

Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

This subject is so little understood that some have confounded it with the baptism of death, referred to in first article of September number. And some of our readers have expressed themselves as being pleased with the article on Baptism of the Spirit. This is quite a mistake, as the two baptisms are entirely different. Notice that while all are exhorted to be baptized into Christ's death, (willingly submitting to death) none are ever told to be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

Some will inquire, should we not assemble ourselves as Bro. Moody and others of our dear brethren and sisters have recently done in Massachusetts, and earnestly pray to our Father for the baptism of the Holy Ghost? We answer, no, because there is only one baptism of the Spirit promised or necessary to the church. This one baptism was at Pentecost. We are told that it came as a rushing, mighty wind and "filled all the house where they were sitting."

Now, notice the idea of immersion. The house being filled, they were completely surrounded by, or immersed in Holy Spirit. We are members of the same church and family, and that was our baptism – one for all, and no other baptism of the Spirit is ever taught anywhere in the Bible. Remember, that up to the time of Jesus' baptism by John, when coming up out of the water, the Holy Ghost descended upon him, the Holy Ghost had not yet been given to any one in the way now imparted to the church, viz.: as a comforter, guide and leader into the understanding of truth, etc.

True, the Spirit had been in the world, and was exercised upon and in certain prophets, but it was given for special occasions, and was not an abiding presence. It gave them miraculous utterance, but did not guide into the understanding of God's word; for, "not unto

themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you, with the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven. 1 Pet. 1:12.

The Spirit given to Jesus without measure, (Jno. 3:34,) and given by measure to all his disciples and members, (Jno. 1:16) is the spirit of adoption (into the divine family and nature), whereby we cry, "Father, Father," i.e., we recognize God as our Father in two senses – first, as our creator as natural men, even as Adam was called the Son of God, (Luke 3:38), and now by our adoption into the divine family he becomes our Father in that divine sense. Until Jesus, no man could enter into the relation to God of adopted sons, partakers of the divine nature, because all were sinners, and God could not receive sinners as sons. When "the man Christ Jesus presented himself as a being, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, in whom was no sin," he was acceptable with the Father, and when he offered his perfect natural life for ours, according to the will of God, it was acceptable. The Father accepted of his sacrifice – the natural, and as a gift, gave to him the spiritual, divine nature – life and body, which he had laid aside when he took the human nature – life and body. Now, when Jesus made the covenant **[R182 : page 6]** to lay down his humanity as our ransom, he received the divine adoption and the spirit without measure, and the witness of his relationship came at once, (Luke 3:22), for a voice from heaven said: "Thou art my beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased." (Luke 3:22.)

Thus was our head anointed with the oil of gladness. Now, were the disciples also so anointed and given the comfort and guidance of the Spirit? No; not while Jesus lived. Why? We answer, for the same reason that the prophets could not receive it thus. They were sinners in God's sight, part of the fallen human family, and the ransom for their forfeited life was not paid until "Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death (on the cross) for every man."

Were the disciples, believers, then received as justified, pure, sinless in God's sight the moment Jesus died? We answer that the price of our ransom was then paid, but that in God's plan, Jesus must first present in the Father's presence the evidence of His death – our redemption. "Him therefore hath God highly exalted and given a name above every name," that the gift of the divine nature should come through him to his body (the church), for God hath committed all judgment unto the Son," and "hath given him power over all flesh that He should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." He must first receive again from the Father, the fullness of the divine nature before He could bestow the spirit, the seal of sonship. Remember, the head only, had so far, received the comforter, or evidence of adoption, for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:39.)

Thus the church, as instructed, were waiting to be imbued with the spirit which should guide them in understanding the scriptures (Old Testament) and the words of Jesus. When the spirit did come, it immersed them all by filling the house. This spiritual baptism came to the church directly from her head, as Peter testified. "Jesus, therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, (having come fully into possession of spiritual power, as promised.) He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." Acts 2:33.

The Holy Spirit – "Spirit of truth" – thus given as the church's teacher, begins the work by distributing certain gifts to certain members of the church. All (the church) received of the spirit of adoption, but some received of the gifts of the spirit. These gifts varied, according to the character and natural ability, etc., of the person; the object of the Lord in bestowing these gifts being, that every one who received them should profit withal (use them profitably for the good of the church and the advancement of truth.) 1 Cor. 12:7.

