
BIBLE TALK

This week the question is: **Does Holy Spirit baptism save men from sin?**

There are many, many things that could be said about the topic of Holy Spirit baptism, but this week we will focus only on one thing: Was the purpose of Holy Spirit baptism to save men from their sins? We will focus only on that.

JOHN AND HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM

Holy Spirit baptism was first mentioned by John the baptizer when he was immersing people in the Jordan River for the remission of their sins. Notice what the scriptures say about John's baptism:

Mark 1:4-5

4 John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching **a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.**

5 Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

Water baptism is under consideration. This baptism was to prepare people for the coming Messiah according to verses 2-3. Notice that water baptism is "for the remission of sins." If John's baptism in water was "for the remission of sins," then it was essential for salvation. No one could be saved without it (read Lk. 7:29-30).

Mark 1:8

8 I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Verse 8 comes after verses 4-5. This means that people had the "remission of sins" by being baptized in water before baptism of the Holy Spirit was even promised. Baptism of the Holy Spirit, therefore, is not "for the remission of sins."

JESUS AND HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM

Jesus is the next person to talk about Holy Spirit baptism. Just before He ascended back into heaven, here is what Jesus said to His apostles:

Acts 1:4-5

4 And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me;

5 "for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

The apostles were being promised the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but they were already saved. Therefore, baptism of the Holy Spirit is not for salvation. Holy Spirit baptism was certainly important, but it was not to save people from their sins. It had another purpose which we will discuss in a moment.

PETER AND HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM

Peter is the next person to talk about Holy Spirit baptism. On the day of Pentecost he himself experienced this baptism. What did he have to say about this?

Acts 2:36-38

36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

If you will read these verses very, very carefully and accept what they say, you will see clearly that repentance and baptism were "for the remission of sins." The "gift of the Holy Spirit" would come after the remission of sins.

Some say that the "gift of the Holy Spirit" is the same thing as baptism of the Holy Spirit. If this is indeed true, then the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not for the remission of sins, because remission of sins comes before receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit – in this passage.

The point is, baptism of the Holy Spirit is not for the purpose of saving people from their sins.

PHILIP AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Let's go now to Acts 8 where we read about a preacher named Philip. This preacher was inspired and could also work miracles according to Acts 8:6.

Acts 8:12

12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.

This verse clearly states that the people listening to Philip believed and were baptized. When they did this, were they saved from their past sins, or were they still sinners? Jesus said in Mk. 16:16, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved." If we accept what Jesus said, we must conclude that these people in Acts 8:12 were actually saved from their sins, because that's exactly what they did. Now, we read two verses further into the chapter:

Acts 8:14-16

14 Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them,

15 who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit.

16 For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

These people had been baptized, but they did not receive Holy Spirit baptism. This demonstrates that people are saved, not by Holy Spirit baptism, but by believing the gospel and being baptized in water for the remission of sins.

SUMMARY

We have examined four passages of scripture which all agree – Holy Spirit baptism is not for the purpose of saving men from their sins. Because this is true, it would be possible for baptism of the Holy Spirit to pass away without anyone losing their salvation. To use other words: since baptism of the Holy Spirit never saved anyone from sin, it would be possible for Holy Spirit baptism to be taken away without anyone losing their salvation.

Next week we will consider what the case of Cornelius and Holy Spirit baptism in Acts 10-11.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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