

“Old things have passed away,
behold, all things are become new”

By Ron Bailey

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
The Old Testament's Hidden Baptisms.....	4
The Flood.....	4
The Crossing of the Red Sea.....	5
Naaman's Baptism.....	6
Isaiah's Baptism.....	8
Ezekiel's Baptism.....	9
The Jewish Baptism of Proselytes.....	10
John Baptist's Testimony.....	12
The forgotten baptism.....	14
New Testament use of the word.....	16
What really happened at Cornelius' place	20

Introduction

In a series of posts to a forum on www.sermonindex.net Ron wrote about the “Baptism in the Spirit”, this study contains some of extracts from those posts.

In this study we will try to build 'from the ground' up, rather than reacting to contemporary views or definitions of the 'Baptism in the Holy Spirit'. Suppose you were in a closed country with no access to denominational or historical sources. Your only source is the scripture which you 'search diligently' to know what Christ expects of you and what you may expect of Him; this is my attempt to answer the last half of that search.

The Old Testament's Hidden Baptisms

First we will trace the idea of baptism from the Old Testament. Did you know that there are 5 hidden baptisms in the Old Testament?

The Flood

Peter tells us that the word baptism has a 'type'. A type is a template; it is something defines a shape. In Romans Paul says Adam was a 'type' of Him who was to come. There is something about the 'shape' of Adam which is repeated in the accomplishments of Christ. It is not the reality but the shape; 'the print of the nails' that Judas wanted to explore is the word 'type'. He would see the shape in the wound. The scriptures also refer to 'shadows'; **For the law having a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of the things, can never with the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect them that draw nigh.** (Heb 10:1 ASV) Types and shadows have the same characteristics; they give the outward shape of the thing, but they are not the things itself. They have no colour, no texture, no details, no life. But even so they can be useful as a starting point.

who sometime disbelieved, when once the long-suffering of God did wait, in days of Noah--an ark being preparing--in which few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water; also to which *an antitype* doth now save us--baptism, (not a putting away of the filth of flesh, but the question of a good conscience in regard to God,) through the rising again of Jesus Christ, (1Pe 3:20-21 YLT) The antitype is the reality of which the type was just the outline. This long introduction is to say that according to Peter Noah's Flood was a 'type' of baptism. So although Noah's Flood was historical fact it was also a revelation of something that would come later. It was a picture of baptism.

Please forget everything you ever knew about 'baptism' and let's start from scratch. If Noah's Flood was the only definition of 'baptism' what would we think about. If your church were to announce a service of Believer's Flood what would you think about? If your denomination says it believes in the Flood of the Holy Spirit would that open up some new lines of thought? Go on, test the idea. If I said tell me what Noah's Flood/Baptism was all about what would be the first thought that entered your head. I suggest the first thought would be 'judgement'. Noah's Flood/Baptism was a death sentence on sinners. The corruption of sin was brought to a standstill by God's action. The old world was buried in water. It also had another effect. Every drop of water had the effect of lifting Noah higher. So the judgement of God on sin actually separated Noah from the sin that God was judging. It brought a whole creation to an end and started again with a new family. I sometimes wonder if Noah took off the covers and said to Mrs Noah, 'old things have passed away, behold, all things are become new'?

What can we learn then from the Bible's first baptism? Baptism is judgement on sin. Baptism is separation from sin. Baptism is the end of the old and the beginning of the new. Remember God is beginning to build a sense of what He means by baptism. Whenever He uses the word 'baptism' in the future we must remember that this is His first 'definition' of baptism.

The Crossing of the Red Sea

I want you to know, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. (1Co 10:1-4 ESV)

Who would have guessed that the events of the Passover and the Crossing of the Red Sea were really a baptism? These prepositions are fascinating too. 'in' the cloud and 'in' the sea have the word 'en' meaning 'in' (or in an instrumental sense.. by) The medium 'in' which they were all baptised was 'the cloud and the sea'. It doesn't say who the Baptizer was, although it was plainly God Himself, but it does have this phrase 'into Moses'. This is the preposition 'eis' meaning 'into' or 'towards'. This preposition is frequently used in the sense of destination and shows the destination of this baptism. The purpose of this baptism is to put the people 'into Moses'.

This is a wonderful facet of truth that we would never have seen if Paul had not used this amazing phrase of being 'baptised into Moses, in the cloud and in the sea.' Let's see if we can do a similar exercise to the one on Noah's Baptism. If we were to ask questions about the Crossing of the Red Sea, what would our answers be? What are the main truths captured in this story?

In fact, there are surprising similarities to Noah's Baptism. This was God's final judgement upon the Egyptians; this was a death sentence on the sinners. The destructive power of the Egyptians was brought to a standstill by this event. Their old master was brought to death in the cloud and the sea. The cloud first separated Israel from the Egyptians and then the closing waters of the Red Sea sealed their fate. The baptism that ended the destructive power sealed their borders and left Israel on one side and their past on the other. So the judgement of God on sin actually separated Israel from the sin that God was judging. It brought a whole creation to an end and started again with a new family. I sometimes wonder if Moses paused on the other side of the water and said, 'old things have passed away, behold, all things are become new'? (I cut and pasted that from the last study!)