Paul explains the matter, saying, "Wherefore it is said, having ascended on high, He led a multitude of captives, and gave gifts to men." "He gave indeed the apostles, and the prophets, and the evangelists, and shepherds, and teachers." Why did Jesus give these gifts? For the complete qualification of the saints for the work of service, in order to the building up of the body of the anointed one." Eph. 4:12. Diaglott.

Here only the chief gifts are mentioned, but in 1 Cor. 12 we have these and other graded "diversities of gifts." And those whom God hath placed in the congregation are: first, apostles; second, prophets; third, teachers; next, powers; then gifts of cures, assistants, directors, different languages. All are not apostles; all are not prophets; all are not teachers, etc....But you earnestly desire the more eminent gifts, and yet a more excellent way I point out unto you." – Love: "If I have prophecy, and know all secrets and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains and have not LOVE, I am nothing." (Diag.)

Now, we inquire, has this spirit ever been withdrawn from the church? If through the various gifts and channels then arranged of God it was sufficient in quantity and quality to do the work assigned, viz.: to guide the church into truth, then has it lost any of its power and efficiency now, that we should ask for a baptism again? No beloved, the comforter abides with us in full measure; Jesus, our head, poured it out abundantly and sufficiently once, and it remains for us.

True, some of the gifts are departed, but the chief ones remain. We still have the apostles and prophets. These being dead, yet speak to us, and that more clearly and forcibly than to our brethren who saw them face to face. The word declares that "there are differences of administration, but the same Lord." Our Lord has, to some extent, changed His administration, but he, as head, is still ruling over his body. The same spirit continues, but with diversities of operations. It

does not now operate (usually) by the lower gifts of [R183 : page 6] tongues, cures, etc., probably because the ignorance which made it expedient then, has now given place to knowledge, so that instead of coming together and speaking or praying ignorantly, in an unknown tongue, we can now, when we assemble ourselves, speak to one another of the teachings of the Lord and His apostles. God still continues, to some extent, the gifts of teachers (called prophets 1 Cor. 14:3-5) evangelists, shepherds. The manner of imparting the Holy Ghost used to be by the laying on of hands of the apostles, or sometimes, of others designated. (Acts 9:1-17.) Here again we see a "difference of administration," [but the same Lord and same spirit] for now, without laying on of hands [even as Cornelius] we, when we consecrate ourselves, fully receive the spirit of adoption, whereby we can recognize God as our Divine Father as well as creator. We find ourselves "Led of the Spirit" and guided into the truth day by day, and we know that "as many as are led by the spirit of God, these are the sons of God." And wherever we find the fruits of the spirit we may be sure that the spirit dwells there, else the fruits could not exist. We should be more anxious to possess the fruits, than the gifts, of the spirit. Paul exalts one of the fruits, LOVE, as being more desirable than any or all the gifts without it.

Let us for a moment look at the type which seems given to illustrate our anointing of the spirit, viz.: The anointing of Aaron. (Lev. 8.) The holy oil type of the spirit was poured upon his head in profusion. So the spirit was given to our head, Jesus, without measure. As the oil ran down all over Aaron, "even to the skirts of his garments," so in due time – Pentecost – the (oil) spirit descended from our exalted head upon us, his body, and all through this age, it has flowed down, down, touching every child of God. Now, to ask God for a fresh baptism would be to ask amiss, for if His word abide in us, we should remember that he said: "The Father shall give you another comforter,

that he may abide with you forever (aion the age), even the spirit of truth." Jno. 14:16.

Now, while it would be no more proper for us to pray for another baptism of the spirit than it would have been for Moses to have anointed Aaron twice, still as individuals, you and I may not have our hearts as full of the spirit of truth as it is our privilege to be. As God's children, we are entitled to "be filled with the spirit," and we cannot ask for this filling too earnestly, nor too frequently go to the fountain of truth – the word of God, at which we may copiously drink into His spirit. The more of the spirit we receive the more we will have room for. The new spirit of the new nature displaces and removes the old, carnal or fleshly spirit, and gives us room for more. And we repeat, there is abundant measure to fill full as they will hold, all of our "earthly vessels."
