

about this book . . . This booklet goes straight to the heart of the matter. Christ with and by the Father has poured out his Spirit for these last days—the days which began at Pentecost and will conclude in the hour of Christ’s coming and presence. It is both stimulating and demanding to be living in this last era of human history. Without the power of the Holy Spirit we cannot live as we ought. Enormous changes have been taking place and are taking place. Christians not only have to face these matters, but they are also to proclaim the Kingdom of God and live in faith, hope and love at the same time. They are to be one with Christ whilst he is putting down great powers and rulers and evils until the end comes and he delivers the Kingdom to the Father. Without his pouring out of the Spirit on us we cannot begin to do a thing. Being baptised by this outpouring alters everything.

Read the booklet and understand the meaning of being baptised in the Holy Spirit.

about the author . . . Octogenarian Geoffrey Bingham has had years of Christian learning and teaching in many countries. These days his new books are always vintage writing. Once Principal of two Bible Colleges and leader for almost thirty years in New Creation Teaching Ministry, he is tirelessly occupied with the Scriptures, constantly learning them and teaching them. His life is rooted in his own substantial family, in the human community, and in the rough and tumble of contemporary living and so he is able to speak to these things through books such as this.

THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Christ Pouring out His Spirit in the Last Days



New Creation Publications Inc.
www.newcreation.org.au

G E O F F R E Y C . B I N G H A M

By the Same Author

Ah, Strong, Strong Love!
All Cry, 'Glory!'
Christ & the Triune Glory
Christ's Cross over Man's Abyss
Everything in Beautiful Array
Spirit-Baptism: Spirit-Living
The Day of the Spirit
The Everlasting Presence
The Law of Eternal Delight
The Magnificence of Mercy
The Profound Mystery
The Spirit's Harvest
The Things We Firmly Believe
The Way & Wonder of Worship

**THE BAPTISM IN
THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Christ Pouring out His Spirit
in the Last Days

Geoffrey C. Bingham

NEW CREATION PUBLICATIONS INC.
PO Box 403, Blackwood, South Australia 5051
2003

Published by NEW CREATION PUBLICATIONS INC.,
AUSTRALIA PO Box 403, Blackwood, South Australia 5051
© Geoffrey C. Bingham 2003

National Library of Australia
cataloguing-in-publication data
Bingham, Geoffrey C.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit: Christ pouring out his Spirit in the
last days.

ISBN 0 86408 262 2 1.

Holy Spirit. 2. Baptism in the Holy Spirit. 3. Christian life.

I Title.

234.13

This book is copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes
of private study, research, criticism or review,
as permitted under the Copyright Act, no part may be reproduced by
any process without written permission.
Enquiries should be addressed to the publisher.

Cover Design: *Jane McLean Design*

Wholly set and printed at
NEW CREATION PUBLICATIONS INC.
Coromandel East, South Australia
www.newcreation.org.au

AUTHOR'S NOTE

In sketching out a series of ten studies, each taking about two pages of A4 size for notes, I thought it might be the right time to write a booklet on the subject because it is one that is often discussed. Having written two books which take up the theme —*Spirit Baptism: Spirit Living* (NCPI, Blackwood, 1990) and *The Day of the Spirit* (NCPI, Blackwood, 1985)—I thought a booklet condensing their materials might, also be helpful. It has been a stimulating exercise for me and I trust it will cause many of us to give increased reverence to Christ who has poured out, and still pours out 'the promise of the Father', without which we would be powerless.

Those interested in a reading list should look at both Bibliographies in the two larger books.

*Geoffrey Bingham,
24th February 2003*

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

Christ Pouring out His Spirit in the Last Days

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE TERM 'THE BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT'

The term 'the baptism in the Holy Spirit' is one which is often used by folk as a biblical term, but in fact is not found, in this precise form, in the New Testament. It might be deduced as such from 1 Corinthians 12:13, 'For by one Spirit we were all baptised into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit'. Here the preposition 'by' may indicate the Spirit as the baptiser, but most translations choose the prepositions 'in' or 'with'. It is made to be a locative dative rather than an instrumental one. The 'all were made to drink of one Spirit' seems to indicate an action not made by the Spirit but rather 'in' or 'with' the Spirit. It is best for us not to think of this as 'Spirit baptism' in comparison to what has been called 'water baptism'. This twelfth chapter of

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

1 Corinthians is really given over to the matter of the functional unity of the body in the diversity of the gifts.

The next place where we might speak of 'the baptism in the Spirit' is Acts 1:4-5, 'And while staying with them he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me, for John baptised with water, but before many days you shall be baptised with the Holy Spirit"'. This was referring back to what John the Baptist had promised—'John answered them all, "I baptise you with water; but he who is mightier than I is coming, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie: he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire"' (Luke 3:16; cf. Matt. 3:11; John 1:26-27). In John 1:33 the Baptist had said, 'I myself did not know him; but he who sent me to baptise with water said to me, "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptises with the Holy Spirit"'.

About one thing there can be no doubt, namely that Jesus' disciples and other hearers were sure that Jesus would be the one who would baptise in or with the Holy Spirit. Like John, Jesus also baptised in water (John 3:22-30). We cannot be sure what those who listened to John and Jesus understood of the term 'baptising in the Holy Spirit'. It must have been most significant and we should seek to understand it.

The third passage which can help us to understand is Acts 2:1-4, for this must certainly be the fulfilment of Jesus' words, 'before many days you shall be baptised with the Holy Spirit':

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

At this point we can understand that the 120 or so (Acts 1:15) were present and the noise, which sounded like a rushing wind, filled the whole house where they were sitting. Surely they were immersed in what filled the house. In fact it is said that they were filled with the Holy Spirit: 'tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them'. They then 'began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance'. The outcome was most notable, for hearing the words of the speakers and the words of Peter in particular, some three thousand people believed in Christ as being both Lord and Messiah, and were baptised.

WHAT INDEED IS THE MEANING OF JESUS' ACT OF BAPTISING IN THE HOLY SPIRIT?

As there are many views held on the idea of 'the baptism in the Spirit', we need to stick faithfully to the text of the Scriptures which relate to the subject. There are so many references to the actions of the Holy Spirit in the early church that it is no wonder many ideas have emerged which, in fact, are not faithfully based on the text from which they have been drawn. For example, in Acts 11:15-18

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

Peter describes the gift of the Holy Spirit being poured out upon the Gentiles (cf. Acts 10:45ff.):

'As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, "John baptised with water, but you shall be baptised with the Holy Spirit." If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?' When they heard this they were silenced. And they glorified God, saying, 'Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance unto life.'

