

Baptism of the Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 12:13: For ~~by~~ in one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

THREE BAPTISMS

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

In considering baptism, we have to keep in mind the one who is baptizing, the one being baptized, and the element into which one is being baptized. In the preceding passage, John was the baptizer, repentant sinners were the ones being baptized, and water was the element into which they were baptized. This is similar to Christian baptism.

Spirit baptism finds Jesus the Christ doing the baptizing, believers being baptized, and the Holy Spirit the element into which they are being baptized. There has been much confusion caused by the translation of “*εν*” as “by” and not “in”. We are all baptized into the Holy Spirit, not by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit baptizes no one. However, Jesus the Christ baptizes all believers into the Holy Spirit; they are one body.

[1 Corinthians 3] John said that not only would Jesus the Christ baptize in the Holy Spirit, but He would also baptize in fire. This will happen at the end of the age in connection with the Judgment Seat of Christ. [1 Corinthians 3:12-15; loss - forfeiting] tells of the trial of a Christian’s works by fire. This is not talking about salvation; you are not saved by your works! You are saved by “believe”. This is judging works.

[Mark 9:49-50] Matthew 5:13 says, “Ye (the disciples) are the salt of the earth”. In Matthew 5 the reference is made to a bituminous and fragrant species of salt, found there. The priests threw great quantities of this salt over the sacrifices to counteract the smell of the burning flesh, and to hasten its consumption. This substance, however, was easily damaged by exposure to the atmosphere, and the portion of it thus rendered unfit for the purpose to which it was ordinarily applied. If it was damaged, it was strewed upon the pavement of the temple, to prevent slipping in wet weather.

[Mark 9:49-50] This passage tells us that all Christians shall be salted with fire; that is, we shall be purified, sterilized, or refined. The English word purify comes from the Greek word “*pur*”, or fire.

[Revelation 2:11] promises that the overcomer shall not be hurt (strong double negative; under no circumstances be injured), of the second death. The second death is the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:6,14) Overcoming is action; it’s works; this is not talking about salvation. Also, do not confuse this purification in fire with going to the lake of fire forever, because it has to do only with Christians after the rapture of the saints.

The baptizing work in the Holy Spirit did not occur in the Old Testament. Even in Acts 1:5, which says, “For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy ~~Ghost~~ Spirit not many days hence”, it is a future event. But with Acts 11:15, we are told that it began at Pentecost. Baptism in the Holy Spirit is unique to the church age.

[Acts 5] Although the baptism in the Holy Spirit takes place at salvation, [Acts 5:32] tells us, “And we are his witnesses of these things; and *so is* also the Holy ~~Ghost~~ Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey [are obeying; present, active, participle] him.” We are filled with the Holy Spirit as we are obeying God. It is an ongoing action; works.

Although there were signs accompanying the filling of the Holy Spirit at one point in time, are these signs are still occurring? It’s a common belief that they are. What are the “signs, wonders and miracles” spoken of in Acts? (Acts 2:22) The sign is centrally in view and the words wonder and miracle describe the sign. That is, the sign (Greek: semeion) is both a wonder (Greek: teras – something out of the ordinary) and a miracle (Greek: dunamis – “power” referring to the supernatural power necessary to bring the sign to pass.)

Signs, wonders and miracles performed through individuals were manifested on only two occasions or in two periods in the Old Testament.

Moses and Aaron manifested them surrounding Israel’s deliverance from Egypt, with a view to the nation’s entrance into the land of Canaan; and then they were manifested by Moses’ successor Joshua, surrounding Israel’s subsequent entrance into the land of Canaan. Exodus 4:29-31 tells of Moses doing the signs in front of the children of Israel. Moses cast his rod down before Pharaoh and it turned into a serpent. Moses parting the Red Sea. In Joshua 3:7, God said he would be with Joshua as he had been with Moses, and later, he had the priests stand in the Jordan, and the water stood in a heap. There are more, but you get the picture. That was the first occasion.

The second was a manifestation by Elijah and his successor Elisha, about 500 years later, in relation to creating a drought that would last for years. (1 Kings 17:1; 2 Kings 2:13) Baal was the god of rain. Israel had turned to Baal; Israel would dry up for disobedience; turning to other gods. His Kingdom will come when the whole world recognizes God as the king of kings and lord of lords, but this event would demonstrate it to the Jews. This was not an absolute drought. An absolute drought would devastate the land into an uninhabitable wasteland. But, Elijah’s miracles were judgmental (drought and fire), because of the apostasy of Israel. The Kingdom was dried up for a while. Elisha’s miracles were more miracles of compassion and healings, such as cleaning the water and adding oil to a widow’s lamp. There’s more here, but we will study that at a future time.

Numerous miracles are recorded throughout the Old Testament, but they were performed **directly by God**, not by individuals empowered by God. There are still miracles being performed by God today, but miracles being performed through men in the name of God was for a specific purpose that no longer exists. [Manna and quail.]

The manifestations during the days of Moses, Aaron and Joshua were in relation to Israel and the Kingdom. Supernatural miracles manifested through people empowered by God occurred relative to Israel being removed from Egypt and being established in Canaan. Thus, a first-mention principle was established at this point in the Scripture. Any time there is mention of signs, wonders and miracles being performed by individuals after this point, both Israel and the Kingdom must be in view.

