

Baptism of the Holy Spirit by Dr. Jay Zinn

The BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT—Isaiah prophesied it, Joel verified it, John preached it, Jesus promised it, YOU can have it, and Peter said it’s for as many as the Lord our God shall call (Acts 2:39).

1. If a person has been saved and baptized in water, is there any other experience God has promised for His people?

A closer look at the book of Acts reveals the pattern of another experience the early saints enjoyed. Peter sites three foundational steps in *Acts 2:38* in response to his audience’s question: *What they should do to right their wrong in crucifying Jesus?* His answer:

- Repent —i.e. *turn* from your sins to Jesus (Salvation),
- Be baptized in water for the forgiveness of sins (Water Baptism),
- Receive the gift and promise of the Holy Spirit (Spirit Baptism).

2. Does this mean the new convert doesn’t receive the Holy Spirit when he’s saved?

No. All Christians receive the Holy Spirit when they turn to Jesus and are “born again” (*John 3:5-7*). Salvation is a *spiritual* birth. But the book of Acts reveals a subsequent experience to the salvation experienced by the early Christians. They were *baptized in the Holy Spirit!*

3. Where in the Bible does it show this experience separate from the early Christian’s salvation?

In *Acts 8:12-17*, the Samaritans believed the gospel Philip was preaching and were baptized in water (water baptism *follows* salvation in the pattern of Acts). When the apostles in Jerusalem heard about it, they came to Samaria to pray for these new converts because the Holy Spirit had not yet come *upon* any of them (*Acts 8:16*). They had received the Holy Spirit *within*, but had not received the Holy Spirit *upon* them as the apostles had experienced in *Acts 2:2-4*.

4. What is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit?

It is a baptism of the believer into the “anointing” of the Holy Spirit. Jesus set the pattern for this when the Spirit descended *upon* him at the river Jordan (*Matthew 3:16*). He was water baptized and then “anointed” by the Holy Spirit. The believer follows Christ’s example. We follow him in water baptism and in Spirit baptism (anointing) when the Holy Spirit comes *upon* us.

5. How does the Baptism of the Holy Spirit affect the believer’s life?

It brings an increased dimension of:

- **Authority** to witness and minister to others (*Acts 1:8*).
- **Inspiration** in worship (*John 4:24; Philippians 3:3*).
- **Power** in prayer (*Rom. 8:26; 1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 6:18; Jude 20*).
- **Understanding** in the Scripture (*1 John 2:20, 27; 1 Cor. 12:12*).
- **Guidance** from God’s voice (*Acts 13:2; Mark 13:11; John 16:13-15*).
- **Manifestations** of the Holy Spirit (*1 Corinthians 12 and 14*).

6. What must we do to receive this “gift” of the Holy Ghost?

Once a person has decided to receive Jesus as their Savior and Lord, they are qualified to receive this “gift” from God. Remember, a gift isn’t something you earn. Many have erred thinking they’ve got to *clean up their act* before they can receive this experience. The blood of Jesus has already cleansed you from all sin. Therefore, you simply need to *desire* the baptism of the Holy Spirit and *ask* for it (*see Acts 2:38; Luke 11:33*).

7. How do you know you have this gift after you ask?

It is more than just “taking it by faith.” There is a tangible experience that accompanies the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Look closely at the experience of the early church Christians.

There are four classic illustrations:

- **THE 120 JEWISH BELIEVERS** in Acts 2. They *spoke in tongues* (a new language) when the Holy Spirit came *upon* them. A great crowd was drawn to this phenomena when they heard the hundred-and-twenty speak about God’s glorious works in their native tongue (Acts 2:11-12). Amazed at this, the crowd asked what it meant to which Peter replied: “*This is what was spoken (or foretold) by the prophet Joel.*” Joel had predicted the coming of this experience (Joel 2:28-29), and so did Jesus (see Acts 1:4-5, 8). Peter further elaborates to the crowd: “*Exalted to the right hand of God, he (Jesus) has received from the Father the **promised** Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now **see and hear** (verse 33).*” What did the crowd see and hear? One hundred and twenty disciples speaking in a new language, which was the tangible evidence of the baptism (anointing) of the Holy Spirit. The tangible evidence of Christ’s anointing was the *dove*. The tangible evidence of the Christian’s anointing was *tongues*.