From this account we gather two things: (i) what happened to the Gentiles at Caesarea was the same, in principle, as what happened at Pentecost; and (ii) it is now called 'the same gift', that is, the gift of the Spirit and at the same time the gift of the forgiveness of sins (cf. 10:43) and 'repentance unto life' (11:18). It is also notable that the Gentiles were 'speaking in tongues and extolling God'. The matter of the Spirit and terms used such as we read in the quote below have led many into confusion and some wrong conclusions. One of the reasons is that some readers of the subject have worked from certain presuppositions. We know we live in streams of history and are to some degree the product of our training within them. Not realising how conditioned we are, we bring our presuppositions to the text of Scripture. We do not realise our own hidden agendas. Look, for example, at the quote below. See how many different terms there are which are related to the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost and subsequent occasions. What do we make of all this? Do they indeed fit our presuppositions of the subject, the baptism in the Spirit?

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

For example, what does it mean when in Acts 2:33 the happening at Pentecost is described, 'Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which you see and hear'?

So we press on to face the reality:

At Samaria, the new believers had not received the Spirit, 'for it had not yet fallen on any of them'. The apostles laid hands on them 'and they received the Holy Spirit'. It was something which could be seen: '... Simon saw that the Holy Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands ...' At Caesarea, 'the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word'; 'the gift of the Spirit had been poured out ... on the Gentiles' and '... the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning [Pentecost]'. Later, Peter described it as giving 'the same gift to them as he gave to us'.

To Paul, it was said simply, '... you may ... be filled with the Holy Spirit'. In the Epistles are found these descriptions: '... the Holy Spirit who was given to us'; '... given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee; '... receive the Spirit ... by the hearing of faith'; '... might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith'. Peter speaks of '... the Holy Spirit sent from heaven'. Again, Paul speaks of '... the Holy Spirit who dwells within us', and says in the same vein, '... the Spirit of God dwells in you', adding, 'Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him'. His meaning in these three statements is that believers have received the Holy Spirit. Indeed, many more of his references to the action of the Spirit in the believer likewise presuppose possession of the Spirit. He says clearly, '... God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts ...'

John says, 'And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit which he has given us', and 'By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his own Spirit'. He also speaks of believers

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

having been 'anointed by the Holy One', and adds, 'the anointing which you have received from him abides in you'. This anointing is undoubtedly that of the Holy Spirit . . .¹

Let us then put together terms which are used in our quote, adding in those used at Pentecost. They are, 'like the rush of a mighty wind . . . tongues as of fire', 'filled with the Holy Spirit', 'pour out my Spirit', 'poured out', 'poured out this', 'fallen', 'fell', 'gift', 'gave', 'given', 'receive', 'sent', 'sent into our hearts', 'receive through faith', 'anointed by the Holy One'. There are so many terms that we could easily be confused by such which speak of Christ and the Father sending and pouring out the Spirit, then of the Spirit himself falling upon people and filling them, and again of the recipients receiving an outpouring, and knowing the indwelling of the Spirit with all that that entails. Whatever the terms and the action, the heart of them is the main thing which Peter described on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:29–33:

Brethren, I may say to you confidently of the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants upon his throne, he foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see

¹ This quote is from *The Day of the Spirit* by Geoffrey Bingham (NCPI, Blackwood, 1985), p. 158. I have not given the references for the various texts, but they are set out appropriately in the book. Also, I have not included the terms used in Acts 19:1–7, the account of twelve disciples Paul found at Ephesus and upon whom the Spirit came when Paul laid hands on them.

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

corruption. This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which you see and hear.

Here it is very clear that Jesus was—and is—the Baptiser, the one pouring out the Holy Spirit. On the night of his betrayal he had said: (i) that the Father would send the Holy Spirit in his—Jesus'—name (John 14:26); (ii) that he would send the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit from the Father (John 15:26); and (iii) that he, himself, would send the Counsellor (John 16:7). In very clear terms he said why the Spirit had to be sent and what he would do when he came, namely that he would bring to their remembrance all that Christ had told them, that he would teach them 'all things', lead them into 'all the truth', would glorify Christ to them, showing them all things which the Father had placed in his hands, would tell them 'things to come' and would convict the world of sin and righteousness and judgment. These things they could always expect would be the case when the Spirit would be sent to them. So many and so powerful were these things!

JESUS TELLING THE APOSTLES THEY WOULD BE BAPTISED WITH THE SPIRIT

Acts 1:1–11 is indispensable to understanding Jesus' outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2:33):

In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

was taken up, after he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. To them he presented himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the kingdom of God. And while staying with them he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, 'you heard from me, for John baptised with water, but before many days you shall be baptised with the Holy Spirit.' So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?' He said to them, 'It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.' And when he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'

What strikes the eye first is that in the forty days in which Jesus appeared to them and taught them, his subject was the Kingdom of God. Jesus had taught them much about the Kingdom prior to the crucifixion. What, then, was he now teaching them? The second thing which catches our attention is that he 'charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me, for John baptised with water, but before many days you shall be baptised with the Holy Spirit"'. Why did he call the coming baptism 'the promise of the

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

Father?'² Why did he tell them that? The third thing which surprises us is that they put the question, 'Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?' What had caught their minds seriously was that the baptism in the Spirit has much to do with the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel, that is, the *promised* restoration. It was the talk in John the Baptist's ministry and throughout Jesus' early ministry. Only once did he relate the Kingdom to them, personally. He had said, 'Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom' (Luke 12:32). Apart from the night of his betrayal when he spoke of the gift of the Spirit, he had only once said, 'If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!' (Luke 11:13). Now in Acts 1:1–11 we are seeing how the coming establishment of the Kingdom and being baptised in the Holy Spirit fit together.

What is often missed in our thinking is that in the Old Testament, promises of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit are linked with the prophecies of the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel. It appears

² The term 'promise of the Father' is also found in Luke 24:49, 'And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high'. In Acts 2:33 Peter says, 'and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which you see and hear'. In Ephesians 1:13 Paul speaks of 'the promised Holy Spirit', which, it is true, is capable of being translated 'the Spirit of promise', but whichever way we look at it the Spirit is promised by the Father to fulfil the promises of the New Covenant (cf. Ezek. 36:22–32; 37:1–14; 2 Cor. 3:1–18; etc.).

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

that they linked Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom with the promise of the outpouring of the Spirit. This was excellent perception. It supplies us with the key to the baptising in the Spirit. Jesus has said, in effect, 'Now don't you go worrying about the immediate restoration of the Kingdom to Israel. When I baptise you in the Holy Spirit then you will be witnesses to me, first in Jerusalem and all Judea (Israel), and then in Samaria (the Samaritans), and to the "uttermost parts of the earth" (the Gentiles, i.e. all the nations). When all this happens, then the Kingdom will not just be Israel being successful but all nations being in that Kingdom.' Now we see the need for power—the power from being baptised in the Spirit—to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom to all the world. The proclamation of the gospel—the gospel of the Kingdom (Acts 20:24–25) which is at the same time the gospel of salvation—would have to do with the final outcome of God's plan and purpose which is both time-wide and world-wide.

JESUS, THE PSALMS, THE PROPHECIES AND THE LAST AGE

We know that on the day of his resurrection Christ talked to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus and later to the apostles gathered in the upper room in Jerusalem. He first spoke to the two along the lines of, 'And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them all the scriptures concerning himself', and then he spoke later to those in the upper room:

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

'These are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled.' Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things' (Luke 24:44–48).

