as follows:

- 🎲 You have never been born again.

- 🎲 You have not been water baptized (there is an exception of this in Acts 10:44-48).

- 🎲 Your faith is inadequate to believe for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

- 🎲 You cannot release your tongue to the Spirit's control for the language He desires to give to you.

- 🎲 You have always been taught that tongues is not for today or is of the devil.

REFLECTION THOUGHTS:

1. Have you received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit? If you have not and desire to be filled, we encourage you to have someone pray with you or just simply come before the Father and begin to ask in faith believing you will receive.

2. Have you or do you now have any of the hindrances in the way of receiving this gift (mentioned in the previous list?)