



BETHEL AG CHURCH
INTERNATIONAL WORSHIP CENTRE

BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT



LORD JESUS SAID "FOR JOHN BAPTISED WITH WATER, BUT YOU
WILL BE BAPTISED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT NOT MANY
DAYS FROM NOW" (ACTS 1:5)

BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

The events of the Day of Pentecost as recorded in **Acts 2** were the climax of a promise God made centuries before through the prophet Ezekiel, *"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them"* (**Ezekiel 36:26,27**).

And through the prophet Joel, *"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: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit"* (**Joel 2:28,29**).

The coming of the Holy Spirit signified the dawn of the new age. But the prophecies clearly distinguish two works of the Holy Spirit — **indwelling and empowering**. The former relates to regeneration (born again) and the consequent indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The latter relates to endowment with power of the Holy Spirit. God's will was that all believers experience both the indwelling and the empowering of the Holy Spirit. It seems it was God's intention that these two operations of the Spirit were to be different aspects of the one work of the Spirit in connection with the new covenant.

John 16:7, *"But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you."*

Acts 1:4,5, *"And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, 'you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'"*

What is Baptism in the Holy Spirit?

In simple terms, baptism in the Holy Spirit is an overwhelming experience with the Holy Spirit to be bold witnesses of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The term '*baptism in the Holy Spirit*' is a terminology designated for the experience predicted by John the Baptist that Jesus would "*baptize in the Holy Spirit*" (**Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33**) and is repeated by both Jesus (**Acts 1:5**) and Peter (**Acts 11:16**). The imagery of baptism portrays '*immersion*'; as seen in John the Baptist's analogy between '*Baptism in water*', which he administered, and '*Baptism in the Spirit*' that Jesus would administer.

Acts 11:16, “And I (Peter) remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’”

Various biblical terms are used for this experience, especially in the Book of Acts. The following expressions in Acts are used interchangeably for the experience: *baptized in the Spirit*—**Acts 1:5; 11:16**; *the Spirit coming, or falling upon*—

Acts 1:8; 8:16; 10:44; 11:15; 19:6; *the Spirit poured out*—**Acts 2:17,18; 10:45**; the gift — **Acts 1:4, 2:38**; *filled with the Spirit*— **Acts 2:4; 9:17**; also **Luke 1:15,41,67**.

Therefore, baptism in the Spirit means to be immersed, to be sunk, to be overwhelmed in the environment or in the person of the Holy Spirit.

Who must be baptised in the Holy Spirit?

All Believers of Lord Jesus are candidates to be baptised in the Holy Spirit. **Joel 2:28-29** promises to pour out His Spirit upon **all His people**. Old and young, male and female, servants—with no distinction for age, gender, or social status—are included in the promise.

Baptism in the
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And on the day of Pentecost, Apostle Peter emphasized the promise in his inaugural speech when he quoted the passage from Joel and declared that the promised gift of the Holy Spirit was “for you and your children and for all who are far off” (**Acts 2:38,39**)

Who baptizes you in the Holy Spirit?

Lord Jesus Christ baptizes you in the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 3:11, “I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”

Acts 1:4,5,8 “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift My Father promised, which you have heard Me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be Baptized with the Holy Spirit.” But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses.”

Why do you require this baptism in the Holy Spirit?

A. The Power for Witnessing

Baptism in the Holy Spirit empowers one to be an effective witness of our resurrected Lord (**Luke 24:49, Acts 1:8**).

There is no point in having the power of the Holy Spirit, if we aren't sharing the good news of Lord Jesus. As we avail ourselves *of this power*, God will use us as He changes people's lives for all eternity. The ascending Jesus empowered His Church with the Spirit to carry on His mission to the ends of the earth (**Acts 1:9-11**).

B. Righteous Living

The purpose of Baptism in the Holy Spirit is to so overwhelm you with the presence of God that you will no longer dwell on your own weaknesses and inadequacies. Instead, you would be filled with power and boldness to fulfill God's purpose for your life. (**Romans 8, 1 Corinthians 14**)

Holy Spirit baptism enables the person to lead a life of holiness – a life that pleases God. With baptism in the Holy Spirit, one experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (**John 7:37–39; Acts 4:8**), a deepened reverence for God (**Acts 2:43; Hebrews 12:28**), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (**Acts 2:42**), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost (**Mark 16:20**).