He was saying that the Scriptures spoke of him and were definite about the facts that 'the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem'. That was why he added, 'You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high', for they would have to witness to Christ. They had to await Pentecost. Again we see the universal nature of the gospel and the need for special power if the gospel was to be preached to all nations.³

We now return to Acts 1:8 and the picture of the Kingdom having to do with all the nations. The Kingdom means, of course, 'the reign and rule of God'. Acts 1:8 speaks of the apostles witnessing to

³ 'Beginning at Jerusalem' may well be linked with Isaiah 2:1–3 (cf. Micah 4:1–3) where the nations will say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.'

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

Israel, Samaria and 'the uttermost part of the earth'. This statement is a quote which was well-known to them. It was from the prophecy of Psalm 2:7–9:

I will tell of the decree of the LORD:
He said to me, 'You are my son,
today I have begotten you.
Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,
and the ends of the earth your possession.
You shall break them with a rod of iron,
and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel'.

Psalm 2 was certainly one of the powerful Kingdom Psalms, a Psalm which figured largely in the early church as Messianic and which had to do with the anti-God nations coming under the rulership of Jesus. It was a well-known Psalm, and probably one which Jesus spoke about personally on the evening of the resurrection and well as in the forty days of teaching on the Kingdom. One needs to study the whole Psalm which is that the kings of the earth⁴ and the peoples (nations) set themselves against God and His Messiah–Son. God laughs at them in scorn for the little they can accomplish and tells His Son to ask for these nations and He will give them to him. The Son will possess all the nations 'to the uttermost part of the earth', the very phrase which Jesus in Acts 1:8 refers to the empowered apostles.

⁴ 'The kings of the earth' are of special note also in the Book of Daniel and the Book of the Revelation. They represent, with their peoples, this world's opposition to God and His Kingdom as they seek to set up their own kingdoms in place of His.

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

At Jesus' baptism (Matt. 3:17) and at his transfiguration (Matt. 17:5) the Father really spoke from Psalm 2:7, 'You are my Son. Today I have begotten you'. In Matthew 28:16–20 Jesus spoke of the authority given to him over all nations, virtually quoting from Psalm 2:8–9. In Acts 13:33 Paul quotes Isaiah 55.3, collating it with Psalm 2:8 and equating it with Jesus' resurrection. In Hebrews 1:5 the writer quotes Psalm 2:7 in relation to him being God's Son and greater than the angels. In 5:5 he quotes Psalm 2:7 as appointing him an eternal high priest after the order of Melchizedek. Two Peter 1:17 refers to Jesus' transfiguration in the light of Psalm 2:7. Revelation 2:26–27 comports with Psalm 2:7–9 regarding power over the nations for Christ and his people. Revelation 12:5 refers to the 'male child' as 'one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron' (Ps. 2:9) and 19:15 says of the Conqueror on the white horse that he will smite the nations and 'rule them with a rod of iron'. In fact this is fulfilment of the worldwide scope and action spoken of in Acts 1:8, Luke 24:47 and Matthew 28:18–19.

Another Psalm—Psalm 110—which Jesus quotes in Matthew 22:44 (Mark 12:36; Luke 20:43) is linked by Peter at Pentecost with Jesus' ascension and reigning at God's right hand over all the earth. Hebrews 5:5–6, Psalm 2:7 and Psalm 110:4 are linked in regard to Jesus' Sonship and his eternal priesthood, ruling over his enemies. In quoting Psalm 110:1 Peter used it to confirm that Jesus had been made 'both Lord and Christ'.

I have always thought it a pity that in looking at the nature of Christ's baptising his people in/with

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

the Holy Spirit very few scholars have seen this baptism of the Spirit and of fire as having to do with the Kingdom of God. In the Book of Acts we are shown how the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost soon covered 'Jerusalem and all Judea', and then—with Philip's powerful visit to Samaria—the Samaritans were enabled to come into the Kingdom. Whilst the visit of Peter and John to Samaria gave the apostolic seal of approval by the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Samaritans through the laying on of the apostolic hands, nevertheless Philip's ministry had been that of preaching the Kingdom of God to them—that is, the 'gospel of the Kingdom' (Acts 8:4–8; cf. 20:24–25). Sadly enough the happening in Samaria has been interpreted as one being able to be converted without being baptised in/with the Spirit, so that the strange doctrine of 'a second blessing' has been formulated. When we see that it was the apostles who were given the keys of the Kingdom⁵ and

⁵ In Matthew 16:13–19 the meaning of verses 18 and 19 is greatly debated, 'And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.' The keys given to Peter were to open or close the Kingdom to persons. We might get a hint from Luke 11:52 where the key of knowledge is to help people to enter the Kingdom but the lawyers by taking away that key have prevented others entering. The keys are the gospel of the Kingdom, and Peter at Pentecost and the days following in Jerusalem certainly opened the Kingdom. Likewise in Samaria he acted in that role, as also he did in Caesarea. He locked the Kingdom to such as Simon Magus and, we might say, Ananias and Sapphira. Peter was not infallible in this respect as Galatians 2:11–21 shows. In Matthew 18:15–20 binding and loosing is addressed to 'you' in the plural, not as in Matthew 16:13–19 in the second person singular. Whatever binding and loosing went on, Peter was not the only one with the keys. A similar message was delivered to all the disciples in John 20:21–23. In regard to Israel, Samaria and the Gentiles, only Israel—in some sense—had entrance into the Kingdom until Pentecost where it was announced that the Spirit was henceforth poured out upon all flesh.

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

under their ministry 'Jerusalem and all Judea' were brought to entrance into the Kingdom by Pentecost, then we understand why the apostles went to Samaria—the second-named place of their witness-to-be in Acts 1:8—and why it was Peter the apostle who was sent to Caesarea by the Holy Spirit.

'The uttermost part of the earth'—the Gentile nations—came into a situation somewhat similar to Pentecost when Peter preached the gospel and there took place what we might call 'the Jewish Pentecost'. In Acts 8 there was a Samaritan 'Pentecost' when Peter and John laid hands on the believing Samaritans. Now in Acts 10 – 11 there was entrance into the Kingdom for Gentiles forever when Peter preached the gospel at Caesarea. So there was like entrance to the Kingdom for Jews, Samaritans and Gentiles (the nations). The position of the apostles was most important but they were not the only ones upon whom the Spirit came at Pentecost, for the entire 120 were so affected. In Acts 6:1–7 the people were encouraged to 'pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom' and this they were able to do. One of them was Philip who later went to

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

Samaria as an evangelist. Another was Stephen 'full of grace and power [who] did great wonders and signs among the people'. In Acts 4:31f., the Holy Spirit had come afresh upon the whole church and all were filled with the Holy Spirit and all 'spoke the word of God with boldness'. The whole community was in rich unity and had great care and concern for the needy among them. Also, 'with great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all'.

