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THE SPIRIT-BAPTISM RELATIONSHIP
IN ACTS

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology

by
Jakob K. Heckert
May 1961

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Approved by: Martin H. Franzmann
Advisor

Edgar M. Krentz
Reader

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

At the first reading the Book of Acts does not seem to present any difficulties in respect to baptism and the Holy Spirit. However, when we read more carefully, we soon recognize seeming inconsistencies. The Holy Spirit does not come to people in a uniform way. He comes to the converts before and after baptism (10:44-48; 19:5-6). He comes immediately after baptism and after some time (2:38; 8:12-17). What then is the relationship between baptism and the Holy Spirit? The data seem rather bewildering.

Our Confessions state clearly not only that the Holy Spirit works through word and sacrament (Apology XXIV 70 Epitome II 1 13 Solid Declaration II 48 65), but also that we receive the Holy Spirit through baptism (Apology II 35 Large Catechism, Baptism 41, cf. Augsburg Confession V 2). How do our confessions harmonize with the teaching of Acts on the relationship between baptism and the Holy Spirit? This is a second point of concern.

What brought this inquiry about? Last year some authors¹ raised questions in the present author's mind concerning the relationship between baptism and the Holy Spirit. They assert

¹Dix, Dom Gregory. The Theology of Confirmation in Relation to Baptism. Mason, Arthur J. The Relation of Confirmation to Baptism as Taught in Holy Scriptures and in the Fathers. Thornton, L. S. Confirmation: Its Place in the Baptismal Mystery.

that baptism does not bring the Holy Spirit. He comes through the laying on of hands. Since our Confessions state clearly that the Holy Spirit works through baptism, yes, comes to men in baptism, there was a conflict.

Most of the proof passages which these authors use to support their views come from the Book of Acts. The Spirit-baptism relationship in the Book of Acts needed to be investigated. Such a study would give firsthand acquaintance with the material and would make possible an independent and balanced judgment on this matter. The reason for concentrating on the Spirit-baptism relationship was the wealth of material available and the importance of this relationship for baptism. This thesis, therefore, is an attempt at an exegetical investigation of the relationship which exists between baptism and the Holy Spirit in Acts.

Some writers question the authorship of Luke. Since the question of the authenticity of Acts is not within the scope of this investigation, this study assumes that Luke wrote Acts and that Acts is a faithful reproduction of the situations which it describes. The twenty second edition of the Nestle text is taken as the basis for this study. Whenever quotations from Scriptures are given in English, the Revised Standard Version has been used. This was done for the sake of consistency. Differences between the Revised Standard Version rendering and the Greek text are indicated when necessary. Chapter and verse references without a reference to a book of the Bible always refer to

Acts.

In the thesis the "gift of the Spirit" and the "Holy Spirit" are used interchangeably, for the Book of Acts does not seem to make any distinction. The genitive *τοῦ πνεύματος ἁγίου* in the phrase "gift of the Holy Spirit" most likely is a genitive of apposition, "the gift, i.e. the Holy Spirit" (cf. 11:17). The word "disciples" usually refers to those Christians who followed Jesus while he was still on earth. The later Christians are described in different ways. When the word "disciples" is used of them, it is either in quotation marks or has some other indication that they are later disciples.

The first chapter discusses the mission emphasis in the Book of Acts as part of the background for the whole study. The task of the disciples was to carry the good news to the end of the earth. Behind them stood God working through the Holy Spirit. Chapter two discusses the various passages in which (1) baptism and the Holy Spirit are mentioned together, (2) where only the gift of the Spirit is mentioned, and (3) where only baptism is mentioned. This chapter forms the second part of the background.

The final chapter considers the possible relationship which exists between baptism and the Holy Spirit. The subject of inquiry is the reception of the Holy Spirit by Jesus, by the first disciples, and by the later converts. In this chapter lines emerge which indicate the kind of context in which the Holy Spirit operates to bring people

into the fellowship of believers.

Some of the major sources used for this thesis were the articles by Oepke, *Βάπτω* and Schweizer, *Πνεῦμα* in Kittel, commentaries on the Book of Acts, Bauernfeind, Bruce, Haenchen, et al., Barret, The Holy Spirit and the Gospel Tradition, Flemington, The New Testament Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and Lampe, The Seal of the Spirit.

