

The Fire Baptism of Jesus Christ! . Jan 21, 2011

I have witnessed over most of my adult life such an antagonism, fear, and confusion on what it means to be “baptized” in the Holy Spirit. What we today are going to refer to as the “fire” baptism of Jesus Christ. Signifying the life changing reality of what it means to be immersed in the fire of the Spirit’s power.

In this writing I hope to reshape in biblical fashion the experience that was intended to be very normative for all those who come to faith in Jesus Christ - Our Yahshua. That this baptism experience, of the Holy Spirit, was given for the primary reason to empower and embolden the witness of the resurrection of Jesus from the grave. No believer in the bodily resurrection of Yahshua was ever to walk in a self denying traverse to glory without receiving the heavenly fire!

What was, and is, to be absolutely necessary to enlarge our understanding of the person of Yahshua, Jesus Christ, to grant us a firmer grasp on heavenly things, should be sought and desired by all those who say they love Jesus. This baptism of fire initiates a brand new spiritual love connection to the Father through the Spirit. The work comes directly from the Right Hand of His Throne only for our good.

*"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire" Mt. 3:11*

So the question remains, "How can we expect to "do" Yahshua without being immersed in Yahshua!

We use the term “fire” because the scriptures aptly reveal the nature of our baptism into Christ. The image of fire is clearly read in the account of Pentecost when the 120 who received the Holy Spirit in the mighty rushing wind had cloven tongues of fire over their heads. So then, fire is the immersion medium of all who come into the faith rights of the new birth.

We observe quite evidently during the early days of Moses, Sinai, and Israel's wilderness journey to the Promised Land that Yah chose to present His presence as a pillar of fire at night. As we grope through the darkness of our times we need the light and power of His fire to envelope us and guide us to His desired haven, just as our forefathers did in their wilderness.

The Holy Spirit is the essential entity of this baptism of fire Our Lord Jesus referred to the Gospel record. The Holy Spirit is our connection to the Father. The Lord's Helper referred to the gospel of John 16:7 When Yahshua said to His disciples, “but if I go, I will send Him to you.”

Holy cloves of fire hovered over the heads of ALL of those 120 needy, scared, lovers of Yah, adherents to His resurrection story, heavenly fire came to everyone of those who sat and prayed together in one accord, as they tarried in an upper room (Cataluma) in Jerusalem, they would not leave this space until the fire was poured out on them approximately 8 days hence the exaltant departure of Yahshua.

Before His ascension to His rightful place in Glory, Yahshua commanded the faithful few to stay in Jerusalem until power was endued from on High.

This incredible spiritual activity occurred while the world of men argued over the reasons why this miracle worker and Jewish Messiah-like person was to be executed by the Romans. Pagans and false religionists oversaw Our Lord's death. The religious and unbelieving turned Our Lord over to the world authorities under Satan's tyrannical grip. In doing so, the world of darkness looked like the winners in this epic battle for the souls of men.

This very same radical Messiah-like Deliverer, now reportedly seen by at least 500 hundred people alive from the dead, was still interacting with the sons of men on the earth.

Yes indeed 120 believers in His radical message of the Kingdom of Heaven coming to earth received His Power from the throne of God. This power would enable the least of them to perform great signs and wonders. This power enabled them to hear the voice of the Spirit. This baptism and Holy Spirit immersion yielded a wisdom from above for all those who also received this immersion in His fire so that they could walk together in perfect unity.

These 120 believers who were scared of going public, after this heavenly experience, now, walk with boldness into the streets proclaiming the bodily resurrection of Yahshua. What would they have done without the fire immersion of the Holy Spirit? I dare say they would not have been willing to take the message to the streets of Jerusalem or Judea or Samaria, or the world!.

Yes they experience what would be prophesied and foreshadowed in John 1:15-17 by none other than John the Baptist.

"This is He of whom I said, "He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me. For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ...

reading on in verse 33:

*"And I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, "he upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, "this is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit."*

Yet many questions are left unanswered today in our ultra-divided American Church:

Is there a natural heavenly outpouring of the Holy Spirit for those who say they are trusting Jesus for salvation?

Does this baptism represent a second blessing of grace?