WHAT HAPPENED AT EPHESUS WITH THE DISCIPLES OF JOHN THE BAPTIST?

In Ephesus Paul found a group of disciples whose minds were linked with the teaching of John the Baptist. It is possible that they had learned certain ideas from Apollos but, whatever the case, they were not as yet disciples of Christ. Paul obviously found something lacking in their situation and asked, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' Their answer, 'No, we have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit', showed where they stood in regard to Christ. They said they had been baptised into John's baptism. When it was pointed out to them that John had exhorted his disciples to believe on the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus, then they were baptised into the name of Jesus. Paul laid his hands upon them and the Spirit *came upon* them and phenomena which had happened at Pentecost and

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

Caesarea now appeared, such as speaking with tongues and prophesying. Since the men were Jews it was a kind of 'filling up' for these at Ephesus, consistent with the event of Pentecost. What is clear is that the men became Christians under the teaching of Paul. The power of the Spirit in their lives was indicative of what happened when folk were baptised into Christ and he gave them the gift of the Spirit. At Pentecost, Peter's injunction for Jews to be baptised in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins also contained the promise of the gift of the Spirit (Acts 2:38). We are not told that certain phenomena attended the baptism of the three thousand Jews, but the change in them was phenomenal. The signs evident in the sound of rushing wind and tongues of fire did not need to be repeated for the baptisms were the fruit of Christ's outpouring of the Spirit. We can note, at this point, that the baptising by Christ of Jews (Pentecost, Acts 2), Samaritans (Samaria, Acts 8), Gentiles (Acts 10 – 11), and erstwhile disciples of John the Baptist (Acts 19) all fit in with the teaching of Acts 1:8. Christ is the out-pourer of the Spirit in this age in accordance with Old Testament prophecies.

It does not appear advisable to make a para-digm out of any of these four happenings because Christ as Lord and Baptiser is the one who has caused them. We are not to shape paradigms out of certain criteria and then work to induce baptisms in the Spirit. The freedom of Christ to baptise and the freedom of the Spirit to 'blow where he wills' precludes us from setting up 'Baptism-in-the-Spirit' situations!

**THE LAST DAYS ARE THE ERA OF
THE HOLY SPIRIT**

The Holy Spirit has always been present in the world he helped to create (Gen. 1:1–2; 6:3; Job 33:4; Ps. 33:6–9; 104:29–30). He was in the time prior to the Flood, in the time of the patriarchs, and he was always with Israel as any history of Israel will show (cf. *The Day of the Spirit*, pp. 6–40). In Israel, in particular, he was present in the prophets with great power. He was present and active in the life of Jesus from his conception to his ascension. He was ever the Spirit of the covenant, so that like the Father and the Son he has ever been active as the Spirit of the Father and the Son. He is also the Spirit of ‘things that are to come’ (John 16:13). Even so, in another sense this is the era of the Spirit.

This era can be said to commence with the conception of Christ through the Spirit in the womb of Mary and to have continued until Christ’s ascension at which point—ten days later—Christ poured out the Spirit, that is, at Pentecost. In assisting Christ in effecting salvation, and having been intimately with him in all things, the Spirit of truth is the true one equipped to teach and empower the church in the mission of God.

I believe it has to be said that the day of Pentecost brought together all the prophecies which spoke of Israel being the recipient of new life through the outpouring of the Spirit. This would mean that the Ezekiel prophecies in chapters 36 and 37 would come into action. Ezekiel 37:11–14 nominates what God will do:

Then he said to me, ‘Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, “Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are clean cut off.” Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you home into the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken, and I have done it, says the LORD.’

Ezekiel 36:24–27 comports with the above prophecy:

For I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances.

In addition there are what we might call revival prophecies such as the following:

The wild beasts will honour me, the jackals and the ostriches; for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise (Isa. 43:20–21).

For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your descendants, and my blessing on your offspring (Isa. 44:3).

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue is parched with thirst, I the Lord will answer them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water (Isa. 41:17–18).

They are prophecies linked with ‘the restoration of the kingdom to Israel’ which we previously discussed regarding Acts 1:6. Most related, however, is the passage of Joel 2:28–32:

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even upon the menservants and maidservants in those days, I will pour out my spirit. And I will give portents in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD comes. And it shall come to pass that all who call upon the name of the LORD shall be delivered; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the LORD has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the LORD calls.

Peter on the day of Pentecost insists that what has happened before the eyes of all, and in the ears of all, is nothing less than the fulfilment of the Joel prophecy:

But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them, ‘Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day; but this is what

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

was spoken by the prophet Joel: “And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; yea, and on my menservants and my maidservants in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth beneath, blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke; the sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and manifest day. And it shall be that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” ‘ (Acts 2:14–21).

From the passage we deduce that at Pentecost began ‘the last days’ and that they shall continue up until ‘the day of the Lord comes, the great and manifest day’. In other words the present age is the age of the Spirit. We then deduce that it will be the age of prophetic activity—‘And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; yea, and on my menservants and my maidservants in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy’. Most important are the words, ‘I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh’.

At no time had God’s Spirit been poured out on all flesh. One of the most dramatic events had been that described in Numbers 11:24–30. Seventy elders were placed around the tent of meeting and the Lord came down in a cloud and took some of the Spirit that was upon Moses and the elders prophesied. Two elders—Eldad and Medad —were not present but were in the camp and

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

simultaneously they prophesied. Joshua objected to their prophesying but Moses answered him, 'Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the LORD's people were prophets, that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!' Joel 2:28ff. was to be a part answer to that prayer, but the important thing is that the age of the Spirit would not come until Messiah first came and effected the salvation prophesied by the prophets. Two such prophecies are Isaiah 59:20–21 and 61:1–2:

And he will come to Zion as Redeemer, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression, says the LORD. And as for me, this is my covenant with them, says the LORD: my spirit which is upon you, and my words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouth of your children, or out of the mouth of your children's children, says the LORD, from this time forth and for evermore.

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted; he has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn.

The second quote shows that the Spirit of the Lord is upon His Servant to liberate the people of the Lord. This is the same as in verse 20 of the first quote, but verse 21 indicates that God's Spirit and His word will always be with His people, and this comports with the Joel prophecy of Pentecost and the last days. Seeing these things we can understand that the Holy Spirit is the eschatological

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

Spirit, that is, the Spirit of the eschaton which is the last age. He is to be the one who tells us 'things to come' (John 16:13).

ALL THAT HAPPENS IN THE LAST AGE IS BECAUSE OF THE PRESENCE AND WORK OF THE SPIRIT

The last age could not have happened had not Messiah come to earth, fulfilled the work of salvation by the aid of the Father and the Spirit, and then been elevated to the right hand of the Father, 'far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come', for the Father 'has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all' (cf. Eph. 1:21–23).

