

Are Holy Spirit Baptism and Water Baptism One And The Same?

by: Steven J. Wallace

Below is a response dealing with the error that Holy Spirit baptism and water baptism are one and the same. It is an answer that was made in a casual email form and has not had the content changed except minor editing. Please consider the material and test it with the written word. Arland's original message is posted at the end.

Arland and Morris:

Greetings. I considered the article by Arland and have submitted some of my thoughts for you to consider in what follows.

The blue constitutes his quoted material.

<< I learned that John the Baptist said to all that came to hear and be baptized of him, that Jesus would baptize them in the Holy Spirit.>>

I have submitted this quote first because this is somewhat foundational to the argumentation. If I understand the quote correctly, Mr. Arland (presumably "Mr.") teaches that "everyone" who came to be baptized by John would then be baptized with the Holy Spirit. But consider this:

Mr 1:5 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. (NKJV)

All the land of Judea and those from Jerusalem went out to him to be baptized by him in the Jordan? I would ask Mr. Arland, when were all of these baptized with the Holy Spirit? It wasn't in Acts 2? For even if we accept his definition that "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit" means more than the apostles, or all the disciples, then we still only have 120 disciples (that is hardly "all the land of Judea and those from Jerusalem"). So, when and were did all the land of Judea and Jerusalem get baptized in the Holy Spirit? Now I suspect that Mr. Arland may suggest that all of Judea and Jerusalem were baptized with the Holy Spirit when they were baptized in water on Pentecost. Yet it creates more problems than it solves. These men who were baptized, for the remission of sins, were Jews from every nation under heaven and very probably had not been baptized by John's baptism. Further, John also said that his subjects would be baptized with fire. Consider:

Lu 3:16 John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whosesandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (NKJV)

Are all going to be baptized with fire? If the "Holy Spirit" is one element, and "water" is another element, I wonder if this passage shows that "fire" is yet a third element in the "one baptism?" Will Mr. Arland now accept three elements in the "one baptism?" If not, why not? That John's fire

baptism is in reference to the fire of torment and damnation rather than salvation is evident from the context:

Lu 3:17 "His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire." (NKJV, all passages will be from NKJV unless noted).

Now, If John's "fire baptism" didn't occur (or will not occur) on everyone whom he preached to, and yet be fulfilled and true on some, then why can John's "Holy Spirit baptism" not be fulfilled upon *some* rather than *all*? Surely Mr. Arland would not think that if one obeyed John's baptism and became a faithful follower of Jesus that he would then partake of John's fire baptism?

<< I learned that the baptism with the Holy Spirit was the gift of the Holy Spirit promised to all that would repent and be baptized in water.>>

How can Mr. Arland contend that the Holy Spirit is one component of water baptism but then speak of it as separate from water baptism in the above statement? Recall: **<<There is one baptism but two elements, water and the Spirit.>>** Yet if they are two elements of the same "one" baptism, then it would be called "Holy Spirit Water Baptism" and we would not say that one would be "Holy Spirit Baptized after he was baptized in water."

Mr. Arland may have learned such, but not from the Bible. Peter promised them the remission of sins and that the gift of the Holy Spirit would be realized (Acts 2:38). None of these people were baptized with the Holy Spirit like that select group of men in 2:1-4. If so, where is the record of it? The "gift" of the Holy Spirit is neither the Holy Spirit's person nor a baptism of the Spirit. If I give you a gift from me, it is not my person, but a mere gift. What gift is the Spirit's? It is possible that it was of a miraculous sort (i.e., Acts 10:45, 46) but not probable. More than likely it is the gift of salvation. See:

- *Acts 11:17 "If therefore God gave them **the same gift as He gave us when we believed** on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?" (18) When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "**Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.**"*
- *Titus:1, 2 "Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, 2 **in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began,***

COMPARE

- *Acts 2:39 in reference to the gift of the Spirit (which I perceive to be the remission of sins): "For the **promise** is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."*

The promise of what? The promise of the "gift of the Spirit" or "remission of sins."

