

BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND FIRE¹

By Pastor Paul Penno Jr.
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The life and ministry of Jesus Christ is representative of the message and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist movement. Unquestionably Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit from His birth. He was conceived of the Spirit in Mary's womb. So far as we know Jesus did no miracles and lived in relative obscurity for some thirty years. During all this time He was filled with the Spirit of God. He lived in Nazareth which was proverbial for its wickedness—"can anything good come out of Nazareth?" There He was the Apostle of God sent to bear witness of the truth about God. Surely He must have been the living embodiment of the three angels' message. How?

He spoke and lived the everlasting gospel. His life was a constant call to come out of the world and be separated unto God. And hence He was a warning to forsake formalistic and pretentious worship by being joined with the true God.

As the representative Son of man God's mission for Him was to reverse the family history of the human race in the first Adam. The first Adam's legacy to humanity was nothing but sin, condemnation and death—a complete and utter loss of the Spirit of God. Adam was filled and

clothed by the holy light of the Spirit of God. But this he lost when alliance was made with the serpent.

Jesus came as the last Adam. He took our sinful flesh upon His divinity. His Spirit-filled divinity combined with our spirit-lost nature. Thus He reconstituted these dead bones by breathing into it the life of the Spirit of God.

After thirty years of common labor in obscurity, Jesus—the Son of man—was led of the Spirit into the experience of conversion. He experienced all the steps of conversion that the sinner must go through—repentance, confession, sorrow for sin, and baptism.² He did this not only to set us an example, but in order "to fulfill all righteousness" as He said to John the Baptist.

God "hath made Him to be sin for us" (2 Cor. 5:21). Baptism is an initiation rite. Jesus as the Representative sin-bearer had our sin removed and the replacement was the baptism of the Holy Spirit. "And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him" (Matt. 3:16). Jesus was anointed as God's Apostle [sent one] to "lighten the earth with His glory" (Rev. 18:1). He bore witness to the loving character of God which seeks and saves the lost. God does not

¹ Luke 3:15, 16. 340, 258.

² Ellen G. White, "The Lord can take every one of us in his embrace; for his arm encircles the race. Let us remember this, after Christ had taken the necessary steps in repentance, conversion, and faith in behalf of the human race, he went to John to be baptized of him in Jordan." *The General Conference Bulletin*, (April 4, 1901), p. 36.

condemn the sinner, but rather convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. This, indeed, is a ministry of comfort.

At His inaugural sermon in the synagogue on Sabbath morning Jesus used as His text Isaiah 61:1-3. “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.”

When Jesus stood in the synagogue that day, and read this scripture: “He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor” (Luke 4:18). And the message to the highways and hedges, and in the streets and lanes of the city, is emphatically carrying the gospel to the poor. This message and work of Jesus was the fourth angel combined with the third angels’ message. He taught the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. He ministered the forgiveness of sins and imparted the power for a restored life to God.

The prophets foretold that in the days of the Messiah God would grant a liberal effusion of the Holy Spirit, which would be new and distinctive, and available for all. In Isaiah 44:3 God promised: “I will

pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your descendants, and my blessings on your offspring.” Again, in a better known passage from Joel, God says: “and it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh” (Joel 2:28).

John the Baptist summarized this expectation in his familiar saying which ascribed the outpouring of the Spirit to the Messiah himself: “I have baptized you with water; but *he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit*” (Mark 1:8). This prophecy of John recorded by the three synoptic evangelists as a simple future (“he will baptize”), takes the form in the fourth Gospel of a present participle: “I myself did not know him; but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, *this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit*’” (John 1:33).

This present participle is timeless. It describes not the single event of Pentecost, but the distinctive ministry of Jesus: “this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.” Jesus is called “the baptizer,” because it is characteristic of His ministry to baptize with the Holy Spirit. The characteristic work of Jesus is twofold. It involves a removal and a bestowal, a taking away of sin and a baptizing with the Holy Spirit. These are the two great gifts of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

They are brought together by the prophets in the Old Testament and the apostles in the New, and they cannot be separated. Thus, through the prophet Ezekiel God promised: “I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean. . . . And I

will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes. . .” (Eze. 36:25, 27).

Similarly, the apostle Paul describes the new covenant as both “the dispensation of righteousness” and “the dispensation of the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:9, 8).

Again, Peter on the day of Pentecost cried: “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). The gift of the Spirit, as Peter here calls the baptism, is as much an integral part of the gospel of salvation as is the remission of sins. We must never conceive of salvation as the negative putting away of sins alone; it includes also the positive blessing of an indwelling Spirit. When we choose the gift of repentance and believe, Jesus not only imparts the experience within of remission of sins,—taking them away,—but also baptizes us with the Holy Spirit.