As we have seen clearly, the last age is to witness to Christ among all the nations until the whole counsel of God is fulfilled and history climaxes in the triumph of God. Said in one sentence such as we have just written, it sounds so simple, but so much has to happen before the end comes. In and through all that is happening, Paul's description of what the Father, Christ and the Spirit are now doing helps to see the heart of the matter:

Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 'For God has put all things in

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

subjection under his feet.' But when it says, 'All things are put in subjection under him,' it is plain that he is excepted who put all things under him. When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things under him, that God may be everything to every one (1 Cor. 15:24–28).

First we see that all things are moving to supremacy of the Kingdom. Christ is now occupied with 'destroying every rule and every authority and power' and this includes death. The Son will then deliver the Kingdom to the Father that 'God may be all in all'.

This is a stupendous accomplishment. Christ has been reigning for some two thousand years at the Father's right hand in fulfilment of Psalms 2 and 110. He has so much to accomplish since he is also head of the church. The work of the Spirit in this age has been defined in many ways, and without the Spirit—sometimes called 'Christ's *alter ego*'—nothing could be effected. Indeed the Spirit was poured forth that all things be completed. It is clear from the Book of the Acts, from the Epistles and the Book of the Revelation that the Spirit works in everything—nothing excepted. The New Testament nominates one work after another. This means that the people of God called the *ecclesia*, that is, the gathered community of believers, need to be baptised in/with the Spirit in order to be true members of the community of God, and to be with Him in His mission to His creation. It is worth reminding ourselves of Acts 1:7–8, 'He said to them, "It is *not* for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. *But* you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.'" 'We are reminded that the scope of God's work is gigantic. So much to do. So many things to cover. All of it, in its tiniest details to its mammoth fulfilments, can never be assessed by the finest of human minds nor the most comprehensive of computing devices. It all defies the most massive coverage.

Our point in looking into Acts 1:7–8 is to say that the program opened to us on the day of Pentecost requires power for accomplishment by the successive stream of the human community of God, to say nothing of all the other powers which God has working for Him in His venture of bringing the creation to its *telos*—its goal, end and completion. We have seen the statement in 1 Corinthians 15:24–28, 'Then comes the end [*eita to telos*] . . .'

We repeat: the members of Christ's community—the church of God—have to be people of a special power and that is the meaning of Acts 2:33, 'Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he [Christ the Son] has poured out this which you see and hear'. Peter was saying, 'Some extraordinary thing has just now happened which must be understood. I am quoting prophets and psalmists and pointing to their fulfilment right here, in this place, and you had better know that the one you took and crucified by the hands of wicked men, God has done with him what has never before happened in history. He has pushed back death and brought this man to resurrection and now placed him as His right hand to reign

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

forever. He has proved and appointed this man as both Lord and Christ!

What was uttered was the truth spoken through Peter by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, the Spirit who *is* the truth, and a brilliant witness to Christ was accomplished. So far as each person was concerned, he may have been encouraged to know he would be equipped with power for the task. So far as the task was concerned, it would be staggering beyond understanding. For this reason we will look at the idea of the power of God, keeping the work towards the *telos* in mind.

THE SPIRIT OF POWER: THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT

Our thinking to do with the power of the Spirit has in mind the matter of Christ baptising us with, or in, the Spirit. It would take reams of description to cover the biblical accounts of the Spirit's power in creation, in the acts of God, in the prophets, in the realm of moral being and moral living.⁶ It is best to take a description such as in Isaiah 11:2 and consider it:

The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

The sevenfold Spirit here has all the moral elements which will constitute Messiah in his person

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

and his ruling. These cannot be surpassed and nothing is lacking. If we link them up with 'the seven spirits who are before his throne' (Rev. 1:4) and realise that 'before the throne burn seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God' (4:5) and that the Lamb is 'standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns, and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth' (5:6), then we know this is the same sevenfold Spirit by whom Messiah will reign. He is the very horns (power) of Christ, and the very eyes (discernment) of him who is 'both Lord and Christ'.

We could say so much more, but in Acts 1:7–8 the power the Spirit brings when he is poured out on God's people is *the power to witness*, and to witness in all the world until the *telos*. We have, then, to see what 'power to witness' really means. Witness is simply stating the truth, telling what one has seen, and speculation in any form is not permitted. Only one man ever spoke and lived the truth. That was Jesus:

Jesus, the Logos, the eternal Word and Son, by whom the worlds were made, became flesh, i.e. human. He came 'full of grace and truth', i.e. he was essentially truth, 'the truth of the Father'. As he told Pilate, 'I am come into the world *to bear witness to the truth*'. He said to his Father, 'Thy word is truth'. He was the living Word, the living truth bearing witness to the truth of God. He did this by what he was and by what he did. He showed God as Father, as Redeemer, and as love. He went against all the lies piled up in the dossiers of men from the time of the fall, and refuted these untruths. He said simply, 'I am a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God.' Living that truth, he died, rose

⁶ I refer to Sections 31 and 32 in *The Day of the Spirit*, pp. 140–8.

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

and ascended. This was showing the truth which man needed to know. That is the truth which the Holy Spirit brings to man in a convincing and convicting way. He has this ability to make truth real to human beings.⁷

In Revelation 1:5, Jesus is called ‘the faithful witness’ and in 3:14, ‘the Amen, the true and faithful witness, the beginning of God’s creation’. He said that many things bore witness to him, such as John the Baptist, the Scriptures and Moses. His trust lay in the Father’s witness to him, ‘But the testimony which I have is greater than that of John; for the works which the Father has granted me to accomplish, these very works which I am doing, bear me witness that the Father has sent me. And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness to me’ (John 5:36–7).

How then could the truth of Christ—his incarnation to his reigning in heaven—ever be communicated as the truth? What a mammoth task! Yet the Holy Spirit is the one who is both the truth and bears witness to the truth and empowers the people of God to be witnesses to the truth. John wrote in his First Letter (5:7) ‘the Spirit is the witness, because the Spirit is the truth’. Jesus had told his followers on the night of his betrayal, ‘But when the Counsellor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness to me; and you also are witnesses, because you have been with me from the beginning’ (John 15:26–27).

⁷ Quoted from *The Day of the Spirit*, p. 126.

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

In Luke 24:48 he told the disciples in the upper room, ‘You are witnesses of these things’, and in the same breath enjoined them to wait for the power of the Holy Spirit to come to them. So then the humanly impossible task of witnessing to Christ was to be in the power of the Spirit.

The New Testament bears witness to the witnessing of the church. The Book of Acts describes the occasions of witnessing and the strong reactions to them. All the time we have in mind the battle for the truth when the evil power of Satan was in action against the truth. Described as ‘the deceiver of the whole world’, he and all his dark powers are out to deceive in every possible manner. Satan’s vast lie is that he is true and advocates the truth. Jesus said of him to the Jews:

You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies. But, because I tell the truth, you do not believe me (John 8:44–45).

Witnessing in the power of the Spirit often leads to death. Millions have perished in this way, down through two thousand Christian years of this era. Revelation 6:9–11 speaks of ‘the souls of those who had been slain . . . for the witness they had borne’. Of such the Spirit cries, ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth. “Blessed indeed . . . that they may rest from their labours, for their deeds follow them!”’ (14:13).