- *2 Peter 3:13, "Nevertheless we, according to His **promise**, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells." What is the promise? It is the new heavens and earth or salvation!*
- *James 1:12 "Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the*

*crown of life which the Lord has **promised** to those who love Him."*

God had promised long ago that in Abraham all the families of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:3). This is promised and revealed by the Spirit and the fulfillment of it is certainly a gift from God.

<< I learned that God still pours out His Spirit.>>

Where did he learn this? There is a deep misunderstanding of the "pouring out of the Spirit" (Acts 2:17). Joel says "pour out the Spirit" and Peter in giving an explanation of the passage says "pour out 'of' the Spirit." God pours out of the Spirit in two miraculous ways. One is by Spirit baptism (Acts 2; 10). Another way is fulfilled indirectly through the laying on of the apostles hands. The distinction between Spirit baptism, receiving the Spirit through laying on of hands, and water baptism is very distinctly made in Acts 8:14-18.

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.

17 Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

18 And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money,

Consider these seven irrefutable truths from Acts 8:

1. Samaria had been receptive to Philips preaching.
2. Philip could work miracles (Acts 8:6, 7).
3. Philip could *not* impart the ability to work miracles to anyone else, thus the apostles were called.
4. Philip could *not* baptize with the Holy Spirit, "for as yet He [the H.S., sjw] had not fallen upon none of them" (v. 16).
5. The apostles could not baptize with the Holy Spirit.
6. Baptism "in the name of the Lord Jesus" is what the Samaritans did, but they were not Holy Spirit baptized. If water baptism and Spirit baptism happen simultaneously, then why not here? If the Spirit and the water are two components of the same "one baptism" then I beg an explanation of the situation in which the Samaritans were in? They should have had both elements when one element occurred, correct?
7. The apostles laid hands upon some and they received the Holy Spirit.

The above facts are indisputable from this clear text and such lays a bombshell in the heart of Mr. Arland's argumentation. Further, when we appreciate the above truth, we can see a further completion of the Joel 2 prophesy in imparting "of the Spirit" through the laying on of apostolic hands. Thus, even maid servants received the out pouring of the Spirit, but were not specifically baptized with the Spirit. Philip's own daughters serve as a case in point:

Acts 21:8 "On the next day we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him. (9) Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied."

Now recall that Philip could not impart this gift of the Spirit in Samaria, and there is no reason to believe that he could do so with his own daughters, yet, they had the Spirit and it is evident that they were not baptized with the Spirit anymore than Samaria was, but that some apostle had to lay his hands on them to receive the Spirit.

<<Question: If "born of water" means baptized in water why doesn't "born of the Spirit," mean baptized in the Spirit?>>

<<Question: Was the Apostle Paul baptized in Holy Spirit?>>

<<Question: Was the Apostle Paul one whit behind the other Apostles?>>

Starting with the last question and working up. . . .

"No," Paul was not behind any apostle. He considered himself the least of the apostles because he had persecuted the church of God, but his authority was just as binding as any.

To the middle question: It is not recorded so one cannot say by faith that he was baptized with the Spirit. However, it was never a prerequisite that one had to be Holy Spirit baptized in order to be an apostle. The apostles were apostles before they were baptized with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit simply guided them into all truth as they preached to others (Jn. 16:13). Matthias was chosen to Judas' "office" (Acts 1:20). He had the office prior to being Holy Spirit baptized. The main requirements consist of having seen the risen Christ (Acts 1:22) and being chosen by the Lord (Acts 1:24; cf. Pr. 16:33). Paul satisfies both of these (Acts 9:15; 1 Cor. 9:1; 15:8).