There is something else about this baptism that we could have mentioned in Noah's Baptism; this baptism united the destiny of a people with the destiny of the Covenant holder. Let me explain. If we had studied the story of Noah we would have discovered that God's covenant was with him personally, and others benefited as a result of their right relationship with Noah. They were united with Noah as a result of Noah's Baptism. Now a similar thing is seen in the story of Moses' Baptism; the people are identified with and united to Moses. Their destinies have become inseparable. This baptism has joined them to Moses. So we are beginning to see a pattern in these hidden baptisms.

1. Judgement on Sin/Our Enemy
2. Separation from Sin/Our Enemy
3. A decisive end of the old.
4. A solid beginning of the new.
5. A union with the the Covenant Holder.

Do we dare to begin to ask the question 'if this is what the word "baptism" means, how does this fit in to a definition of 'baptism in the Spirit'? The word 'baptism' can't signify one thing consistently in the types and another in the reality. Hold the question, we have two more hidden OT baptisms to consider.

Naaman's Baptism

As with many words used in the New Testament the word 'baptism' was not new. The Hebrew Bible had been translated into Greek somewhere around 250BC (the Greek LXX (Septuagint c 260 BC) was the bible used by the early Christians, and when NT quotations differ from their OT original it is usually because the quotations are from the LXX. This doesn't mean that the Greek LXX is to be preferred to the Hebrew behind our bibles. It means that in the times quoted there is truth visible in the Greek LXX which was not obvious in the Hebrew) For the Jews of the 1st century AD Greek was their everyday language, particularly in the area of Galilee where most of Jesus' disciples had their homes. These men knew the LXX better than the Hebrew text, and Greek OT used the word 'baptize' on at least three occasions.

The first instance was in a vivid story. The ASV translating from the Hebrew text has; **Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.** (2Ki 5:14 ASV) But the disciples had grown up with a text which, in the Greek said;**2 Kings 5:14 So Naiman went down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the word of Elisaie: and his flesh returned to him as the flesh of a little child, and he was cleansed.** (LXX Eng Trans) where the word 'dipped' is ' βαπτισατο' - baptized.

Perhaps this is a good time to say more about the Greek words to explain what they mean. There are several associated words:

baptO means to dip, and sometimes 'to wash by dipping'

baptizO means to submerge, and which should not be confused with baptO.

The clearest example that shows the meaning of baptizo is a text from the Greek poet and physician Nicander, who lived about 200 B.C. It is a recipe for making pickles and is helpful because it uses both words. Nicander says that in order to make a pickle, the vegetable should first be 'dipped' (bapto) into boiling water and then 'baptised' (baptizo) in the vinegar solution. Both verbs concern the immersing of vegetables in a solution. But the first is temporary. The second, the act of baptising the vegetable, produces a permanent change. When used in the New Testament, this word more often refers to our union and identification with Christ than to our water baptism. e.g. #Mr 16:16. 'He that believes and is baptised shall be saved'. Christ is saying that mere intellectual assent is not enough. There must be a union with him, a real change, like the vegetable to the pickle! (Bible Study Magazine, James Montgomery Boice, May 1989). (the cooks will see immediately the distinction is between 'blanching' and 'marinading'.)

Naaman, then, marinaded/submerged himself seven times. Seven in the scripture is a number which often indicates perfection, thoroughness or completion. There could be no doubt about Naaman's 'baptism'. I think we can safely presume that the miracle took place not gradually but instantly as Naaman emerged from his seventh submerging. The consequence was that the battle scars and leprous scars of this gnarled old warrior were instantly gone and his **his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.** Remember that the ideas associated with baptism are perculating down into the nation's memory of what is involved in baptism. Naaman became 'new and clean'. Naaman's personal history recorded in his scars was gone, completely.

We can see some ideas here which link with the earlier 'hidden baptisms'. This marked the end of the old and the beginning of the new. It is linked this time not with judgement but with cleansing. If

we continue our speculation we might imagine Naaman saying 'old things have passed away, all things have become new.' This is the first Bible 'baptism' where the candidate got wet!! Noah and family and Moses and the Israelites were kept completely dry during their baptisms.

There is something else that this baptism effected. Naaman became an adherant of Jehovah. He was a changed man in more ways than his skin. This 'flesh as a little child' effect may have had future impact upon Jewish baptism as we shall see later. This links baptism with conversion and 'new birth'.

This is slow work and I hope you don't mind that, but it will be important to understand what the word 'baptism' means before we try to understand what 'baptism in the Spirit' means.