THE NATURE OF POWER AND WITNESS

Sometimes, and particularly when we use the language of battle, we might think, erroneously, that to have power to witness and to do battle our power must be supernatural, and our warfare almost a physical one, a kind of quasi-military operation. How wrong is such an idea! Paul once made it very clear that the weapons of our warfare are not worldly or carnal, but are spiritual and mighty to the pulling down of many strong-holds of evil (1 Cor. 10:4). Jesus said that they who take the sword shall perish by the sword (Matt. 26:52), a thought repeated in Revelation 13:10.

What, then, are these spiritual weapons and how shall we fight? Looked at from one point of view they are frail and ineffective, for Paul lines them up with such things as faith, hope, love, truth, salvation and the like. Testimony to the truth of Christ and the gospel come only from such things. Such things the natural man does not even recognise until the Spirit invades him with the truth. Love becomes to him a brilliant revelation of the nature of God and the power for the redemption of Man. God forgives the sinner, justifies the ungodly, purifies the polluted heart, relieves the conscience of heavy guilt, reconstitutes the idolater, makes holy the evil heart and mind, and reveals God the Father truly as love. The gospel then is the power of God unto salvation. The word of the Cross saves the perishing, and the love of God is poured into the hearts of the hateful and hating humanity which is ours.

What we can say with truth is that none of these things could happen unless the Spirit of truth and love reveals these to human beings. His power is that he is the Spirit of truth, of love, of sonship, of holiness and of life. His presence in the ecclesia is what keeps it in love, unity and fellowship. The pictures of the company of believers in the chapters of Acts are so heart-warming. The testimony of history in times of persecution and suppression of Christians is beyond the natural actions of humanity. It can only be of God. So do we know the reality and power of witness by the Holy Spirit in the life of the church. What commenced in the new company of believers on the day of Pentecost has gone on in this age of the Spirit.

We ought not to idealise the Community of Christ, nor make heady claims of extraordinary success. Christians are not paragons of virtue, moral beyond all reproach and perfect above others. Sadly enough their history is stained with terrible deeds claimed to have been in the name of Christ and for the advancement of the human race. We question whether many of these deeds came out of the true people of God, for we know so often the Community has been in the hands of wicked men, and at times dreadful evil has happened and cruelty executed. Wars cannot be justified and some have been fought over unjustifiable causes. At the same time such things cannot be excused. The church has known apostasy and has betrayed its Lord. Yet, given all this to have been part of its history, the church has come to see and acknowledge these failures and to give renewed witness to the Lordship of Christ and the glory of

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

the age to come, and the holy triumphs of the *telos*. This is the true Community of eternal life.

WHAT, THEN, OF THE SPIRIT TODAY; OF CHRIST'S BAPTISING AND OF THE SPIRIT'S WORK AND LIFE IN US?

This little book has been written to put forward the matter of Christ as the risen and reigning Lord, of the plan of God for all history, and of the ecclesia living in the power of the Holy Spirit and witnessing to the world in the last stage of what we call 'the Common Era', or 'this age', to distinguish it from 'the age to come', that is, the commencement of eternity. It is intended to refresh and renew us in an understanding of this present age and the age to come. At the same time we face the fact that some of us are uninformed about these matters, or we have confusion in our thinking regarding them. In this section of our book I would like to deal with points which may help to clarify our thinking.

One of the simplest questions apt to be asked by some is whether he or she has been baptised in the Spirit or whether that was a phenom-enon of the early church which no longer happens. More complex questions are asked, such as whether the gifts known in the early church—as *dorea*, the gift of the Spirit himself in Acts 11:17, as *domata* in Ephesians 4:7–11, and *charismata* in 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and other places—are still in existence and in operation. Some ask whether or not one has to speak in tongues—the gift of glossolalia—as a sign or proof of having been

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

baptised in the Spirit. To discuss all these points at length is beyond the scope of this small book, but some indications need to be given as at least a part answer to the questions posed.

Baptism in the name of Christ⁸ was the custom and ritual by which those who had believed in Christ became his disciples (Acts 2:38–42; cf. 4:4; 8:12–13; 10:44–48; 11:13–18; 16:34; etc.), received the forgiveness and cleansing of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). By passages such as Acts 13:38ff., we know that believers received forgiveness of sins and were justified as the law of Moses could never justify. In Romans chapter 6 Paul gives teaching regarding baptism, saying that in that act we were baptised into Christ and buried with him in his death and rose again with him in his resurrection. In Colossians 2:11–15 similar teaching is given.

⁸ In Matthew 28:19–20 we read that those who believed in Christ were to be baptised in the *name* of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. This may or may not be intended to be a specific formula for baptising new believers. It is noted that it is baptism *into* the *one* name and not *three*, but *it is surely baptism into God*. This injunction, if indeed it is a formula, seems not to have been followed, as such, in the New Testament, but the principle of incorporation into the Godhead is certainly present in apostolic teaching. In the added portion at the end of Mark's Gospel we read, 'Later he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were sitting at the table; and he upbraided them for their lack of faith and stubbornness, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen. And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation. The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned"' (Mark 16:14–16, *NRSV*).

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

When it comes to the matter of the gift of the Spirit, Paul says quite plainly in Romans 8:9, 'But you are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.' Nothing could be plainer than that! The fact that is linked with baptism is the new birth, and the new birth cannot happen without the presence and work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus taught these things in John 3:1–14. We have also seen in such passages as Galatians 4:1–7, Romans 8:14–30, 1 Corinthians 6:11, and Acts 13:38–39, that sonship ('adoption as sons') is effected by the Holy Spirit. All these regenerating and transforming works are by the Spirit who reveals and applies the work of Christ to the human spirit. What has happened is that the baptised person lives in 'the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus' and so in him the righteous demand of the law (*to dikaioma tou nomou*) is fulfilled (Rom. 8:2–4).

The baptised person now walks in the Spirit (Rom. 8:5–17; Gal. 5:16–26) and so bears the fruit of the Spirit. The love of God has been poured into the heart of the baptised one by means of the Holy Spirit. All elements of love, fellowship, unity and worship are manifestly operative in the body of Christ by the presence and power of the Spirit. The Spirit himself is working in this age to convince (convict, rebuke) the world of sin, righteousness and judgment, in accordance with the principle, 'about sin, because they do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; about judgment,

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

because the ruler of this world has been condemned' (John 16:9–11, *NRSV*).