- **THE SAMARITANS** in Acts 8. When the apostles came down to Samaria and laid hands on the converts, Simon the sorcerer SAW something he wanted to purchase the ability to lay hands on people and impart the gift of the Holy Spirit. Peter rebuked him for this and said, “*Your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the **gift** of God with money! You have no part or share in this **utterance** (Greek word **logos**).*” Simon saw something uttered. So in light of the pattern of Spirit Baptism in Acts it is safe to conclude that Simon saw the Samaritans speaking in *tongues* (new language).

- **THE ROMANS** in Acts 10. The saved Jews with Peter were surprised when they witnessed the household of Cornelius receive the *gift* of the Holy Spirit. How did they know? Because they heard them *speaking in tongues!* Peter acknowledged they had received the Holy Spirit just as they had on the day of Pentecost. So he ordered them (*Gentiles!*) to be water baptized. When confronted by the apostles for going into the home of the Gentiles (Acts 11), Peter explained how God took him there and how they received the same *gift* as the apostles on the day of Pentecost. Case closed. No one could refute the *evidence*—the Gentiles had *spoken in tongues*.

- **THE GREEKS** in Acts 19. In his journey through the interior of Asia Minor, Paul came across twelve disciples who had not been water baptized correctly, nor had they been baptized in the Holy Spirit. When Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came *upon* them and they *spoke in tongues* (19:6).

In all of the above incidents the pattern is clear. Something tangible was *seen* and *heard* when the early saints received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It was the immediate evidence. Jesus himself predicted this would happen when he said, “*These **signs** will accompany those who believe...they will speak in **new** tongues...*” (Mark 16:17).

8. Is this doctrine of tongues taught anywhere else in the Bible?

Yes. Tongues is also mentioned in *1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14* in the context of explaining the purpose, practice, and dynamics of speaking in tongues. The book of Acts provides the historical record of the experience. *First Corinthians* provides the insight.

9. Why would God chose this particular manifestation as evidence for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit?

Perhaps the answer may be understood when we consider the most unruly member of our body is the tongue which no one can tame (*James 3*). Speaking in *tongues* is the Holy Spirit enabling the utterance (Acts 2:4). Truly a time when the tongue is tamed and speaking only that which edifies (*1 Cor. 14:4*).

10. Who can receive this experience of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit?

Every believer in Christ can have it. Peter told the crowds, “*The promise (gift of the Holy Spirit) is for you and your children and for all who are afar off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.*” (Acts 2:39)

11. Why won't I understand what I'm saying when I speak in tongues?

The apostle Paul gives us the answer. He tells us our “spirit” is speaking *mysteries* to God and, therefore, will not be understood by our minds (*1 Corinthians 14:2*). He further explains, when we speak in tongues, our mind is not producing the language because it is coming from our “spirit.” (*1 Corinthians 14:14*).

What is our spirit?

Proverbs 20:27 says:

“*The spirit of man is the candle (lamp) of the Lord, searching all the inward parts (depths) of the belly (inmost being).*”

Apparently the physical location of our *spirit* is in the middle section of the body. This is probably why, when our conscience is pricked, a physical reaction occurs in our gut (like butterflies). Proverbs also indicates our *spirit* is the *Lord's lamp* (the conscious awareness of the existence of God).

When humankind was created, God designed us as three-part beings—that is, we have a *body*, a *soul*, and a *spirit* (see *1 Thessalonians 5:23*). The **body** (our *world-conscious* part) is the visible, physical home of our *invisible* soul and spirit. The **soul** (our *self-conscious* part) is our mind, and the **spirit** of man is our *God-conscious* part. This is how our *soul* (mind) can have its own language while our *spirit* receives another language when we are baptized in the Holy Spirit.

13. What is happening when I speak in tongues?

- The Holy Spirit (in us) enables our “spirit” to speak in tongues (*Acts 2:4*).
- We're uttering “mysteries” to God with our spirit (*1 Corinthians 14:2*).
- We're praying in a tongue we don't understand (*1 Cor. 13:1; 14:2, 15-16*).
- We're praying “in the Spirit” with our spirit, which builds faith (*Jude 20*).
- We're praying a prayer God understands, which edifies us (*1 Cor. 14:4a*).
- It's a perfect prayer because it's source is in the Holy Spirit (*Acts 2:4*).
- It is a way the Holy Spirit intercedes for us in our weakness (*Ro. 8:26-27*).
- It burns up the *chaff* (of sin) in our lives (*Isaiah 4:4; Matthew 3:11-12*).
- It imparts a greater boldness to witness (*Acts 1:8; 4:13,31*).