Isaiah's Baptism

Another portion of scripture which has 'bapizO' in the Septuagint is in Isaiah; **Therefore are my loins filled with anguish; pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman in travail: I am pained so that I cannot hear; I am dismayed so that I cannot see. My heart fluttereth, horror hath affrighted me; the twilight that I desired hath been turned into trembling unto me.** (Isa 21:3-4 ASV) For the word 'affrighted' the Septuagint has **κα νομ αμεβαπτ ζει** horror baptized me

The Greek word 'baptizO' is the word that classical authors used to describe a ship lost at sea; the ship was 'baptized' or overwhelmed. Irretrievably sunk. This is sense in which the LXX uses the word, but this passage is a terrifying passage of scripture. It is found in the section of Isaiah where God's judgements are coming upon the nations. All of these visions are terrifying but Isaiah singles this one out for a special introduction; **A grievous vision is declared unto me; the treacherous man dealeth treacherously, and the destroyer destroyeth. Go up, O Elam; besiege, O Media; all the sighing thereof have I made to cease.** (Isa 21:2 ASV) It is a grievous vision. In this vision he sees the judgements of God coming on Babylon. As a prophet he identifies with his prophecy and experiences, in the Spirit, the sense of the judgement upon Babylon. He uses the language of childbirth, and later refers to this judgement as; **O thou my threshing, and the grain of my floor! that which I have heard from Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you.** (Isa 21:10 ASV) (We shall come back to the picture of the threshing floor later in these studies)

Experiencing the final judgement of God upon Babylon and its sin, Isaiah says 'he was baptized in horror'. He was utterly overwhelmed by the sense of God's righteous judgement upon sin, but even in the midst of this there is glimmer of hope represented in the picture of the travail that will bring forth.

Can we see any of our familiar traits in this use of 'baptize'? Well, it is God's destructive visitation of judgement upon sin, and the judgement will ultimately result in the freeing of Babylon's slave peoples. It is a separating experience that will leave people on either side of a divide. It is also one of the OT's most vivid pictures of Gethsemene and Calvary, but that will need to wait for a while in our studies.

The template for the idea of 'baptism' is remarkably consistent. It is a destructive act of God which separates men from their slave-masters. Are we beginning to get an idea of what 'baptism' signified to Bible reading 1st century Jews?

Ezekiel's Baptism

As far as I am aware this is the last OT reference to the idea of baptism. Again it is in the Septuagint, the early church's KJV, that the word is used. This time it is in Ezekiel; **Girded with girdles upon their loins, exceeding in dyed attire upon their heads, all of them princes to look to, after the manner of the Babylonians of Chaldea, the land of their nativity:** (Eze 23:15 KJV) I expect you are looking at the verse and wondering where the word 'baptism' could be hidden here. Well, it's not the word 'baptizo' but that word 'bapto' signifying to dip and it is the word translated 'dyed'.

Our Greek New Testament has this word too; **And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.** (Rev 19:13 KJV) That word 'dipped' could be translated 'dyed'. When ancient people dyed a cloth in their purple dyes, they 'dipped' the cloth in and it became 'united with' what it had been dipped into. The words they used were 'bapto' and 'baptizo'. This is why the New Testament speaks of 'the baptism' in this way; **Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection,** (Rom 6:4-5 NASB) 'baptism' unites the thing immersed into the medium into which it was baptised. The two become inseparably one. Once you had two items cloth and purple dye, but now you have one item; purple- cloth.

There is no picture of judgement here, but the introduction of an idea that a baptism can effect a union. It is an irreversible event which leaves old things passed away and everything become new, or at least, purple!

The Jewish Baptism of Proselytes.

[Edersheim: The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah](#), Appendix 12. The Baptism of Proselytes.