All of this is an individual conversion experience which is the privilege of each one to have. But individual “believers were added to the Lord” (Acts 5:14). The individual becomes part of the body of Christ. The Spirit never leaves him alone to himself otherwise he dies. He must become part of the body of Christ. The branch in order to live must be grafted into the Vine. It then receives the life-sustaining fluid and nourishment of the parent stock.

They were added to *the Lord*: not to the church. Not by any man, not by any ministry of men, is anybody ever added to the church.

By the preaching of the Word folks are brought to believe on Christ, and to receive Him. Then by baptism in water the believer is joined to Christ in the spiritual union symbolized in the thought of marriage.

“Ye are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another: even to Him that is raised from the dead” (Rom. 7:4).

Baptism is the marriage ceremony by which the believer and Christ are united, that they may live together and bring forth fruit unto God. “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Rom. 6:4, 5, 8).

The believer being thus “added to the Lord,” *then* “*the Lord* added to *the church* daily such as should be saved”—“such as were being saved.” For “God hath set the members *every one of them* in the body”—the church—“as it hath pleased Him” (Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 12:18).

And as by faith in Christ and baptism in water, believers are “added to the Lord,” so by faith in Christ and baptism *of the Holy Ghost, the Lord* adds them to the church.

“For by *one Spirit* we are all baptized into *one body*”—the church. And “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born *of water* and of *the Spirit*, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (1 Cor. 12:13; John 3:5).

No man nor any combination or association of men can ever by any possibility add anybody to the church which is Christ’s body the fullness of Him who filleth all in all. *That is accomplished* only by

the baptism of the Holy Spirit; and none but *the Lord* can baptize with the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Christ sent the Holy Spirit to raise up the Great Second Advent Movement. Jesus baptized this movement with the Holy Ghost. Individually we may experience the baptism of the Holy Ghost and His continual infilling all along the journey. But it is also true of us as a people that we must together experience the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

This is what is predicted. “And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, *having great power*; [baptism of the Holy Ghost] and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice [the loud cry]” (Rev. 18:1). Another angel takes us back to Revelation 14 who do a wonderful work. Some Seventh-day Adventist churches have the three angels as their logo. And those three angels have been at work since 1831 when William Miller gave his first Bible study on the prophecies 185 years ago. The three angels have been at work 185.

Those three angels need the help that comes from the angel in Revelation 18 when a fourth angel comes. John said that angel had great power and the earth was lightened with His glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice repeating the second angels’ message, but adding to it, Ellen White says in her book *Early Writings*. She saw in vision the coming of this fourth angel in great power. His message appeared to be an addition to that of the three angels.³

Ellen White describes the coming of this fourth angel, “I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven descending to the earth and again ascending to heaven preparing for the fulfillment of some important event. Then I saw another mighty angel commissioned to descend to the earth to unite his voice with the third angel and to give power and force to his message. Great power and glory were imparted to this fourth angel. And as he descended the earth was lightened with his glory. The light which attended this angel penetrated everywhere as he cried mightily with a strong voice, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen. This message of the fall Babylon as given by the second angel in Revelation 14:8 is now repeated with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the fallen churches since 1844. The work of this angel comes in at the right time to join in the last great work of the third angel’s message as it swells to a loud cry.”

All of this is yet future. And yet all of this actually began at the Minneapolis meeting in 1888.

“When the people of God are thus prepared to stand in the power of temptation which they are soon to meet. I saw great light resting upon them and they united to proclaim fearlessly the third angel’s message. She heard voices which seemed to sound everywhere.”

Page 278: “The light that was shed upon the waiting ones penetrated everywhere. In those in the churches who had any light [the Sunday-keeping churches to do have some light] who had not heard and rejected the three messages of Revelation 14, they obeyed the call and they left the fallen

³ *Early Writings*, p. 277.

churches and joined those who were looking for their Lord in keeping all his commandments.”

This glorious work is described in these words p. 278: “Servants of God endowed with power from on high with their faces lighted up shining with holy consecration went forth to proclaim the message from heaven. Souls that were scattered all through the religious bodies answered the call and the precious ones were hurried out of the doomed churches as Lot was hurried out of Sodom.”

And then Ellen White tells us that people who had been held back by relatives nothing stopped them they just stepped out and they took their part with God’s people.