To the first question: No, "born of water and the spirit" means water baptism. Water doesn't save, but "water baptism" saves because it is by the Spirit's authority. Consider:

Matt. 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"

The Spirit endorses water baptism as much as any of the other person of the Godhead. The Spirit proceeds from the father (Jn. 15:26); but speaks under the authority of Christ:

"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come" (Jn. 16:13).

So, if one is under the Spirit, he is under Christ and the Father and if one is *in* Christ, he is *in* the Spirit. This destroys Mr. Arland's suggestion that we are baptized in the Spirit thus Holy Spirit baptized using 1 Cor. 12:13.

"For in [en] one Spirit were we all baptized into [eis] one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit" (American Standard Version)

It is useless to argue "by" (NKJV; KJV; RSV; Green's Lit. Trans.; YLT; JPS; etc.) or "in" (NAS). The one who is subject to the Spirit in baptism is placed into [eis] one body. Darby's version makes this point clear the way it reads:

*"For also in the power of one Spirit *we* have all been baptised into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bondmen or free, and have all been given to drink of one Spirit."*

In the Holy Spirit's power or authority we are all baptized into one body. . .because the Holy Spirit endorses water baptism into one body (Matt. 28:19). But also consider in Corinthians:

1 Cor. 6:11 "And such were some of you. But you were washed [baptized, sjw], but you were sanctified, but you were justified in [en, sjw] the name of the Lord Jesus and by [en, sjw] the Spirit of our God."

This washing or baptism (cf. Acts 18:8) is done "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (cf. Acts 2:38; 10:48; 19:5) and "by the Spirit" (cf. 1 Cor. 12:13; Matt. 28:19; Jn. 3:5). It is heaven's stamp of authority. Since we work in the Spirit's dispensation, we had better make sure that our baptism is "by the Spirit of our God." Water baptism is not Holy Spirit baptism, but can we not refer to water baptism as being "of the Spirit?" Water baptism wasn't Holy Spirit baptism in Acts 2; it certainly is distinguished from it in Acts 8 with the Samaritans and with the Gentiles in Acts 10:47, 48 too!

"Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days."

Yet, Mr. Arland's understanding would have these folks already wet with water when they were Spirit baptized! He needs to explain this or simply change his position to be in accord with revelation. 1 Corinthians 12:13 is only speaking about water baptism. It is by the Spirit because water baptism is "by" or "in" the name of the Spirit (Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 6:11). It puts us into one body or Christ like water baptism does that (Gal. 3:26-28). It breaks down social standings like water baptism (Gal. 3:27-28). Therefore, it is water baptism and not Holy Spirit baptism.

<<Jesus preforms Holy Spirit baptism when we obey>>

- Then the apostles were disobedient until the Holy Spirit fell in Acts 2 when they were Holy Spirit Baptized.
- Then the rest of the 120 were disobedient because there is no grammatical support for the disciples receiving the Holy Spirit on Pentecost save the apostles (Acts 1:2 and follow "them" and "they" on down to chapter two).
- Then the Samaritans were disobedient even though they had been "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 8: 16). Or perhaps Jesus was just slow to baptize them with the Spirit? (I speak as a fool).
- Cornelius and his household must have been considered "obedient" before they "obeyed" the command to be baptized! Absurd!

I don't know. . . I would have difficulty swallowing such consequences. The fact of the matter is, Holy Spirit baptism was not to save anyone, but to show that God had "granted the Gentiles repentance to life" (Acts 11:18). There is one very truthful statement made by Mr. Arland and that is, <<It is a promise not a command.>>

Indeed! Holy Spirit baptism was a promise, not a command. You do not obey promises but enjoy them. This was promised and the scripture is careful to tell us that it was fulfilled (Acts 1:4, 5; 2:1-4; 10:44; 11:15, 16).

I leave you with one more thought to show the infrequency of Holy Spirit baptism:

*Acts 11:15, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us **at the beginning.**"*

Think about it. . .why would Peter say "at the beginning" if Holy Spirit baptism was occurring day in and day out with conversions? Why add "at the beginning"? What is the beginning? If it is not the beginning in Acts 2, please tell us what it is Mr. Arland.