1. Proselytes of the Gate did not undergo baptism or even circumcision.

2. It was otherwise with 'the proselytes of righteousness,' who became 'children of the covenant,' 'perfect Israelites,' Israelites in every respect, both as regarded duties and privileges. All writers are agreed that three things were required for the admission of such proselytes: Circumcision (*Milah*), Baptism (*Tebhilah*), and a Sacrifice (*Qorban*, in the case of women: baptism and sacrifice) - the latter consisting of a burnt-offering of a heifer, or of a pair of turtle doves or of young doves *Maimonides, Hilkh. Iss. Biah xiii. 5*). After the destruction of the Temple promise had to be made of such a sacrifice when the services of the Sanctuary were restored. On this and the ordinances about circumcision it is not necessary to enter further. **That baptism was absolutely necessary to make a proselyte is so frequently stated as not to be disputed** (See *Maimonides, u. s.*; the tractate *Masseketh Gerim* in *Kirchheim's Septem Libri Talm. Parvi*, pp. 38-44 [which, however, adds little to our knowledge]; *Targum on Ex. xii. 44*; *Ber. 47 b*; *Kerith. 9 a*; *Jer. Yebam. p. 8 d*; *Yebam. 45 b, 46 a and b, 48 b, 76 a*; *Ab. Sar. 57 a, 59 a*, and other passages). There was, indeed a difference between *Rabbis Joshua and Eliezer*, the former maintaining that baptism alone without circumcision, the latter that circumcision alone without baptism, sufficed to make a proselyte, but the sages decided in favour of the necessity of both rites (*Yebam. 46 a and b*). The baptism was to be performed in the presence of three witnesses, ordinarily *Sanhedrists* (*Yebam. 47 b*), but in case of necessity others might act. The person to be baptized, having cut his hair and nails, undressed completely, made fresh profession of his faith before what were 'the fathers of the baptism' (our Godfathers, *Kethub. 11 a*; *Erub. 15 a*), and then immersed completely, so that every part of the body was touched by the water. The rite would, of course, be accompanied by exhortations and benedictions (*Maimonides, Hilkh. Milah iii. 4*; *Hilkh. Iss. Biah xiv. 6*). Baptism was not to be administered at night, nor on a Sabbath or feast-day (*Yebam. 46 b*). Women were attended by those of their own sex, the *Rabbis* standing at the door outside. Yet unborn children of proselytes did not require to be baptized, because they were born 'in holiness' (*Yebam. 78 a*). In regard to the little children of proselytes opinions differed. A person under age was indeed received, but not regarded as properly an Israelite till he had attained majority. Secret baptism, or where only the mother brought a child, was not acknowledged. In general, the statements of a proselyte about his baptism required attestation by witnesses. But the children of a Jewess or of a proselyte were regarded as Jews, even if the baptism of the father was doubtful.

It was indeed a great thing when, in the words of *Maimonides*, a stranger sought shelter under the wings of the *Shekhinah*, and the change of condition which he underwent was regarded as complete. The waters of baptism were to him in very truth, though in a far different from the Christian sense, the 'bath of regeneration' (*Titus iii. 5*). As he stepped out of these waters he was considered as 'born anew' - in the language of the *Rabbis*, as if he were 'a little child just born' (*Yeb. 22 a*; *48 b*; *97 b*), as 'a child of one day' (*Mass. Ger. c. ii.*). *Edersheim: The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Appendix 12. The Baptism of Proselytes.

The Jews of John Baptist's day were very familiar with baptism; it was part of the essential ritual of a Gentile becoming a Jew. What must have been provoking was that John was baptizing Jews. There is an interesting feature in that one of John's sites was 'Bethabara beyond Jordan'; that means on the other side. I have often wondered whether John was acting out the Crossing of the Jordan in Joshua's time. Bethabara is exactly where they crossed. Jesus said of John, 'he restoreth all things'.

John's preaching of repentance and baptism was almost like a re-setting of the dials, bringing Israel back to the point of its beginnings.

What can we learn from Jewish Baptism to help us in building up our understanding of the word 'baptism'? There are definite links with 'cleansing' here and again the concept, for converted Gentiles, of old things having passed away and all things become new. It provoked in the Jewish thought ideas of 'born anew', 'a little child just born' and a 'bath of regeneration'.

I am not building doctrine on Jewish habits, but it is good to remind ourselves that John Baptist was not preaching in a sterile vacuum but in a market place of ideas. In such a context the word 'baptism' would have held ideas that were common to many groups.

John Baptist's Testimony

John Baptist was like the Morning Star which shone so brilliantly but which was inevitably made invisible by the rising of the sun. We are usually anxious to get on into the gospel account and sometimes this prevents us from considering 'how great' this man was. He was the greatest unregenerate servant of God; **But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.** (Mat 11:9-13 KJV) John was one of the Bible's milestone men; a watershed in God's ongoing purposes. John is the last of the breed.

His work was blessed with amazing popular success but, more importantly, with Christ's personal approval;

Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. (Mat 3:5-6 KJV)

And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought. (Mar 9:12 KJV)

He brought back the spiritual condition of the people to the highest levels. As Elijah had marked a new beginning for Israel, so John did the same. If John is the greatest of the prophets it behoves us to listen carefully to what he has to say about 'Baptism in the Spirit'. It is, after all, his phrase. In every narrative that mentions 'Baptism in the Spirit' there is a reference to John Baptist. (Matt 3:11, Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, John 1:33, Acts 1:5, Acts 11:16) It almost seems that the inspired historians never used the phrase without crediting John with its origin.

But it is not just John's origin of the phrase that the historians record but his continual contrast between his own mode of baptism and that of Christ's. "I am a water baptist; He will be a Spirit baptist." is the theme of his prophecy to Christ's future work. Well, as the world's most experienced baptizer, what did John think baptism signified? We have touched on the Jewish view of water baptism as the end of the old and the beginning of the new. It is a sacramental expression of death followed by life, and part of incorporation into the people of God. In Israel's Levitical ritual they placed their hands on sacrificial animals and acknowledged their sins; John's innovation is that Jews must also acknowledge their sins and then submit to baptism. So there is a clear focus on sin, and its penalty in death. But beyond the death there is new identity within the family of God. It is as though, old things had passed away and all things become new. He invited the hearers to 'play out' the sentence of death upon the old and yet when that was done they lived.