Acts 17:28, *"in Him we live, we move and have our being."*

C. Equipped with Spiritual Gifts

The Holy Spirit not only empowers us for Christ-like living; He equips us for Christ-like service to build the body of Christ (**Acts 6:3; 11:24; 13:52, 1 Corinthians 12:4–6**). The purpose of spiritual gifts is not to impress, nor to provide a powerful personal experience. The manifestation of the Spirit is for the common good and the edification of the church (**1 Corinthians 12:7; 14:12, 26**).

I was told that the Holy Spirit dwells in you the moment you believe in Lord Jesus, so what is this second filling or baptism of the Holy Spirit?

No one becomes a follower of Lord Jesus without the gracious work of Holy Spirit towards salvation. The Bible scholars call this as the first filling of the Holy Spirit. Not only does He save a person, but dwells in them (**Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 6:19, Galatians 4:6**). However, there seems to be an additional and distinct ministry of the Holy Spirit - called the Baptism of the Holy Spirit - like on the day of Pentecost (**Acts 1 & 2**)

Baptism of the Spirit occurs at some point subsequent to salvation. Its purpose is to empower Believers primarily to witness boldly. The distinctiveness of Spirit baptism is also clearly evidenced in **Acts 8**. Here we are told that people from Samaria believed in Christ and were baptized (**vs. 12**) but some apostles were called up from Jerusalem to pray for them *"that they might receive the Holy Spirit"* (**vs. 15**).

Being filled with the Spirit should be a normal part of all Believer's lives. However, in the Book of Acts, what may surprise some readers is that Spirit empowerment did not stop with what some may call 'second filling' or 'Baptism of the Holy Spirit'. Peter and John received their second filling of Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Later, they received additional power for a special circumstance (**Acts 4:8**).

Likewise, Paul was filled with the Holy Spirit shortly after **Acts 9:17**, but God filled him anew for a special situation in **Acts 13:9**. We are not simply called for a second, or third, or fourth filling of the Holy Spirit but for a continued Spirit-filled life. **Ephesians 5:18**, *"And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit."*

The verb *"be filled"* in **Ephesians 5:18** is a continuous verb - it means 'being filled', 'keep on being filled', and not 'be filled once'. God desires to fill you with His Spirit all the time. Such people who were filled of the Holy Spirit continually were referred to in Acts as "men and women FULL of the Holy Spirit".

We read in Acts 2:4 that all spoke in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterances. What is this "spoke in other tongues"? Does it accompany 'filling in the Holy Spirit'?

Speaking in other tongues (*Greek: Glossolalia*) or other languages unknown to the speaker is an initial sign of baptism in the Spirit. When the disciples were first baptized in the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, *"all of them...began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability"* (**Acts 2:4**). Similarly, when the Gentiles were initially filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter and the other Jewish Christians recognized it, *"for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God"* (**Acts 10:46**). And when the disciples of John the Baptist first received this blessing from God after Paul preached to them and prayed with them, they all *"spoke in tongues and prophesied"* (**Acts 19:6**).

Speaking in other tongues continues to be an evidence of the Holy Spirit's presence. There are, however, many other evidences of the Spirit's activity: the other gifts of the Holy Spirit, (**1 Corinthians 12:8-10**) and most important, the expression of the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (**Galatians 5:22-23**). The Body of Christ is in need of a healthy balance of all these evidences. Speaking in other tongues is but the initial evidence and is to be followed by all the evidences of Christlikeness that mark a consistent Spirit-filled life.

Why is praying in other tongues important?

1. Praying in other tongues gives you Supernatural Understanding of God's mysteries.

1 Corinthians 14:2, *"For one who speaks in an unknown tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the Spirit."*

2. Praying in other tongues edifies or builds your spirit man to be bold.

1 Corinthians 14:4, *"He that speaks in an unknown tongue edifies himself"*

Jude 1:20, *"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost."*

3. Praying in other tongues constitutes a deeper intimacy with God in worship and prayer.

1 Corinthians 14:14-15, *"What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also. I'll sing with the Spirit, and I'll sing with the understanding also."*

Should everyone speak in other tongues?

It is not a matter of whether 'all should' but 'all may'. On three occasions in the book of Acts, people were said to speak in tongues - **Acts 2:4; 10:46; and 19:6**

ALL of them did so. They so spoke as a result of the Holy Spirit's action upon them, but there is no suggestion of necessity. Rather, tongues are the free expression of praise to God. Apostle Paul says, *"I wish that you all spoke in tongues"* (**1 Corinthians 14:5**).

