

Message #50

Various Texts

“The Gift of Tongues / Spirit Baptism”
(Part 4)

The leading supporters of the modern day tongues movement, without exception, closely connect their tongues speaking experience with a term called “Spirit Baptism.”

Jimmy Swaggart, for example, in his book on doctrine writes: “...every believer should rightfully and scripturally expect to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit of God gives utterance when he is baptized in the Holy Spirit” (Jimmy Swaggart, *Straight Answers To Tough Questions*, p. 188).

Steve Clark has written a book supporting and encouraging people to speak in tongues and his book is entitled *Baptized in the Spirit* (Steve Clark, *Baptized in the Spirit*, Dove Publications, 1969).

Don Basham, who has been called the “high priest” of tongues speakers, has also written a book supporting and encouraging people to speak in tongues and his book is called *Ministering the Baptism in the Holy Spirit* (Don Basham, *Ministering the Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, Whitaker House, 1971).

Clearly there can be no doubt those leading tongues speakers closely associate the term “Spirit baptism” with their tongues speaking experience. It would seem logical, then, that one would ask “what is Spirit Baptism?”

GOD DOES NOT WANT US TO BE IGNORANT OF THE SPIRITUAL GIFT OF TONGUES OR IGNORANT OF THE DOCTRINE OF SPIRIT BAPTISM.

QUESTION #1 – Who in the N.T. taught or wrote on the subject of Spirit Baptism?

Although most would have us believe that only Acts contains key information of Spirit baptism, biblically speaking there are four individuals who taught or wrote on this subject:

1) John – called John the Baptist, who was the last O.T. prophet; 2) Jesus Christ, who was both King of the Jews and the Savior of the world; 3) Peter, who was an apostle to the Jews; 4) Paul, who was the apostle to the Gentiles.

QUESTION #2 – What did these men teach on the subject of Spirit Baptism?

Individual #1 - The teaching of John.

In the chronology of the doctrine of Spirit baptism, John was the first to teach on the subject. John was a critical figure in the program of God, for he was the prophesied forerunner of Jesus Christ (Is. 40:3-5; Matt. 3:2).

John was the last of the O.T. prophets and because he had the privilege of literally meeting and baptizing Jesus Christ physically and introducing Jesus Christ to Israel as her king, he is classified as the greatest of the prophets (Matt. 11:11-13).

(Fact #1) - Spirit baptism would be after and separate from John's water baptism.
Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:31-33

John demanded that the Jews allow him to physically baptize them in water as a personal acknowledgement and admission of the fact that they were a sinner in need of their Messianic Savior (Matt. 3:6). In fact, this baptism is called "baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Mark 1:4-5). This particular water baptism aimed specifically at Israel came to John by direct revelation from God (John 1:33).

John NEVER believed or taught that his water baptism would take away the sin of Israel, but he did know that a Spirit baptism would take away the sin of Israel, which point is clearly stressed time and time again in the O.T. prophetic writings (Ezek. 36:26-28; Jer. 31:31-34).

(Fact #2) - Spirit baptism would identify the Messiah for Israel. John 1:31-33, 40-41

The One who would visibly receive the Spirit and the One who would eventually baptize with the Spirit was the One who was Israel's Messiah, who would eventually lead Israel to her kingdom (Acts 1:5-6).

(Fact #3) - Spirit baptism would seal the Israelites who would enter the kingdom.
Acts 1:5-6; Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; John 1:31-32

Clearly the inference and expectation for those who had been baptized in water by John was that they would be the ones who would be baptized in the Spirit by Jesus and would enter her promised kingdom.

(Fact #4) - Spirit baptism would not be instituted or administered by John.

In every one of John's references to Spirit baptism, he stresses that he IS NOT worthy to baptize one with the Spirit. This Biblical humility is certainly far removed from the attitudes and philosophies of modern-day tongues speakers, who claim they are the ones who help to give others what they call the "baptism of the Holy Spirit." For example, Don Basham not only believed he had the power to pray the baptism of the Holy Spirit on people, but that he also had the power to command it to come upon others. Listen to what he says on Spirit baptism and tongues: "After I have prayed the prayer on your behalf...when I give the word for you to open your mouth...I know from experience that some of you will receive tongues instantly. ...Just babble out whatever pops into your mind..." (Cited from Ronald E. Baxter, *Charismatic Gift of Tongues*, pp. 76-78). Spirit baptism, according to John, had NOTHING to do with tongues; it had to do with Israel's King and Kingdom.

Individual #2 - The teaching of Jesus .

(Fact #1) - Christ was identified by the Spirit baptism. John 1:31-34; Acts 10:37-38

It must be made clear that Christ's first earthly ministry, although it touched base with a few Gentiles, was specifically and primarily aimed at Israel (Matt. 10:6; 15:24; Rom. 15:8). When the Spirit of God descended on Jesus Christ, it was identifying Him as the One who was Israel's King and the One who would baptize with the Spirit, thus enabling Israel to enter her Promised Land and receive her promised kingdom.

