

word of God. 2 And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, 3 Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them. 4 But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying, 5 I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me: 6 Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. 7 And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat. 8 But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth. 9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. 10 And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven. 11 And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Caesarea unto me. 12 And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house: 13 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; 14 Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved. 15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. 16 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. 17 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? 18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

## The Doctrine of Water Baptism

In the above portions of scripture we have seen several fundamental facts of New Testament doctrine emphasized. The first, the sign of having received the Holy Ghost since becoming a believer is evidenced by the believer speaking in a language he does not know, as the Holy Spirit gives the utterance. The second New Testament doctrine emphasized in the above portions of scripture, and in ACTS 19:1-7 concerns water baptism. This will first lead us into a discussion of baptism in general.

Let's read our text again noting the subject of baptism. ACTS 19:1 *And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, 2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. 3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. 4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. 7 And all the men were about twelve.*

The subject of baptism is a New Testament doctrine, which being misunderstood by an innumerable multitude, has caused considerable divisions among Christendom throughout this church age. There are really three aspects of baptism taught in the New Testament, all of which are really brought out in our portion of scripture of ACTS 19:1-7. We will cover this subject of baptism in chronological order as it is presented in the New Testament.

The first to baptize was John the Baptist. John the Baptist ministry can be read about in MATTHEW 3, MARK 1:1-11; LUKE 3:1-20; and in JOHN 1:15-34. The essence of John the Baptist ministry is summed up nicely for us here in ACTS 19:4 where Paul states: *...John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.* Paul in his first sermon to those of Antioch, Pisidia told them the same thing concerning the baptism of repentance in ACTS 13:23-25, which reads: *23 Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus: 24 When John had first*

preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. 25 And as John fulfilled his course, he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not he. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose. MARK 1:4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. LUKE 3:3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;... . Mark, Luke and the Apostle Paul in the above scriptures have all noted that John the Baptist preached the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins, looking forward to the coming of Christ Jesus. MATTHEW 3:6 and MARK 1:5 further note the following concerning John the Baptists' ministry: MATTHEW 3:6 *And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.* MARK 1:5 *And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.*

All who confessed their sins believing on Jesus, and were baptized in John the Baptist ministry were thus saved. Their baptism in water didn't save them, rather their believing on their soon coming Savior saved them. In John the Baptist's day water baptism was an outward expression of an inward belief in the soon coming Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and His forgiveness of sins. 1 JOHN 1:9 *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Those disciples whom Paul met upon his arrival in Ephesus in ACTS 19:1 were, of course, saved disciples, having confessed their sins, and believing on Jesus, even though they only knew the forward looking preaching of John the Baptist concerning Jesus Christ.

All four gospel records tell this of John the Baptists' preaching concerning Jesus: *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:* (MATTHEW 3:11). MARK 1:8 states: *I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.* LUKE 3:16 tells us: *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:...* . And in JOHN 1:33 we read: *And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.* We see here then foretold the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Jesus then comes on the scene, and preaches for approximately three years, and is crucified. On the third day after His death, being the first day of the week, Jesus arose from the dead. We then read this account in JOHN 20. JOHN 20:19 *Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. 20 And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. 21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. 22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:... . Jesus makes several appearances here upon earth for forty days after His resurrection, and ACTS 1:3-5 tells us concerning Jesus: *To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: 4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. 5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. ...8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. 9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.**

This baptism with the Holy Ghost, and with fire, preached by John the Baptist, and promised by Jesus Christ Himself in ACTS 1:5, happened on the day of Pentecost ten days after ACTS 1:5, and is recorded for us in ACTS 2. Before we read in ACTS 2, it is noted in ACTS 1:15 that there were about a hundred and twenty who are accounted for and noted in ACTS 2:1-4 as those that were all in one accord in one place there in Jerusalem. What were these hundred and twenty waiting for in ACTS 2:1-4? They were waiting to be

baptized with the Holy Ghost, as Jesus told them in ACTS 1:5, and they were waiting to receive power from the Holy Ghost, as spoken of in ACTS 1:8, yet none of these one hundred and twenty knew exactly what this meant. They were not waiting to speak with other tongues, nor were they waiting to have cloven tongues appear unto them, nor were they waiting for the sound of a rushing mighty wind. Yet each and every one of them experienced the warm rush of the Holy Ghost when they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance, as noted in the following account from ACTS 2. ACTS 2:1 *And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.* 2 *And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.* 3 *And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.* 4 *And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.* In other words they were all one hundred and twenty baptized, totally immersed, with the Holy Ghost on that day of Pentecost.