What are the cautionary commandments that deal with speaking in other tongues?

- The ability to speak in other tongues is a powerful gift by the Holy Spirit but not a valid way to measure a person's spiritual commitment. (**1 Corinthians 13:1**)
- It is a mistake to seek the gift of speaking in tongues rather than the Giver. (**1 Corinthians 12:1-11**)
- Avoid spiritual elitism by pride among those who speak in tongues and those who don't.
- There is no requirement to fake or imitate what you hear from others who speak in other tongues.

Does Baptism of the Holy Spirit happen automatically in my life? What must I do to be filled of the Holy Spirit or to receive this Baptism of the Holy Spirit?

Spiritual growth is not automatic, it is intentional.

We are not simply called for a second, or third, or fourth filling of the Holy Spirit but for a continued Spirit-filled life

Steps to receive Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

- a) Know that Baptism in the Holy Spirit is a gift from God (**Acts 2:38**).
- b) Have a genuine thirst for the filling of the Holy Spirit (**John 7:38**).
- c) Know that Jesus is the source (**Matthew 3:11**). It is not the Pastor who baptizes, but Jesus who is the Baptizer. Focus on Him.
- d) Confess any known sins in your life and make a decision to live a righteous life (**2 Timothy 2:22**)
- e) Ask Him to fill you (**Luke 11:13**).
- f) Begin to worship the Lord with expressions of praise and adoration (**Romans 12:1**)
- g) Yield to any deep gushing within your spirit and allow that inner surge to break through in expressions of worship, praise, and adoration in a language unknown to you, but meaningful to God. (**Acts 10 & 16, Ephesians 5:19**)

The gift of tongues is not reserved for a select few. Paul made it clear in **1 Corinthians 14:5** that he wanted every believer to pray in tongues.

What are the common barriers that people experience in being filled with the Holy Spirit?

• Fear of the unknown

Some are afraid of the Holy Spirit because of what He may ask us to do or how we may react when the Holy Spirit comes on us.

"For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and a sound-mind." (**2 Timothy 1:7**)

"and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets." (**1 Corinthians 14:32**). This simply means the Holy Spirit will never make us do anything and can do nothing through our lives without our conscious willful cooperation first.

• Pride

Many people are unable to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit because they are more concerned about what people think about them, than standing up for what is right and true and best for all.

"The fear of man gives a snare, but he who trusts in Jehovah will be exalted." (**Proverbs 29:25**)

"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome." (**1 John 5:2-3**)

- **Sin**

Some Christians do not want to get any closer to Lord Jesus or Holy Spirit than they already are, because it would mean a change in their lifestyle.

"I beseech you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."
(Romans 12:1)

How does a Spirit-filled life look like?

The indicator of a Spirit-filled life is seen in how well a Believer produces the fruits of the Holy Spirit mentioned in **Galatians 5:22-23**. Legalistic religion often leads to quarrels and spiritual competition; it is self-centred, empowered only by the flesh.

By contrast, the Spirit summons us to self-sacrificial, loving servanthood. The Spirit produces cooperation and wholesome relationships within Christ's body (**Galatians 5:25 – 6:10**) and one must seek to develop such qualities in our lives (**2 Peter 1:4-11**). These qualities characterize our identity in Christ and show what our lives should look like as we submit to the Spirit's gentle leading from within. No spiritual gifts declare us to be people of the Spirit if we do not walk lovingly and meekly towards others.

The Spirit-filled life is a life marked by genuine submission to one another. Christians who cannot submit to others, cannot take responsibility, and cannot humble themselves in loving service to others are not yielding to the full life of the Spirit. Christians who gossip, slander, and act arrogantly or with authoritarian attitude quench the fruit of God's Spirit. This is true even if these same Christians are able to exercise spiritual gifts, claim leading roles in God's work, or if others rank them highly in God's kingdom.

God will judge us for our character and obedience, not for how much power He gave us (**Matthew 7:15-23; 1 Corinthians 3:6-15; 4:1-5**).

Book References:

Gift & Giver: The Holy Spirit for Today – Craig Keener

Overwhelmed by the Spirit – Randall A. Harrison

God's empowering presence – Gordon Fee

If you have any further questions, please email us at info@bethelag.in or walk into the church office for any counselling regarding this issue.

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