In *The Great Controversy*, p. 612 Ellen White describes this wonderful loud cry: “The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Holy Spirit of God. The arguments have been presented already. The seed has been sown. Now it will spring up and bear fruit. The publications distributed by missionary workers have exerted their influence yet many whose minds were impressed have been prevented from fully comprehending the truths or from yielding obedience.” That is just what is happening today. There are many people who have begun to be convicted but they are hindered from making a full consecration.

“Now the rays of light penetrate everywhere. The truth is seen in its clearness. And the honest children of God severed the bands which have held them. Family connections, church relations, are powerless to save them now. Truth is more

precious than all the sides. Notwithstanding the agencies combined against the truth, a large number take their stand upon the Lord’s side.”

The latter rain is what prepares God’s people to give the loud cry to the world.

Who is this fourth angel? It is a mighty angel who comes from heaven. It is a symbol of a mighty message that comes from heaven. The word “angel” means a messenger. The three angels’ messages are given by angels who are messengers themselves.

Now it may have been God’s plan that not only this little denomination known as Seventh-day Adventists should lighten the earth with glory. God had prepared the way and Elder Froom in *Movement of Destiny* on the 1888 message tells us that the Keswick movement in England and various Bible movements here in North America and even in Germany there was a movement in the 1870’s and especially in the 1880’s that was indeed preparing Christendom to hear the fourth angel’s message.

Well how could it have done without TV, radio? News traveled faster then than it does today. Yes, the first angel’s message traveled all over the world in just a few years. The Lord had ways of blessing his work at that time. We had the finest medical institution in the world. We had a reputation that was excellent. Oh yes, we were hated by pastors. If we would pitch a tent in some town, or city to preach the message they would rise up in arms against us. But that was good. We stirred the city. It wasn’t the same when we left as when we entered

the city. God was blessing our evangelism led by humble men and women.

Dr. Kellogg captured the attention of the world medically. The religious liberty truth [A. T. Jones] electrified the United States Senate and taught those senators what it means to be American citizens.

God was prepared to lighten the earth with glory. Over 100 times Ellen White says we behaved just like the Jews who rejected their Messiah and crucified Him. She didn't say it one time. She didn't say it two times. She didn't say it three times. Over 100 times. But that is a problem. How do we get from where we are to Revelation 18:1-3?

The disciples had been disunited because of looking at themselves who would be the greatest in the kingdom. They did not believe Jesus' words regarding His death and resurrection. Thus they missed a great preparation for the crisis which lay ahead. In rejecting the present truth they were laid wide open for devastating disappointment.

Before the day of Pentecost they came together under deep conviction of the Holy Spirit regarding their sin of unbelief. The Comforter brought the gift of repentance full and complete. They received the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus—the forgiveness of their sins. They had to go back where they had failed to listen to their Lord and learn anew the missed lessons of the past.

If the sinless Son of God needed to repent of sin as the Son of man, how much more do we need to repent of our sin? Likewise the Holy Spirit calls

upon us to look upon where the Lord has led us. "We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history."⁴

As it was necessary for Jesus to be baptized with the Holy Ghost, in order to do this work that then lay before Him, how much more is it necessary that we be baptized with the Holy Ghost, in order to do this identical work that is now placed before us.

Do not forget that Jesus had been a perfect Christian all his days on earth up to the time when he must enter upon this work; yet he must be baptized with the Holy Ghost before He could enter upon this work. The Holy Spirit had been with Him every hour of his life on earth, up to that time; yet before He could do the work that then lay before Him, His closing work, it was necessary that He should be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

Have we been such perfect Christians all our days as was He all His days?—O, no. Then how much more do we need the baptism of the Holy Spirit than did he! Have we had the Holy Spirit in our lives as had He those thirty years of his life?—O, No. Then how much more do we need the baptism of the Holy Spirit than did He!

Yet it was essential to the completion of the work of God in that day, that he should be baptized with the Holy Spirit. In that closing period of His work, there were trials, persecutions, temptations, and the cross to meet, which He could not meet successfully without this baptism of the Holy Spirit.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches*, p. 196.

So likewise it is essential to the completion of the work of God in *this our* day, that we be baptized with the Holy Ghost. In this closing period of our work, there are trials, persecutions, temptations, and crosses for us to meet, which we cannot meet successfully without this same baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Not only do we need this, not only must we have it, but thank the Lord we *can* have it. God longs for us to receive it. The Father loves us just as He loves Jesus. And praise His holy name, when He places before us the same work that lay before Jesus, He gives us the same Holy Spirit in full measure, to fit us for that work, just as He gave it to Jesus.