Paul writes in EPHESIANS 4:4 *There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;* 5 *One Lord, one faith, one baptism,* 6 *One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* Never again do we read in scripture of “*cloven tongues like as of fire*” that we read about in ACTS 2:3. The reason being was that this day of Pentecost was the day that the “one baptism” spoken of in EPHESIANS 4:5 took place. The day of Pentecost was the day that John the Baptist spoke of when he stated in MATTHEW 3:11 and LUKE 3:16...*he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.* The day of Pentecost was the day that Jesus promised some ten days before when He said, as noted above in ACTS 1:5 ...*but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.* This is the very same and only Holy Ghost whom Jesus calls the “Comforter” in JOHN 14:16; 14:26; 15:26; and 16:7. Note again what said told his disciples concerning the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, in JOHN 14:16 *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.* In short, the “one baptism” of the Holy Ghost, which happened on the day of Pentecost, is for ever. The sign of having received the Holy Ghost is speaking with other tongues as the Holy Spirit gives the utterance. {See again ACTS 2:4.}

Brother Copley writes in his tract on “The Holy Spirit:” “We no where read of anyone being baptized in the Spirit after the Day of Pentecost. Never! ...The question “Have ye been baptized in the Spirit?” is never once asked in Scripture.” And this is not the question Paul asked these Ephesian disciples in ACTS 19:2, but rather he asked them ...*Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?*

Let's return to our text of ACTS 19 and note the two questions Paul asks these unnamed Ephesian disciples in verses 2 and 3. ACTS 19:2 *He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.* 3 *And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.* Note this second question of Paul's here in verse 3 ...*Unto what then were ye baptized?* Paul knew that the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the “one baptism” he references later in EPHESIANS 4:5, took place on the day of Pentecost, and these disciples had already answered his first question stating that they hadn't ever heard whether there be any Holy Ghost, so he wasn't asking them any more questions concerning the Holy Ghost, but rather he was asking them about their water baptism. If they hadn't heard about the Holy Ghost, then they obviously hadn't learned much of the preaching of Jesus. So Paul questions them asking: *Unto what then were ye baptized?* And they were quick to answer: *Unto John's baptism.*

Paul then expounded unto them the doctrine of John the Baptist, stating in ACTS 19:4 *John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.* Paul then expounds unto them facts concerning Christ Jesus, His ministry, His death, and His resurrection, and facts about the Holy Ghost. In John the Baptist's day water baptism was an outward expression of an inward belief in the soon coming Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and His forgiveness of sins. After the resurrection of Jesus water baptism to a Jew was an outward expression of an inward belief that they had accepted Jesus as their own personal Saviour, His forgiveness of their sins, and that they had died unto the law

of Moses and were to be counted among those who believed in the resurrected Jesus Christ. Brother Copley points out that a fellow Jew will not believe that a Jew is saved if they are not willing to be baptized in water, thus when a Jew is baptized in water the unbelieving Jews denounce the baptized Jew from Judaism, and even from their family. They are referred to by other Jews as "the blotted out," having denounced Judaism and accepted the message of the Saviour. Recall also in 1 CORINTHIANS 1:22 that Paul writes: *For the Jews require a sign,...* . Water baptism was a definite sign unto the Jews that one had accepted Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour. {See again pages 59 & 168 of these notes.} Later Paul wrote in ROMANS 6:3 & 4 --*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 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.* Again in COLOSSIANS 2:12 Paul writes: *Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.*

ACTS 19:5 records this of these Ephesian disciples who had just heard some of Paul's doctrine: *When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.* They were baptized in water again, this time by the Apostle Paul, and this time symbolically identifying themselves with the resurrected Christ Jesus.

Note a pattern here emphasized in New Testament church age doctrine, and that being *...they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.* To be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus was the pattern ever since the day of Pentecost. Recall in ACTS 2 on the day of Pentecost that Peter preached his first sermon. This was part of the manifested power of the Holy Ghost that enabled that old fisherman, Simon Peter, to preach his first Holy Ghost inspired sermon. After hearing Peter's powerful Holy Ghost inspired words ACTS 2:37 and 38 records: *Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? 38 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.* Note again the pattern here in verse 38, that they were to *...be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ...* .

Philip, a man full of the Holy Ghost in ACTS 8, went down unto Samaria and preached Christ unto them. ACTS 8:12 records: *But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.* Again we see the pattern of water baptism in this verse for in *...the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.* Staying in ACTS 8 for a minute, we read the following account starting in verse 14 -- *Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: 15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: 16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) 17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.* Note again the pattern of water baptism mentioned in verse 16: *...they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.*

Recall the account earlier when Peter went to the house of Cornelius in ACTS 10? {See page 483 of these notes.} And Peter preached in the house of Cornelius. Then we read starting in ACTS 10:44 *While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, 47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.* In verse 48 we again find this New Testament pattern with which believers are to be baptized in water, which is they are to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.