John's specific teaching about the nature of Christ's Spirit Baptism is found most fully in Matthew and Luke who each record with almost identical words; **John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable. And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.** (Luk 3:16-18 KJV) This coming Baptizer, says John, will baptize you with (in) the Holy Spirit and fire. This is not two baptisms but one; a baptism in 'Holy Spirit

and fire'. Water was a Biblical symbol of judgement and cleansing; so was fire. There can be no doubt that when John used this phrase he was thinking of judgement and cleansing; his next words confirm that plainly. His thought moves seamlessly from the picture of 'fire' to the place that fire has in the process of harvest. His image is of the threshing floor; John says it is 'Christ's winnowing fan, Christ's threshing floor', Christ's garner. The only difference between Matthew and Luke is that Matthew tells us it is Christ's harvest too. (cf Luke 3:17, Matt 3:12) This whole process of baptism in Spirit and fire, according to John, is HIS.

What is John referring to? He links Christ's Baptism with harvest. It is easy to forget in the midst of all the other symbolism that the feast of Pentecost was a 'harvest festival. (Originally called the Feast of Weeks, (First Fruits and Harvest) (see Leviticus 23:15 - 21), it is observed on the sixth day of the Sivan (our May/June). It became known as Pentecost (meaning 50th) because it comes 50 days after Passover. It was the celebration of the beginning of the harvest season when the people brought the first fruits and offered them in thanksgiving to the Lord.) When was the last time we thought of Pentecost as a celebration of harvest? But for John the ideas are inseparable. This was Christ's harvest and John sees that the Spirit and fire Baptizer will have his fan in his hand. Seed and tares have grown together to harvest but now the time of final separation has arrived; **Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.** (Mat 13:30 KJV) Can you see the consistency of the imagery?

John has in mind the process of harvest. The wheat (and tares) have been cut down and gathered together on the threshing floor. With flails and sledges they have been out the gold grain, but it is all mixed up with the husks. They takes spadefulls of the mixture and lift it gently into the air. Meanwhile they create a gentle breeze with their fans and in a golden haze the chaff is blown to one side and the heavier grain fall to the earth. Next they gather the wheat into the barns, and the chaff is consumed in a spectacular conflagration. Have you seen a fire like this? Have you heard one? The fire creates its own upward thermal and draws in the oxygen which furthers the process. The noise is alarming; a great continuous roar. I cannot see this picture without seeing the day of Pentecost; **And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.** (Act 2:2-3 KJV) Donald Gee's history of the Pentecostal movement in the UK was called 'Wind and Fire'; the upper room had become part of the harvest process; the rushing mighty wind filled the room, and the coming Spirit filled those who waited in it. One of the consistent pictures of God's attitude to sin is expressed powerfully in Hebrews; **For our God is a consuming fire.** (Heb 12:29 KJV)

But John's image of harvest is part of his thinking on Christ's Baptism. Can we see any of our old patterns of baptism here? Judgement on sin and sinners, separation of God's people to safety, the old passed away, behold all things are become new. They are all here. Can we see why the old Holiness preachers equated Baptism in Spirit with God's dealing with sin rather than power to evangelize? And what is more sobering, how do pentecostal/charismatic paradigms of Baptism in the Holy Spirit match what we have seen so far? If, as many pentecostal/charismatic teachers would say, Baptism in the Holy Spirit does not relate to sin, separation, sanctification and new beginnings, then centuries of Biblical ideas have a been without purpose, and the word baptism now means some quite different to what we had been led to expect.

The forgotten baptism

We have at least one more 'baptism' to look at before we take the word into the phrase to see what we ought to be expecting from a 'baptism in the Spirit'. If the OT references are to 'hidden' baptisms' this one must be called the 'forgotten' baptism; **I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:** (Luk 12:49-51 KJV) Martin Luther king said 'I have a dream'but Jesus says 'I have a baptism'. What is he referring to? He links it in His thought to the sending of 'fire on the earth' and 'division'. This is not the only time He took up this kind of language; **But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:** (Mar 10:38-39 KJV) This is His cup and His baptism and there can be little doubt that He is referring to His death on the cross, but what extraordinary images to use. I may have led a 'sheltered life'but I have never heard anyone (other than myself) preach on Christ's death as a baptism; this is why I called it the 'forgotten' baptism.

This is a foundational image of His death, but little referred to in evangelical circles. If we take some of the values of 'baptism' from our previous notes and apply them here it begins to make sense. Isaiah contemplated Babylon's judgement and was 'baptized in terror'. When Christ contemplated the cross His reactions were remarkably similar; **And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray. And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch. And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.** (Mar 14:32-36 KJV) Luke records great gouts of blood that splashed on the earth as He prayed. The other language used is to be found in medical textbooks of the day describing the extremities of a complete nervous breakdown. Terror has taken hold of Him.