What conditions are necessary for a person to receive the baptism of fire?

Should this baptism happen at the point of faith in Christ?

Does water baptism accompany this operation of the Holy Spirit?

Is there a difference between what the early Christians experienced with their fire baptism then what modern believers receive from the Lord today?

Could this explain why we believers in Yahshua's resurrection are so weak in our witness and in our willingness to forsake all (die) for His kingdom?

And why has Satan been allowed to pervert this experience in the Church? Even causing what was supposed to be a very normal experience to become a point of argument in the body of Christ?

---

Many questions beyond these still remain and challenge us all to reevaluate what it means to be baptized in the "fire" of Jesus Christ.

I wonder what Our Lord thinks of our treatment of His promise to send us His Spirit. His teaching on this very important topic is mentioned earlier is clearly stated in His Word, especially in the gospel of John chapters 14-16.

Jesus has not left us in a place of ignorance, yet we must be honest, dear people of God, that we have become so ignorant of the Lord's desire to pour Himself out on His Bride to enable us to come into intimate fellowship with Him. And that He purchased to secure this outpouring of fire on us through the power of His own Blood.

Paul's letters to the churches would be impossible to obey, because the cost was so great, if those early believers in Jesus did not have a clear understanding of His baptism of fire. His heavy high demand epistles would be incomprehensible to those who received them had they not experienced the fire baptism of Jesus Christ!

Just read Acts 19 and discover how Paul was used of God to bring power to the city of Ephesus, then read on how the Spirit flipped the city of Ephesus upside-down. How could this work been accomplished without the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire?

Right now, Jesus sits at the right hand of God the Father waiting for us to ask for the Holy Spirit to enter into our lives in a fuller and more powerful way. Yet we think we are fine without this outpouring. Why? because we haven't died to self yet. We haven't offered up our lives yet.

If we don't ask Him for more, He will not impart the full measure of the Holy Spirit's power and grace we must have to fight the fight of faith and take the world by storm.

What of those who argue over this doctrine and reduce it to a simple filling of the Spirit of Christ that honestly looks more like a way to be nice rather than a way to turn the world upside-down for Jesus?

While many have never as much as heard that there is such a thing as a baptism of fire that brings us into the Love and Grace of Jesus Christ, what then, does that mean then that we avoid the topic for the sake of unity? I offer this emphatic statement - we can't have unity without a full impartation of the Holy Spirit into the depths of our soul.

From the Scriptures we have accepted as fact that the Holy Spirit was given as a first installment of our eternal inheritance in the kingdom of heaven. Most of us who name the name of Christ would agree with this simple statement.

Many would agree with me today that we must be born again to even see the kingdom of heaven, John 3:5 "that unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven."

Yet many a preacher today tries to avoid this topic to his own peril. In doing so the supposed shepherds of the sheep of God limit the power of heaven to aid broken and needy sinners what they need to survive and build His kingdom here on earth.

In doing so these weak and faulty shepherds bring judgment on their own heads and on their congregations. Ignorance is not an excuse to escape judgment dear people of God.

Why do many preachers avoid this topic today, and in doing so, seemingly keep his hearers from gaining a greater understanding of the “fire” baptism of Jesus. Which in turn will increase their love of Jesus and their ability to minister in His name?

Why is this so?

Is it not a simple thing to call upon the name of the Lord?

Believing in Christ and taking Him at His word and resting in Him exclusively for salvation is compared to a childlike act and right response to such a glorious and matchless heavenly gift.

Why not then the work of the Holy Spirit?

Why can't we take a childlike posture to this simple teaching?

If a child could understand what Jesus promised to Nicodemus the night he came secretly to Jesus to ask Him how he might inherit the kingdom of heaven, why then, my fellow believers, has the teaching on the “fire” baptism of Jesus become so confusing and argumentative?

Why then have we allowed our minds to be so polluted by weak and erroneous teaching on this very relevant topic found everywhere in the New Testament?

Can't we just simply accept the experience of the first century believer in Yahshua?

If we do then accept their experience as normative for all those who believe in this epoch of time, why then, does our experience not parallel theirs?

