

The Doctrine of the Apostles' The Baptism of the Holy Ghost

By Elder D. Michael Fischer

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Acts 2:38

In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John we find a man called John the Baptist, who the prophets Isaiah and Malachi prophesied would be the forerunner of Jesus Christ, who is (God in flesh). It is John the Baptist that would prepare the way of the Lord by preaching the baptism of repentance and telling all who heard him that the Kingdom of God is at hand.

At his baptism of repentance he makes a very significant statement: I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and [with] fire: (Matthew 3:11) The One John was speaking of is none other than Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is the One who baptizes or fills people with the Holy Ghost.

In the Gospel of the Apostle John we find Jesus speaking with a Jewish Pharisee named Nicodemus. Christ, explaining to him the way of salvation, tells him that a person **MUST** be born again to see and enter the Kingdom of God. (John 3:1-8) When a person reads this passage of Scripture one may ask the question: What does it mean to be born again? Jesus gives us the answer in verse 6, "That which is born of flesh is flesh; and that which is born of Spirit is spirit."

To gain a better understanding of what Jesus is saying we must go back to the beginning. In the first book of Moses (in Genesis: chapters 1-5) we find that God created man in His image. (Genesis 1:27) God gave a commandment to Adam; he could eat of every tree in the garden, except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God said that in the day Adam ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he would surely die. (Genesis 2:16-17)

God's word is true, for truly the man and his wife died that same day they ate of this fruit. God allowed for Adam to live nine hundred and thirty years and he died (physically), but he died spiritually the same day that he ate the fruit.

Because of their sin, Adam and Eve were removed from the Garden of Eden and separated from God. (Genesis 3:24) Sin is what separates or severs man from God and

makes man dead spiritually. (Isaiah 59:2; Ephesians 2:1, 5) Understanding now that man is in sin and separated from God, Adam has a son in his image and likeness (separated from God). (Genesis 5:3) The Bible tells us for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23) Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. (Psalms 51:5)

But thanks be to God who came in flesh as the son of God and that flesh died for our sins. He did not leave us without a way of escape. He does not want us to be eternally separated from Him in the lake of fire, which is the second death. (Revelation 20:14, 15) For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16) “He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet [given]; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.” (John 7:38, 39)

It is the Holy Ghost (Spirit of Christ) that connects us back to God. Without His Spirit we are none of His. (Romans 8:9-11) This is what John the Baptist was speaking of in Matthew 3:11. Jesus rehearses this with His disciples before His ascension to heaven. (Acts 1:4-5) The promise of the Father is the Spirit of God. (Joel 2:28-32) Compare this with (Acts 2:16-21, 33-42). It is the Spirit that lets us know we belong to God and we are able to call Him Father. (Romans 8:15-16)

The Bible also says that if a person does not have the Holy Ghost we cannot call Jesus Lord. (1 Corinthians 12:3) It is the Spirit of God that puts us into the body of Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:13)

When a person is born again (born from above) they become a new creature. Yes, you can be new! You can change! Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

How do we get in Christ? For by 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. (1 Corinthians 12:13) What happens to a person when they receive the Holy Ghost? Going back to John 3:8 the Bible says “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the **sound** thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: **so is every one that is born of the Spirit.**” These are the Words of Jesus Christ, using what takes place in the natural world to explain to Nicodemus what happens in the Spirit when a person receives the Holy Ghost (born again).

The word sound in this verse is from the Greek word (*phōnē*) [Strong's g5456]. According to the lexicon from the Blue letter bible at www.blueletterbible.com this word

means a **voice** a) of the sound of **uttered words, speech of a language, tongue**. Jesus tells us in Mark 16:17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In My name shall they cast out devils; **they shall speak with new tongues**; this is what the prophet Isaiah prophesied in Isaiah 28:11,12. This prophesy was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:1-4.

It is also important to note that we have two different authors using the same terminology; the Apostle John declaring to us Jesus' Words in the Gospel of John and Luke giving us the accounts of the Acts of the Apostles in Acts. Comparing John 3:8, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the **sound** thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: **so is every one that is born of the Spirit.**" (Notice Jesus said **everyone** who is born of the Spirit).

Acts2:1-4 "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, **they were all with one accord** in one place. And suddenly there came a **sound** from **heaven as of a rushing mighty wind**, and it filled all the house where **they** were sitting. And there appeared unto **them** cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon **each of them**. **And they were all filled** with the **Holy Ghost**, and **began to speak with other tongues**, as the **Spirit** gave **them utterance.**"

Remember the word sound in John 3:8 means to speak; **they spoke in tongues** when they were filled with the Spirit of God. So is **everyone** who is born of the Spirit.

Compare with Acts 10:42-48, Acts 19:1-6.

What must I do to receive the Holy Ghost? Obey Acts 2:38. Ask God to fill you with His Spirit.

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall [your] heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" (Luke 11:13)

"For whosoever shall call upon the **name** of the Lord shall be saved." (Romans 10:13)

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6)

"And we are His witnesses of these things; and [so is] also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him." (Acts 5:32)