Mark's gospel tells us of His thoughts as they walked to Gethsemene; **And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.** (Mar 14:26-27 KJV) This is a quotation from Zechariah; **Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith Jehovah of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn my hand upon the little ones.** (Zec 13:7 ASV) It is God who calls for the Sword of Judgement against 'my fellow'; it was the horror of this prospect that 'Abba, Father' must now unsheath His sword that broke Him in Gethsemene. And this was only the contemplation of the event, what must the reality be described as? A baptism to be baptized with and a cup to be drunk.

"O make me understand it,
Help me to take it in,
What is meant to Thee, the HOly One
To take away my sin"

The cup that he had first referred to in Mark 10 reappears in His prayer in Gethsemene. 'the cup' of

Mark 10 has become 'this cup' of Mark 14. It is no longer 'the cup' as a prospect, it is 'this cup'; within reach now. His Abba Father is reaching out to Him with 'this cup'. The other image 'baptism' is an overwhelming flood. Judgement falls upon sin and the judgement becomes the source of the salvation; this is consistent with Noah's Baptism and Moses' Baptism. The separation effected by those Old Testament baptisms is seen again in the cry of dereliction; **My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me** and He bears in His body our sins. And it all culminates in the great cry; **it is finished**. Old things have passed away...

I believe something else is happening here which takes us to the very edge of revelation and human comprehension. Baptism effected a union. Those who 'received' Noah's baptism were united with him in his destiny. Those who 'received' Moses' Baptism were united with him in his destiny. What was Christ baptized into and with what was He united? I see a reference here to the real 'passion of the Christ'; **For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.** (2Co 5:21 KJV) The sinless lamb of God is seen as the 'serpent in the wilderness' [John 3:14] God has drawn the veil of an impenetrable blackness over these eternal moments and we can go no further, we can only bow and worship.

And yet, and this is breathtaking, He says; ... **Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:** (Mar 10:39 KJV) The disciples said 'We can' which only serves to show their ignorance at such a prospect, but He says 'ye shall...' How can these things be?

I'll try to answer the question in the next chapter, but before we leave this I will draw our attention to a remarkable verse in Paul's letter to the Corinthians; **For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink into one Spirit.** (1Co 12:13 RB Literal) Notice, baptism and drinking have come together again here in One Spirit. It was not an idle promise.... **ye shall**.

New Testament use of the word

Continuing our examination of the concept of baptism we can now take a look at the New Testament use of the word. In this exercise I am continuing to define the word 'baptism' before we join it to the phrase 'baptism in the Spirit'. My 'thesis' so far has been that the word has a long biblical history and that we must understand the use of the word before we can understand the expectations that 'baptism in the Spirit' would have evoked.

This time I want to go beyond the narratives in the Acts to pick up the word in the Epistles. If we can demonstrate that the word has maintained its mood and feeling we may say with some certainty that the word is used consistently throughout the scriptures; this will have deep implications for the phrase 'baptism in the Spirit'.

There are some references which clearly pertain to water baptism; (1 Cor 1:13-17, 15:29) but others are open to interpretation. Water baptism in the period of the Acts was usually referred to as 'baptism in the name of Jesus'. This was not a baptismal formula but a simple assertion that the person being baptized was coming under the authority of the 'name' into which they were baptized. To call 'the name of the Lord' over someone was to bring that person consciously under the authority of that owner of that name; **Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:** (Jam 5:14 KJV). There is an interesting cameo in the story of David which illustrates this idea. Joab was about to take Rabbah but is insistent that the victory should be credited to David; **and Joab sendeth messengers unto David, and saith, 'I have fought against Rabbah--also I have captured the city of waters; and now, gather the rest of the people, and encamp against the city, and capture it, lest I capture the city, and my name hath been called upon it.'** (2Sa 12:27-28 YLT) To have David's 'name' called upon Rabbah would bring the city under David's authority and rule. The inscription of names of boundary stones throughout archaeology has the same purpose. To put your name on it is to stake your claim; **Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.** (Rev 3:12 KJV) 'baptism in the name' is to bring that person publically under the authority of 'the name'. Peter's first proclamation is a no compromise demand; **Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.** (Act 2:38 KJV) It would be a challenging question to ask whether we see 'water baptism' in this light today? The link between baptism and 'the name' continues throughout the Acts and into the Epistles; Acts 8:12-16, 10:48, 19:5, 22:16, 1 Cor 1:13-15.

However there are two occasions in the Epistles where the construction is changed dramatically and these passages have been the subject of disagreement as to their application; we will need to examine these.

1. Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. (Rom 6:3-6 KJV)

The phrase 'in the name' is missing from this passage. Instead we have a reference to 'baptism into Christ Jesus'; not 'into the name' now, but 'into the person'. The question we must ask is 'is this water-baptism'? The claims for this 'baptism' are wide-ranging. It is said that this baptism 'baptizes into His death'? Would any, other than the Roman Catholics and their fellow travellers, claim this for 'water baptism'? It reminds me of the old saying that if you water-baptize a sinner what you get is a 'wet sinner'. However, Paul sees the consequence of this 'baptism' in a much greater panorama. This baptism 'unites' the baptized with 'the likeness of His death'. In a profound sense this baptism is not focussing upon the death of the 'baptized' but upon Christ's own death; the event that He called 'a baptism'. This is not 'my death' but 'His death' which is being effected in the person being baptized. Again, this has powerful implications.

2. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. (Gal 3:27-28 KJV)

Again the key phrase from the water-baptisms is missing. The reference is not to those 'baptized into the name of' but to those 'baptized into the person' of Christ. Again the implications are wide-ranging; those who have been baptized into Christ have 'put on Christ'. This latter phrase immediately links with the things 'taught' to the Christians in Ephesus; **if so be ye did hear him, and in him were taught, as truth is in Jesus; ye are to put off concerning the former behaviour the old man, that is corrupt according to the desires of the deceit, and to be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and to put on the new man, which, according to God, was created in righteousness and kindness of the truth.** (Eph 4:21-24 YLT) Again, other than the Roman Catholics, no one would attribute these events to water-baptism. We also see the consequence of this 'baptism' in that it has united those baptized into 'oneness' in Christ.

In both of the above we are seeing that familiar theme of 'baptism' effecting a union. In the first with Christ's own baptismal-death on the cross, and in the second with the 'body' of His people who are 'one in Christ'. In fact both of these passages result in 'union with Christ'; union with Him in His death and union with Him in His Body. Each is a baptism 'into Christ' which unites the baptized with Him.

The theme is carried forward in another reference to 'baptism'; **For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.** (1Co 12:12-13 KJV) I have begun with the familiar KJV which seems to suggest that this 'baptism' is 'by one Spirit'. Some have used this translation to justify the teaching that this is a different baptism to 'baptism in the Spirit', but the original Greek phrase is exactly the same as earlier constructions; **For, even as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the one body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ, for also in one Spirit we all to one body were baptized, whether Jews or Greeks, whether servants or freemen, and all into one Spirit were made to drink,** (1Co 12:12-13 YLT) The Greek prepositions behind the KJV are 'en'-'by' and 'eis'-'into', but 'en' is most usually translated 'in' and 'eis' has the purposive sense of 'towards', hence the Greek reads 'in one Spirit were we all baptized towards one Body'. The purpose, or one of them as it suits Paul's teaching here, was to get everything into 'one body', the means was 'baptism in Spirit'. In fact the passage parallels the earlier one; **and all to Moses were baptized in the cloud, and in the sea;** (1Co 10:2 YLT) in which 'to Moses' is 'eis' and 'in the cloud etc' is 'en'.

The purpose was to unite them all with Moses and the means was 'a baptism in cloud and sea'.

In these references we see a persistence that baptism effects union. The 1 Cor 12:13 reference brings together a baptism and a drinking; the exact imagery of Christ's own baptism and cup. This is the fulfilled promise; **And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:** (Mar 10:39 KJV) If it should be countered that this is just a reference to a bloody death we need to remind ourselves that, so far as we can be sure, John did not experience such a death. But how can we experience his 'baptism and cup'? By being 'baptized into Christ'. We are touching here, a baptism into a baptism. If God really does have means of uniting us to Christ at the point of His death then it is dynamically true, not positionally so that **...he who hath died hath been set free from the sin.** (Rom 6:7 YLT) and that is the gospel in a nutshell.

We have two more references to study;

1. The first is more in the way of a return to an earlier one. **we were buried together, then, with him through the baptism to the death, that even as Christ was raised up out of the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we in newness of life might walk.**(Rom 6:4 YLT)

Young's Literal translation picks up the definite article and give us 'the baptism'. It also reminds us of an earlier characteristic that we have noted; all biblical baptism is 'baptism into death' and if this is true is must have a powerful impact upon our understanding of the phrase 'baptism in the Spirit'.

The Greek definitive article can have the effect of a backwards reference. 'the death' of Romans 5 and 6 is a companion term to 'the sin'. This is not 'sins' as events but the nature and dynamic of 'Sin' which **'by one man'** 'entered into the world'. Sin has its consequence in sins, and Death has its consequence in death, but we need to distinguish between the nature and the event. Christ's baptism (his cross) was a baptism into Sin and Death and in a manner beyond human expression He was united with it **Him who knew not sin he has made sin for us, that *we* might become God's righteousness in him.** (2Co 5:21 Darby). Again, we dare go no further... What a Saviour! 'the baptism into the death' however is a baptism into 'the death, His'. In this sense the Christian does not have to 'die to Sin'; he just needs to be baptized into Christ's baptism where He died to Sin. The Romans section carries the truth further forwards for we are united by such a 'baptism' into Christ who has already died and has already risen again (and if we were to follow the theme into Ephesians...) has already ascended, and has already sat down. It is wonderfully and literally true; everything is 'in Christ'.