The signs, wonders and miracles were simply the credentials for those manifesting them. Israel was to recognize the messenger as being sent from God. Whether it was Jesus or His disciples proclaiming the Kingdom, the signs, wonders and miracles were their credentials that authenticated the message. They were teaching something new; they didn't have the NT. [John 3:1-2] is a good picture of how the signs authenticated the message. Also, leprosy was considered the finger of God directly at work; it was against the law to even try to cure it. Only God could cause it and only the Messiah could heal it.

Those carrying the message to Israel manifested these supernatural works, and when Gentiles began to be added to the body of Christ, they were manifested within churches comprised of saved Gentiles. Why were they manifested in Gentile churches if they were for the Jews?

[Matthew 4:23-25] Most of the manifestations of supernatural power during the ministry of Christ and the apostles centered around bodily healings; this is during both the periods covered by both the gospel accounts and by the Book of Acts. This was the manner in which they were introduced during Christ's ministry, and this was the manner in which they were brought to a close about three and one-half decades later during Paul's ministry (Acts 28:7-9).

The signs, which centered around bodily healings (though including other related things), reflected on and had to do with a dual aspect of one thing: The spiritual condition of the nation of Israel. There was an existing condition (shown prior to the healings) and a future condition (shown following the healings). They also centered around deliverance for the nation after the fashion set forth by the signs was contingent on national repentance, followed by baptism (Matthew 3:1-11; 4:17, 23-25; 10:5-8; Acts 2:37, 38; 3:19-21).

Why were they manifested in Gentile churches? [Romans 10:19] Paul's reference to this matter in his first letter to those in Corinth was made necessary because the Church in Corinth was a Gentile Church in which signs, wonders, and miracles were being manifested, with a view to provoking Israel to jealousy. God wanted to provoke Israel to make her repent. (also, Romans 11:11-14; Acts 13:44-46) Paul, viewing that which was occurring in the light of the Old Testament Scriptures, called Israel's attention to the time and the reason when these manifestations of supernatural power would cease.

In [1 Corinthians 13:8-10], Paul called attention to the fact that the spiritual sign-gifts being manifested in the Church in Corinth (and other places as well) were only

temporary, and for a revealed reason. It is evident that the three that Paul singled out, prophecies, tongues, and knowledge, would allude to the whole panorama of spiritual sign-gifts.

All of the spiritual sign-gifts would have to be looked upon together, as a unit, comprised of different parts, simply because of their interrelated purpose. They all existed for exactly the same purpose. And when the Lord saw fit to bring His purpose surrounding these gifts to a close, they would no longer exist. By “they”, I mean all of them together, delineated by the three in 1 Corinthians 13:8.

They could no longer exist. Any existence of these gifts beyond this time would be contrary to the revealed Word of God and, thus, impossible. [Keep your place in 1 Corinthians; Acts 28:28; *this* salvation]

Prior to this time, Paul had the power to effect bodily healings (as a type of Israel’s healing), because the offer of the kingdom was still open to Israel as a nation (Acts 19:6, 11, 12; 28:8, 9). But after this time, when the offer of the kingdom was no longer open to the nation (when healing for Israel was set aside with the nation, with the corresponding cessation of signs, wonders, and miracles) Paul no longer possessed this power.

[1 Corinthians 13:9] teaches that Paul and the others were exercising these gifts during a time of incompleteness or prior to the time when God would complete His work with Israel relative to the proffered kingdom.

[1 Corinthians 13:10] then goes on to state that the time was coming when God would complete His work surrounding the re-offer of the Kingdom to Israel. Then, the things being done during the time of incompleteness would cease. [Perfect, complete, mature.]

This is exactly what occurred when the offer of the kingdom was withdrawn from Israel, with a view to God removing from the Gentiles “a people for his name.” The manifested signs, wonders, and miracles ceased. And this was in complete keeping with their usage in the Old Testament (pertaining to Israel and the kingdom), in complete keeping with their usage during the time covered by both the gospel accounts and the Book of Acts (again, pertaining to Israel and the kingdom), and in complete keeping with that which they portended (Israel’s spiritual condition, both present and future).

In Acts 28:28, Paul told the Jews for the third and last time that he was going to the Gentiles with the message that they had rejected. 3 is the number of Divine completion or perfection; in 1 Corinthians 13:10, the plan was “perfect”, mature, or complete.

At this point God set Israel aside as a nation for the remainder of the dispensation, and, correspondingly, signs, wonders, and miracles ceased. They had to cease with God’s termination of His dealings with Israel in relation to the kingdom; and they cannot again be in evidence until that future time when God resumes His dealings with Israel in relation to the kingdom.

The signs, wonders, and miracles performed through men were never given to the Gentiles as a sign, just as the Law was never given to the Gentiles. Jews can still enter, but on an individual basis, not as a nation. And although the Law was never given to Gentiles, as Christians, we're not under the law, but neither are we above it.

I do want to point out that the gifts that ceased were the sign-gifts that were given for a revealed reason. Not all spiritual gifts ceased, just the sign-gifts. [Ephesians 4:11] is written after the cessation of the sign gifts, but at this time, there were still apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors-teachers. For obvious reasons, there are no more apostles today, and that last one should be pastor-teachers, not pastors and teachers.

These are truths drawn from the Old Testament, the gospel accounts, and the Book of Acts. From a Biblical standpoint, they cannot be denied.