Steve Clark, a leading tongues spokesperson, writes: "We can best understand what it means to be baptized in the Spirit seeing what happens to people when they are baptized in the Spirit" (Steve Clark, *Baptized in the Spirit*, p. 16). If we examine the life of Jesus Christ, we discover that when the Spirit of God came upon Him, He DID NOT speak in tongues, but rather He demonstrated a tremendous power and ability to say "no" to satanic temptation and gained a powerful reputation for His ability to teach the Scriptures (Luke 3:22; 4:1, 14-15).

(Fact #2) - Christ identified the time of Spirit baptism. Acts 1:2-5

Christ informed His disciples that Spirit baptism for them, Israel, and later the Gentiles, would come to them after He ascended.

(Fact #3) - Christ taught the subject of Spirit baptism. Acts 1:4

In Acts 1:4 Jesus Christ clearly indicates that He had already taught His disciples about Spirit baptism. One very critical reference where Christ taught concerning this subject was John 14:16-17. What Christ promised was the Spirit of God, who had been "with" them, would eventually be "in" them.

Individual #3 - The teaching of Peter .

Peter was an apostle to the Jews (Gal. 2:8), and there is no question that his concept of Spirit baptism is certainly Jewish.

(Fact #1) - Peter identified the originating time of Spirit baptism. Acts 2:1; 11:15-16

The inception of Spirit baptism was on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem in Acts 2.

(Fact #2) - Peter experienced several signs of Spirit baptism. Acts 2:2-4

Sign #1 - There was the sound of a strong wind . Acts 2:2

By the way, notice carefully that when the baptism did occur the people were sitting. They were not begging, pleading, standing or waving their hands or walking or running down aisles; they were just sitting.

Sign #2 - There was the visible appearance of tongue-shaped fire. Acts 2:3

Sign #3 - Everyone was filled with the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:4a

The verb “were filled” is passive, indicating the people had nothing to do with this action; it just happened to them. They were not actively striving for these things; they were just the recipients of them.

Sign #4 - Everyone spoke in a different language. Acts 2:4b

The language was an understandable foreign, human language that was understood by various Jews in Jerusalem who spoke different languages and dialects from all over the world (Acts 2:6, 8, 11).

(Fact #3) - Peter connected Spirit baptism to Israel’s King and kingdom. Acts 2:14-40

The Apostle Peter immediately connected Spirit baptism to Joel’s prophecy, which very clearly is aimed at Israel receiving her land (Joel 2:18, 21-32).

(Fact #4) - Peter defended Spirit baptism of the Gentiles. Acts 10:34, 44, 47-48; 11:1-8

Peter taught that because of God’s Spirit, Israel’s blessings would be shared by even Gentiles, who had God’s Spirit.

Individual #4 - The teaching of Paul.

Three critical men in the Bible have addressed the subject of “Spirit baptism”:

1) John – Israel’s greatest prophet; 2) Jesus – Israel’s King and 3) Peter – Israel’s apostle. Now of course there is one more to hear from and that is Paul. Paul, unquestionably, according to the Bible, is the apostle to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15; 22:21; Rom. 11:13; Gal. 2:8-9).

(Fact #1) - Every believer is baptized by the Spirit. I Cor. 12:13

Notice very carefully in the context of this very verse, “all” were baptized by the Spirit (12:13); however, not all spoke in tongues (12:4-6, 29-30).

(Fact #2) - Every believer was baptized by the Spirit at the moment of salvation. Eph. 4:4-6

The salvation of the soul, including the baptism of the Spirit, was “one” event.

(Fact #3) - Spirit baptism frees a believer from sin. Rom. 6:3-7

Spirit baptism positionally places one completely into the work of Jesus Christ so that he is freed from the condemnation of sin and guaranteed a future eternity with God.

(Fact #4) - Spirit baptism connects the Gentile to the Jewish kingdom promises. Gal. 3:26-29; Col. 2:10-17

Paul believed and taught that Spirit baptism was closely connected with giving even Gentiles a righteousness that would enable them to share in the eternal blessings of God.

QUESTION #3 – What is Spirit Baptism?

Spirit baptism is the sovereign work of God in which He gives His Spirit to one who has admitted he has sinned and has believed on Jesus Christ and places him into the work of Christ, thus resulting in giving the person a righteousness that will enable both Jew and Gentile to share in the land, king and kingdom promises of Israel.

Spirit baptism is the ticket that is needed by both Jew and Gentile to get into the Kingdom of God.

Have you been baptized by God's Spirit? Have you admitted your sin to God? Have you believed on Jesus Christ as your Savior? If you have, these are exciting times because God's Kingdom does not appear to be too far away. If you haven't, these are frightening times because God's judgment does not appear to be too far away, either.