Have we come any closer to defining the baptism in/with the Spirit? Is it just the same as being baptised in the name of Christ? Are there two baptisms, one of water and one of the Spirit? Surely the matter is very simple: we are baptised into the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and are now 'participants in the divine nature' (2 Pet. 1:4, *NRSV*), but that does not mean participators in the substance of the Godhead so that we achieve divinity, but are participators in the work and plan and fellowship of the Trinity of Three Persons. One key to understanding is surely to heed the words of John 7:37–39:

On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, 'If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, "Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water."' Now this he said about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive; for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

This is an immensely important passage for it brings to our notice all we have said about the prophecies concerning the coming of the Spirit and his power. Up to this point in his ministry Jesus has said in John 4:10 to the Samaritan woman by the well, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, "Give me a drink," you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water'. It was to this thirsty woman that Jesus later spoke of the Father, of the Spirit and of true

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

worship. He has also said to his Jewish listeners, 'I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst' (John 6:35). Continually he had offered eternal life to those who believed in him. Life from him was lavish. John the apostle is the one who fully records John the Baptist's account of Jesus being the one who will baptise Israel in the Holy Spirit. Here, at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles when a golden jar was brought in from the stream of Siloam and poured at the foot of the altar to the chanting of Isaiah 12:3, 'With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation', Jesus stood up and gave his invitation: 'As the scripture has said, "Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water"'. This has no precise scripture to parallel it, but we have seen Old Testament Scriptures which speak of the river of God, beginning with its creation in Eden and the indication that it will water the whole earth.⁹ There is the invitation of Isaiah 55:1–3 to come and drink of the waters:

Ho, every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Harken diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in fatness. Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

⁹ See my booklet, *The River of God* (NCPI, Blackwood, 2001).

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

John recognises the saying from his own, later, point of view, for rivers of living water had flowed out of him and others at Pentecost and were continuing to flow. Christ had to be humiliated by the action of the Cross before the gift of the Spirit could flow to the world—to 'all flesh'—but the flow of the Spirit from the time of Pentecost has always been lavish. Only those who will not believe and will not drink do not know that flowing. Way back in Jeremiah 2:13 (cf. 17:13), God had spoken proph-etically, 'for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns, that can hold no water'. Proverbs 4:23 had said, 'Keep your heart with all vigilance; for from it flow the springs [issues] of life'.

We have drawn our attention to the passage of John 7:37–39 for it stands continually as a promise to all believers who drink to quench their thirst and so have the issues of life flowing from them to the world. All of us have to know the Spirit has been poured out upon us from on high, and that this is the era of that outpouring, that baptising of God's people in or with the Spirit—the initial, principal outpouring in Israel, Samaria and the Gentiles—has happened. Being baptised into Christ assures us that the Holy Spirit is present both to us and in us. It is for us to heed such injunctions as 'Be aglow [fervent] with the Spirit' (Rom. 12:11); 'do not get drunk with wine . . . but be filled with [or by] the Spirit' (Eph. 5:18); 'But you, beloved, build yourself up in your most holy faith; pray in the Holy Spirit' (Jude 20); and 'walk by the Spirit' (Gal. 5:16, 25). One equally strong injunction is, 'And do

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption' (Eph. 4:30). In Acts 5:29–32 Peter is seen speaking to the Jewish Sanhedrin who sought to forbid them to preach the gospel of Christ:

But Peter and the apostles answered, 'We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised Jesus whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.'

Peter is not saying one must become morally obedient before God will give His Holy Spirit, but He gives His Holy Spirit to those who believe, for belief is obedience to the gospel (Rom. 10:16; 2 Thess. 1:8; 1 Pet. 1:2; Rom. 1:5; 15:18; 16:26). To believe on Christ is to obey the gospel. Likewise, obedience having been given to us by the Spirit is a practical principle in our living. To quench the Spirit is juxtaposed with 'do not despise prophesying' (1 Thess. 5:19–20), and this is understandable since we are the prophetic community, as we saw in Acts 2:14–21.

CONCLUSION: WE ARE GOD'S PEOPLE, DESTINED TO BE FILLED UNTO ALL HIS FULLNESS

It is very clear from John's Gospel that the Holy Spirit is the one who brings Christ's life to the believer. That life is by the Spirit springing up as a

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

fountain. It satisfies our thirst continually, but rivers of living water also flow from our inner beings—our hearts. We know that God in Israel was known as 'The Fountain of Living Waters' and water means—and is—life, life from God as breathed into Man, and that Man is ever dependent upon God to sustain his life with its many issues. Man's refusal to be dependent upon God in the interest of his autonomy brought him immediately into idolatry. He is always busy about his idols. Christ's entering the world was so that Man would abandon the tricky idols and find his fullness from God in God.

When in Acts 2:4 it is said that all present at Pentecost—the 120 disciples—were filled with the Holy Spirit, at the same time it could be said they were all filled with Christ and that they were filled 'with all the fullness of God' (Eph. 3:19). It is in this way that we come to the teaching of the Trinity that the Three Persons indwell one another. To be in the fullness of Christ is to be in the fullness of the Father and the Son. By 'fullness' we do not mean being quantitatively filled so much as being relationally wholly one with God—Father, Son and Spirit. It is only when Man is filled with and by God that he is truly human, truly the image of God. When his fullness—so-called—comes from idols he is empty of God. In Romans 1:28–31 sinful Man is said to be filled with evil, but evil is not morally substantial and so Man has a sickening emptiness, his broken reservoir dry of and empty of God:

*And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a base mind and to improper conduct. They were *filled* with all manner of wickedness, evil,*

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

covetousness, malice. *Full* of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity, they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

When, then, we speak of being filled with the Spirit (Luke 1:15, 41, 67; Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 9:17; 13:9; Eph. 5:18), we mean that the Spirit has brought God's fullness to us. It is interesting that Paul in Ephesians 3:14–19 prays that the Spirit may strengthen us within, so that Christ may dwell in our hearts and we may know his love and the love of God and be filled unto all the fullness of God:

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with might through his Spirit in the inner man, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Linked with this is Ephesians 5:18 where Paul enjoins his readers to be filled *with* the Spirit or—as some see this correct exegesis to show—they are to be filled *by* the Spirit; that is, they are to be filled *with* God's fullness by the Holy Spirit. It seems to me that the writers of the New Testament were not so much talking of a 'Father fullness', a 'Son fullness' and a 'Spirit fullness' as they were emphasising the fullness of God which Man needs to become truly human, just as the Samaritan woman needed to drink of the water Christ offered her so that she would not thirst.

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

Over many years of preaching, teaching and pastoral counselling ministry I have found that human beings know extreme misery when they are empty of God, and some who are Christians undergo anxiety when the baptism in/with the Spirit is posed to them as a kind of power-pack which they lack and must obtain. One of the cruellest demands is that they must speak in tongues so that they may indeed know that they are baptised in the Spirit. This springs from ignorance of the use of gifts—*dorea, doma, charisma*—and so becomes an endeavour of achievement which makes some to be elitists, whether or not they intend to be that.

If we look at what we might call the 'filling' happenings in the New Testament, then we see they are varied. At Pentecost there was first Christ's outpouring of the Spirit and then the baptism of 3,000 who responded. The phenomena of being baptised in the Spirit experienced by the 120 was not said to be repeated at the baptism of the 3,000. Even so, some time later, the whole Christian community was again filled with the Spirit after they prayed a prayer that had no explicit request for such an outpouring. Peter and Paul were two apostles who being, we would say, habitually filled with or by the Spirit were suddenly filled to meet certain contingencies which had arisen, such as, Peter speaking to the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:8) and Paul to Elymas the magician (Acts 13:9). In Samaria the Holy Spirit was received with the laying on of the apostolic hands of Peter and John but, it appears, without special phenomena, whilst at Ephesus when Paul laid hands on the twelve

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

disciples of John there were phenomena such as at Pentecost and Caesarea.