We are not shaking the foundations of our Babylonian system in our idolatrous America and turning the citizens of the kingdom of darkness over to the government of Christ.

We are exceedingly divided in the church and our churches lack life and power to influence and change our godless culture... so something has to change, right?

So we admit that something is missing and we might also admit that just maybe it connects to an accurate understanding of what it means to be baptized in the "fire" of Jesus Christ. Because Our Lord told His disciples at His ascension to do "nothing" until they were granted Power from on high.

---

In Eph 4:4-6 says, "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all."

Can we see and can we gain a spiritual grasp on this vital truth of our unity being bound to our baptism in the Spirit?

That there is no other way to be unified in a holy way unless we are baptised in the Spirit. Amen.

The true church of Jesus Christ must unite in these challenging times, but if we keep contending over this vital teaching of Our Lord, can we ever bring the church back to Christ. No way.

Especially if we tenaciously hold to our view in a sectarian and callous spirit.

The doctrine of "self" has corrupted our mind from receiving into our lives a baptism of Jesus that brings us to a place of selflessness.

When our self-based thinking unites with a lying religious spirit, we are left in a state of spiritual delusion. Most of my adult life I looked at the work of the Holy Spirit as a way simply to be more holy. Little did I know that there was much more required of me than being holy.

But we need more than good morality to make an impact on our world and carry out the words of the Great Commission.

Yes, holiness is a key part of the baptism of fire, we can not obey the Lord's Word or our call to follow Him without the Power of God's Spirit to move us into this very harmful way, even to the public square, and obey the Lord's call to bring His Power to our needy, broken, and idolatrous world!

If we see ourselves as righteous, sufficient, and better than others by virtue of our church doctrine, I guarantee you that we will most certainly miss this God-ordained blessing that awaits all who surrender their lives to speak His words to a lost and dying world.

If you are a Pentecostal and believe in the baptism of the Holy Spirit and you are living in sin, then you too have not entered into the fullness of the Holy Spirit fire baptism!

I have met many a person who say they have experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit yet they are addicted to drugs or alcohol, or they are sexually promiscuous, and this biggie, they can't seem to extract themselves from gazing at pornography.

The early church fathers would never endorse this kind of behavior. The entire book of Corinthians deals with sexual immorality and idolatry.

In fact, if they didn't address this sin and others, why would Paul admonish the Corinthians from the beginning of His epistle with the words, "but you were washed and you were sanctified".

But what is this sanctification to which Paul refers?

Since many a charismatic church has made a circus act out of the work of the Holy Spirit, some will excuse themselves from seeking the fullness of Christ's baptism because they think they already have the blessing fully understood and they are living in it. Here delusion can set in, may the Lord deliver all of us from being deceived by demons on this very important matter.

But the overemphasis on the supernatural elements of the work of the Holy Spirit does not excuse us from preaching this truth to every man.

Many of our hearers will not be delivered from death to life unless they receive the power contained in the baptism of fire of the Holy Spirit.

This powerful work is the only true power source that will truly set them and us free from the curses associated with sins that are generational and deeply woven into the depths of our humanity!

Even our religious pride.

The possession of the gift of the Holy Spirit should be desired more than any other commodity in the Christian life. Especially for those of us called to serve the King of Kings and Lord of Lords as the carriers of His message of Salvation to the corners of the earth.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit, or Christ's fire baptism, should be a normal part of the conversion experience of those who accept Christ exclusively as Lord and Savior. The baptism of fire then makes our confession a living reality in real time space history.

What then has happened to the teaching on the baptism of Jesus?

John the Baptist declared, "As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

One day while reading this section of Matthew chapter 3, my heart was illuminated to understand more of what John the Baptist was declaring to first century Palestine.

His hearers knew the law of God but were violating the law of God with their grumbling about being under Rome rule, just judgment for their idolatry and rebellion in centuries past. Nor did these Palistinian Jews really understand what it meant to love their neighbors, case in

point the Samaritans. They were grumbling about everything, they were discontented with their wages and so on.

How were they to change their attitude?

I argue that this could only happen through a future outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

John's assignment was to prepare their hearts for the baptism of Jesus by preaching repentance and washing of the word of God.