14. What if God doesn't want to give this to me, or what if I get a demon instead?

Look closely at what Jesus says in *Luke 11:9-13*:

“So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you—for everyone who asks **receives**. Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will he give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will he give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, **how much more** will your Father in heaven **give the Holy Spirit** to those who ask him!”

The principle here is obvious. If we ask God for the “gift” of the Holy Spirit, which *he* initiated, and it says in his Word that it is ours for the asking, why would he not give it to us? And why would he give us a scorpion or snake (symbolic for devils) instead of the Holy Spirit? What parent would do that to their child? Parents give good gifts—not harmful gifts—to their children. *How much more* will our heavenly Father give us the Holy Spirit when we ask him? God not only wants to give it to us; it will be exactly what we asked for, not a demonic spirit

15. How can I receive this “gift” of the Holy Ghost and speak in tongues?

First, you must repent (be willing to turn from everything the Bible calls sin) and accept Jesus Christ as your Lord (Master) and Savior (*Acts 2:38-39; Romans 10:8-13*). Then believe the following:

- it is Biblical (*be thoroughly convinced through examining the Scriptures*).
- it is God’s will for you (*Ephesians 5:17-18*).
- it is applicable for today’s Christian (*Mark 16:17; Acts 2:39*).
- it is distinct from your salvation experience (*Acts 8:14-17*).
- it is evidenced by speaking in a language (tongue) you won’t understand (*Mark 16:17; 1 Cor. 14:2 and 15*).
- it is for your spiritual growth and edification (*1 Cor.14:4a; Jude 20*).

Other important points as you step out to receive this:

- You must really want this gift, and believe God will give you what you have asked for (*Luke 11:9-13; Hebrews 11:6; James 1:6-7*).
- Jesus is the Baptizer in the Holy Spirit (*Matthew 3:11; Luke 24:49*). Ask *him* to baptize you with the evidence of tongues.
- After you ask, say nothing more in the language you understand because your mind won’t be producing the new language (*1 Corinthians 14:14*). It will come from your *spirit* (out of your belly—*see John 7:38*). To speak from your mind is to shut off the valve from which the *river* flows.
- Understand that God uses *your* lips and *your* voice when you speak. You can’t speak with your mouth closed tight. Neither can you speak in tongues unless you begin to give voice, and start speaking in the new language as the Holy Spirit gives the utterance. Speak it out loud.
- Once you begin to speak in tongues, relax and let it go. Keep speaking for as long as you want. Your language will grow, and your faith increase. Your spirit is now speaking *mysteries* to God so don’t give any thought to the fact that you don’t understand what you’re saying (*1 Cor. 14:2, 14*).
- As you’re speaking there’s something else you can do with your new language. Paul says, “*So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, ...I will sing with my spirit.*” (*1 Corinthians 14:15*). You can *sing* in tongues! Put a tune to it, any tune. It’s fun!
- Pay no attention to the lies the Devil will fire into your thoughts. Such as: “*You’re not really speaking in tongues, you’re just making it up!*” If this happens it isn’t uncommon. The majority of those who have received this experience had the same thoughts. Why? Perhaps because it’s new and doesn’t seem possible. Or maybe our intellect is trying to reject it because it seems foolish. Whatever the doubts, understand it is Satan who wants to keep you from having this gift. Ignore him and keep speaking in tongues. In time the doubts will cease as your faith increases.
- Finally, pray in tongues often. Paul did (*1 Cor. 14:18*). Also understand you can start and stop at any time. You’re in control of the praying. Tongues will not come without you initiating it (*1 Corinthians 14:15*).
- It brings the supernatural power (anointing) of God to operate in the gifts of the Spirit (*1 Corinthians 12:1-11*). This is what happened to Jesus after he was anointed by the Holy Spirit at the Jordan River:

Luke 4:1 – “Jesus, *full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan...*”

Luke 4:14 – “Jesus returned to Galilee in the *power* (Gk: *dunamis*) of the Spirit.”

Luke 24:49 – “I (Jesus) am going to send you what my Father promised; but stay in the city until you have been *clothed with power* (*dunamis*) from on high.”

Acts 1:8 – “You will receive *power* (*dunamis*) when the Holy Spirit comes *upon* you.”

Acts 19:6 – “...Holy Spirit came *on* them,...they spoke in tongues and *prophesied* (the gift of prophecy).