2. The second is also obscured by our English translations; **in whom also ye were circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh in the circumcision of the Christ, being buried with him in the baptism, in which also ye rose with him through the faith of the working of God, who did raise him out of the dead.**(Col 2:11-12 YLT) We have here another reference to 'the baptism' and this one will add some more 'experiences'. This time Paul says his Colossians readers were 'co-buried with Christ' and 'co-raised with Him' and each time he sees the agent as 'the baptism'. He says 'you were co-buried with Him in the baptism' 'in which (the baptism) you were also c-raised with Him. Faith is at work here too, but the focus is 'the baptism'. Again we see the uniting power of 'the baptism' which unites us to a life that was taken down into death and raised from it.

The word 'baptism' is retaining its historical content. It is baptism into death. It is judgment upon the old. It is separation from the continuing pollution. It is an end which makes a genuine beginning

possible. It is a uniting process which links the baptized into the destiny of the another. It is co-everything; co-circumcision, co-burial, co-resurrection, co-ascension, co-seating in the heavenlies, and all is 'in Christ' and so may I be... 'by the baptism'.

What really happened at Cornelius' place

Do you recall the title 'what really happened at Azuza Street'? How about 'what really happened at Cornelius' place' There are several unique features about Cornelius, especially that this is the first comprehensive Gentile experience of 'baptism in the Spirit'. Perhaps we should justify that phrase first?

When Peter justified his entering into Cornelius house he did so in terms of the Holy Spirit's leading. He went on to justify Cornelius' experience by using the language of 'baptism in Spirit'; **And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.** (Act 11:15-16 KJV) This is a rich passage; it includes

1. the sense of suddenness; the Holy Spirit fell on them
2. a tie into their own unquestionable experience in Acts 2; as on us at the beginning
3. the identification of this experience with the phrase 'baptism in Spirit'.

This is clearly a repeat of Acts 2 but without the wind and fire. The language used to describe the narrative is very wide.

The story begins with Cornelius' command to send for Peter; **And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.** (Act 10:5-6 KJV) Peter gives more details of this event in Acts 11 and declares that the purpose of his visit to Corenlius was Cornelius' salvation; **And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.** (Act 11:13-14 KJV)

Cornelius would have been a credit to most churches today. He was devout, gave charitable gifts, was constant in prayer, fasted, had visions of angels. He also knew of Christ's preaching and miracles; **The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.** (Act 10:36-38 KJV)

But, apparently, he still needed to be 'saved' and for this he needed Peter's words. Cornelius experience, like so many, had been culmulative but was still incomplete.

Peter certainly added to Cornelius store of information; **And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.** (Act 10:39-43 KJV) This new information includes the facts that Christ has risen, will be Judge of living and dead, is the fulfillment of OT prophecy and, that as a consequence of faith in Him believers would have their sins remitted. This is a wonderful summary of the gospel and we may presume that Cornelius and his house-meeting believed; **Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he**

did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? (Act 11:17 KJV) The mood is pregnant; **While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message.** (Act 10:44 NASB)

The conservative Jewish believers were amazed that; **on the Gentiles was poured out (another image) the gift of the Holy Spirit.** Traditional Pentecostal denominations have found strong evidence here for their doctrine of 'the initial evidence' of speaking with tongues. The Jewish witness, seven in all, witnessed an epoch opening event; Gentiles had received the Spirit **just as we did.** When Peter reported this to the gathered saints in Jerusalem their response was significant: **When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.** (Act 11:18 KJV). There logic was God has given them '**repentance unto life**'. In the space of a few sentences Cornelius and his friends came to genuine faith and a repentance that opened the way to life. God's response was to baptize them in the Holy Spirit. For the reluctant folks back at Jerusalem God's response to Cornelius was conclusive proof that salvation was opened to the Gentiles.

There is a post-script to this story. Some years later at the Jerusalem conference Peter gave his evidence; **And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.** (Act 15:8-9 KJV) He boldly declares that what happened at the home of Cornelius was that 'hearts were purified, by faith'. This is new evidence; it was not recorded in Acts 10 or 11. Why would Peter make such an assertion? Because he knew that this is what happened when people were 'baptized in the Holy Spirit'. It seems that in the space of few moments, Cornelius believed, repented unto life, received the Holy Spirit and had his heart purified by faith. There is a dimension to baptism in the Spirit which has almost become lost here. God, who knew their hearts, bore witness to them by giving them the Spirit. This eliminated all differences between Jew and Gentile and brought in heart purity. Yes, they spoke with tongues and magnified God, but something had happened on the inside too; their hearts were purified by faith.

The Second Blessing Holiness people said 'Baptism in the Spirit produces a clean heart'. The Pentecostals said Baptism in the Spirit 'gives power for service'. Why quarrel? Why set one truth against the other?