From another angle there is teaching by Paul that Christ is filling all things—for example, Ephesians 4:6ff.—but in the same Letter he speaks of Christ having given his fullness to his body, the church. In Colossians 1:19 he says that all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell in Christ and in 2:9–10 states, ‘For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness of life in him, who is the head of all rule and authority’. ‘Fullness of life’ is characteristic of all members of the ecclesia. When we think that ‘fullness’ is a special factor which happens only on special occasions then we are virtually relegating ourselves to ‘non-fullness’. On this score it is helpful to read part of Paul’s Letter to the Romans. In 15:18–19 he says, ‘For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has wrought through me to win obedience from the Gentiles, *by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Holy Spirit*, so that from Jerusalem and as far round as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ’. We do not gather the idea that Paul braced himself for special cases and girded his loins for it, so to speak, but that his ministry was habitually powerful by reason of the Spirit’s presence and action.

It is also interesting to note later in the chapter that he is sure he will ‘come [to them] in the fullness of the blessing of Christ’ (vv. 28–29). I once shared in a Pastors’ School where we mused on this. Some thought that Paul was going to gird himself up for this special occasion and be sure

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

that he came in strength and power—so much we project ourselves onto the great Paul—but our conclusion should have been that this was always the way Paul would go about things. It is the way that we should always go about things.

It is often argued today that the phenomena known in the New Testament as ‘signs and wonders’ were for that time and have not reappeared in history.¹⁰ The facts of history are that they have appeared and do appear, especially when the apostolic gospel is preached with simplicity to sympathetic audiences. Stories by Christians who have lived under oppressive regimes read and sound like pages of the Book of Acts. The gospel is received more easily in countries which have not been subjected to revealed religions such as Christianity, Islam and Judaism. We need to read history to realise this. It seems a contradiction to say that where Christianity has been for years, the gospel would not be easily accepted. Unfortunately in some Western countries the period of the Enlightenment not only destroyed medieval superstition but also human reasoning has rejected what we call the apostolic style of the gospel and the kind of life which follows its acceptance. Islam is strongly

¹⁰ The book *After the Apostles* by John Foster is subtitled *Missionary Preaching of the First Three Centuries*. Originally published by the SCM Press (London, 1951), it was republished by Anzea Publishers (Sydney) in 1972. It gives us a good view of the church in its first 200 years and shows continuity between it and the apostolic church in doctrine and what we might call spiritual phenomena. Its quotes are lavish from early Christian writers and pagans who opposed the gospel.

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

opposed to Christianity and Judaism and there is prejudice against the Bible as being God's truth for today. This flow of history has scarcely touched animistic beliefs and practices and often the gospel is readily received. See, for example, a book such as *Christianity Rediscovered* by Vincent J. Donovan, (published by both SCM, London, and Orbis Books, Maryknoll, New York). This speaks of an apostolic approach to the Masai tribes and the extraordinary impression made upon them by Donovan preaching the apostolic gospel to them.

I am pointing out these things because I want to repeat my thesis that genuine preaching of the gospel is by those upon whom Christ has poured out 'the promise of the Father', that is, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of revelation and of power. It is a strange twist of history that when groups of folk in Third World countries receive the gospel in simple faith today, phenomena such as we read about in the Gospels and the Acts are often manifested. We can appreciate the massive output of theology and missiology these days from colleges and universities, but so much of it is for Academe and not for Christians in the rough and tumble of history, religion and culture that we do not wonder so little of it stirs the pool in Third World countries. Missiology can be our mission rather than mission itself.

At the risk of being thought simplistic and my ideas passé, I wish to refer to the work done by Roland Allen and some of his colleagues back in the later 19th and early 20th centuries. *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?* (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1966); *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Christ Church: And the Causes Which Hinder It*

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

(Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1967); and *The Ministry of the Spirit: Selected Writings of Roland Allen*, edited by David M. Paton (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965), demand our attention as much in this age, if not more so. When the world is in its present upheaval we might not think it the time to be able to act along the lines of his wisdom but some are doing so, and times of crisis are no final barrier to the gospel of Christ when the Spirit of the Lord—the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord—is empowering his people. Prophetic voices are still to be heard in the land and Christ is indeed the present Lord over all history. None sees or can understand, nor can say, 'Jesus is Lord!' but by the Holy Spirit.

I am sure it is right for us to go back to the fourth chapter of Acts for a closing meditation. In this chapter we read the account of the disciples being reprimanded by the Council of Elders, the Sanhedrin. They charged the apostles—presumably Peter and John—not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus:

But Peter and John answered them, 'Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge; for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.' And when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way to punish them, because of the people; for all men praised God for what had happened. For the man on whom this sign of healing was performed was more than forty years old (Acts 4:19–22).

Having been released the apostles 'went to their friends', that is, the company of believers, and

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

reported what the chief priests and elders had said to them. Immediately there was a response and the company prayed. Their prayer was powerful:

Sovereign Lord, who didst make the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who by the mouth of our father David, thy servant, didst say by the Holy Spirit, 'Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples imagine vain things? The kings of the earth set themselves in array, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed'—for truly in this city there were gathered together against thy holy servant Jesus, whom thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever thy hand and thy plan had predestined to take place. And now, Lord, look upon their threats, and grant to thy servants to speak thy word with all boldness, while thou stretchest out thy hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of thy holy servant Jesus (Acts 4:24–30).

It is noteworthy that Israel was in the grip of strange happenings: the disturbances throughout Palestine occasioned by John the Baptist and Jesus; the miracles and teaching of the Nazarene; his triumphal entrance into Jerusalem; the priests and leaders apprehending Jesus, judging him, crucifying him; and then the stunning claim that he was risen from the dead and present to his disciples, and had even ascended to God—so they were saying! How uneasy the Jewish leaders had been and how confident Jesus' followers! The prayer is worth pondering: God's sovereignty, the use of Psalm 2, the recent enacting of it in the crucifixion and the battle which was yet ahead. Then comes the prayer for the apostles for power, with its immediate fulfilment:

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness. Now the company of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had everything in common. And with great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all (Acts 4:31–33).

Note the strong point, 'they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness'. Not only the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit, but also the whole company. This was not the first time they had been filled and although 'the first time' signified much, the power of the Spirit was to be theirs in every contingency. The community was greatly refreshed in love, unity and compassion, 'And with great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all'.

By this we learn that not only is being baptised in the Holy Spirit an initial act determinative of the continuing life of the one on whom the Spirit has been poured by Jesus, but also it is on the basis of it that we can pray for affusions of such power by the Spirit in order to pursue the mission of God through all His people.