I hope this helps. Feel free to distribute my thoughts to anyone. I will be glad to consider what anyone else thinks.

Cordially,

Steven J. Wallace

The One Baptism of Ephesians 4; 5

When I was a child, growing up, we heard more sermons about baptism than any other subject. You would think that if any one knew the truth about baptism it would be us. And we were taught much precious truth, for which I am forever thankful. But did we receive the complete truth? As I got older I found some things I had been taught did not square with the Bible. For example:

- We were taught that only the Apostles and the household of Cornelius received the baptism with the Holy Spirit.
- We were taught that there were measures of the Spirit
- We were taught that the “all mankind” of Acts 2: 17 was fulfilled in the Apostles, who were Jews, and the household of Cornelius, who were Gentiles.

Later, much to my surprise, I learned that all that was not quite correct.

- I learned that John the Baptist said to all that came to hear and be baptized of him, that Jesus would baptize them in the Holy Spirit.
- I learned that the baptism with the Holy Spirit was the gift of the Holy Spirit promised to all that would repent and be baptized in water.
- I learned that there are no measures of the Spirit; the Bible speaks of the gift of the Holy Spirit and gifts of the Spirit.
- I learned that the one category not mentioned in Acts 2: 17-21 was race.
- I learned that God still pours out His Spirit.

That opened the door to the question, “If I had not been correctly instructed about the Holy Spirit, are there other areas that need to be examined again?”

How about the one baptism of Ephesians 4: 5? Have we received the complete truth or is there something further to be said or at least asked?

The One Birth

After being begotten by God through the Word, the seed, we must be born again. We must be born of water and the Spirit. I don't know of anyone, notwithstanding those who immerse three times at the initial baptism, who advocates multiple births. Although the Scriptures do not specifically say it, the likeness of regeneration to procreation would strongly suggest that there is only one spiritual birth. But the truth is often stranger than fiction, because in the one birth there are two elements, water and the Spirit.

I suggest that the same is true of the one baptism. There is one baptism but two elements, water and the Spirit.

Question: If “born of water” means baptized in water why doesn’t “born of the Spirit,” mean baptized in the Spirit?

Question: Was the Apostle Paul baptized in Holy Spirit?

Question: Was the Apostle Paul one whit behind the other Apostles?

The Typical Baptism of Israel

We find that the typical baptism of Israel sheds more light upon the one baptism. “For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, 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.” (1 Corinthians 10: 1, 2) Here we find one baptism but two elements. The cloud, which was a pillar of fire by night, represented more than water vapor.

But you say, give me a Scripture; I want something more concrete.

1 Corinthians 12: 13

“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.”

But you say, “It does not say ‘in’, it says, “by’.”

Does it really?

First: my American Standard Version gives the alternate reading as “in”.

Second: I am not a Greek scholar but my interlinear gives the following:

Matthew 3: 11 with the Holy Spirit and fire; en pneumatī hagio kai puri.

Mark 1: 8 with the Holy Spirit; en pneumatic hagio.

Luke 3: 16 with the Holy Spirit and fire; en pneumatī hagio kai puri.

John 1: 33 in the Holy Spirit; en pneumatī hagio

Acts 1: 5 with the Holy Spirit; en pneumatic hagio

Acts 11: 16 with the Holy Spirit; en pneumatic hagio

1 Corinthians 12; 13 For by one Spirit; kai gar en heni pneumatic

When one preposition, “en” is used in all instances it is worst than disingenuous to require a different interpretation. This verse plainly says, “For with one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.”

Jesus preforms Holy Spirit baptism when we obey

It is a promise not a command.

All Christians must receive the Holy Spirit. John 4: 13, 14; 7: 38, 39

Surely those of us who believe in three persons yet one God, or husband and wife, yet one flesh, can entertain the idea on one baptism but two elements.

God bless. Arland