---

Something radically changed in me after I encountered the Person of Jesus Christ calling me to "go" and "preach" His Message to people that I assumed hated Him and would not listen to me or anyone that would speak to them about His Salvation.

Through a powerful prophetic word, I heard the voice of God calling me to do a work for Christ that I could never do without His Spirit. Nor was this a work that I ever imagined doing for God. It was too hard.

I vowed to the Lord I would do this work only if He gave me the power and grace to do it, it was a work I could never do without Him!

At the point of this prophetic encounter, I was open to receive any additional power and understanding that was available to me in Christ! We need to think about how this plays out today in the hearers of our message of salvation. If they hear and believe and are baptized in the water and in the fire of Jesus then they too will be given assignments that they can only do under the power and influence of the Holy Spirit.

This biblical concept of a "fire baptism" seemed like a good idea to me when I encountered a greater sight of the Living Christ. All my prior experiences with God did not have such a high view of His Glory, nor did they include the difficult assignment as I had just experienced.

As soon as I encountered this very strong prophetic word, I sensed immediately that I was overmatched, no way could I perform Christ's call in my own strength.

I ask you, shouldn't all believers feel this way?

Sadly, most believers miss this call and subsequently they miss the need to be baptised in the fire of Jesus Christ, and so, they sense this issue to be irrelevant and unimportant as they continue to live under Babylonian control just like the Palistinian Jews alive at the time of Jesus ministry.

---

If you share Christ with someone who is demon-possessed, addicted to crack, or devastated by a horrible, physically abusive divorce, you might find the "fire" baptism a requirement for their freedom. To all who have sought to help these folks in their misery and horrible bondage know instinctively that they need all that Christ has died to procure for needy sinners just to survive.

Read "Cross and Switchblade" by David Wilkerson, in David Wilkerson's experience in the inner city ministry he was called to he found the only way drug addicted and demon possessed sinners could be set free from the power of addiction was the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Just as in the cases I have just described here, I too needed all the power that heaven could offer me. All I wanted was a powerful deposit of life and energy so I could obey Christ's Word over my life.

I say this a lot, when you get a big view of God, then most likely, you will get a big assignment from the God who showed higher aspects of His Glory.

Today if you hear His Voice and His Call on your life, then you too will sense with me a strong desire to be filled with all of Christ's Spirit.

Those of us who have been commissioned by Christ to preach His Message in this time of human history have been called to a death march!

Death to self, the fear of men, and the taunts of the evil one and his host.

This work of grace requires nothing less than a complete and thorough death to our will, the dictates of this evil world, and Satan's effort to throw all his demonic lies at us, to derail us from the fulfillment of our calling.

Trust me, you and I, once we receive this power and baptism from on high have been ushered into a new battle...we now become marked men and women in the universe, marked adversaries of the prince and power of the air.

There simply is no turning back once you step into this confrontation with darkness. We go on in Him and in His Power.

At the very outset of my calling I knew I would be laughed at, I knew I would be scoffed for believing the things that I was now saying, and I knew I did not know enough of God's word to do what I was being called to do. A whole new level of dependence on God was now upon me.

I knew I needed to have the power to heal the sick and to cast out demons if people were gonna believe in this time of human history. A time will come when the powers of darkness will raise the dead and heal the sick, even translate.

I thought of a day when He might ask me to raise the dead! There was no way on earth that I could do this work without the outpouring of the Holy Spirit!

What then had changed in me?

I had finally, after so many years of sitting and waiting on a church pew, been summoned by the King of the Universe to do something that I could not do in my flesh!

At this point I was ready to receive whatever Christ could give me in word and in power.

In the movie “The Matrix” the character Neo knew that he had to go back and save Morpheus from those powerful agents that were about to kill him. Before Neo left on this epic journey, his crew asked him a simple question, “what do you need?”

Do you remember Neo’s response? Neo said give me “guns, lots of guns!”

Like the character Neo I knew I was called to do a very difficult job but I could not say “no” to God because I saw how empty and sick our world had become. I was finally ready and open to obey God’s power and His weapons to obey His call on my life. For many years God had been waiting for me to get to a point where I would just open myself up to Him.

To Be Continued in due season