Since the concern of this paper was the relationship between baptism and the Holy Spirit, the first approach in the collection of data was to the total concept of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures. Next came the study of the commentaries on the pertinent passages. And finally a reading of that material which concentrated on the Spirit-baptism relationship. There was thus a constantly narrowing concern.

A summary of the findings would be this: The Holy Spirit is not a passive gift. He gives himself through word and baptism. He has a mission from God the Father, to glorify Jesus, the Christ. This task he carries out through the fellowship of the Christians. Through the preaching of the word and through baptism the Holy Spirit lays claim to the lives of people and incorporates them into the fellowship of believers where he equips them for service. The baptismal context is the field of operation of the Holy Spirit, for in this context preaching and baptism take place.

CHAPTER II

THE MISSIONARY EMPHASIS IN ACTS

The Task of the Disciples

When we read the book of Acts carefully, we cannot but be struck by its continuous mission emphasis. The book commences with the mission command of Jesus (1:8) and concludes with a description of Paul's unhindered activities in Rome (28:31). For this reason some theologians summarize the content of the book with the phrase "from Jerusalem to Rome." Indeed this was the course which the gospel took. The disciples spread the gospel into an ever expanding territory: Judea, Samaria, Asia Minor, Greece, and finally--Rome. People from Jerusalem to Rome came under the shadow of the cross. There was also another movement, the movement from Jew to Gentile. This is quite pronounced in Acts. The work began with Jews. The disciples and the first followers were all Jews, or at least proselytes. Yet already in the days of Jesus the Jews rejected the gospel. When the disciples proclaimed salvation in Jesus, whom the Jews had rejected, the Jews persecuted them. After Stephen's defense all Christians were forced to leave Jerusalem except the apostles. During Paul's missionary journeys the Jews time and time again rejected the gospel. When they noticed the success of the gospel among the Gentiles, they became jealous and initiated persecutions against Paul and his followers.

Acts then describes a double movement: (1) a movement from Jerusalem to Rome, and (2) a movement from Jew to Gentile. The disciples did not reject the Jew. It was the Jews who rejected the gospel and forced the missionaries to turn their back on them and approach the Gentiles.

From Jerusalem to Rome

The thrust of the story in Acts is forward and outward. Our story begins with one person--Jesus Christ. He gathered disciples about himself, and shortly before he returned to his Father, he gave them a glimpse into his strategy: ". . . you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth" (1:8). They had the outline of their work; what they needed was the power to carry it out. At Pentecost they received this power. Immediately they "began to speak in other tongues" (2:4), a symbol of the gospel's universal nature. The disciples carried on where Jesus had left off. For some time the disciples stayed in Jerusalem, which became the scene of their activities. First the church was to make an impact on the city which God had chosen for his own. The people (3:12-26) and the leaders of the people (4:8-22) heard the witness of the disciples. The courage and power of the disciples made the leaders (4:13) and the people (3:10) wonder. Because of the impact of their witness the leaders forbade the disciples to continue (4:18). But the disciples could not be stopped (4:31). This refusal on the part of

the disciples led the Sanhedrin to arrest the disciples. They escaped death only because of Gamaliel's words (5:40).

The time had come for the church to move, but it was not yet ready to do so. God had to force the disciples to move. Since the Greek speaking Jews in the congregation did not provide enough incentive for the church to move out of Jerusalem, God brought about the incident of Stephen. Stephen, filled with the Spirit, became involved in an argument with some Hellenists. Since they were unable to silence him, they dragged him before the Sanhedrin and accused him of blasphemy against Moses and God (6:11). Stephen spoke in his defense. He accused the Jews of rebellion against God (7:51). When Stephen mentioned his vision (7:56), their rage burst into action; they dragged him out of the city and stoned him (7:58). A wave of persecution followed (8:1). Most of the Christians fled Jerusalem except for the apostles (8:1).¹ This persecution initiated the beginning of the second step in the mission of the church. Jerusalem had heard the gospel. Judea and Samaria were the next stages in the progress of the good news.

We do not hear very much about Judea; it is mentioned only once outside of chapter one (8:1) as part of the mission field. Most likely the gospel had reached Judea from

¹Jerusalem was the center of the church at that time. The apostles were the leaders of the church, the representatives of Jesus (15:4-29).

Jerusalem. But Samaria was important, for it was here that the first step toward the Gentile mission was taken. Those who fled from Jerusalem went about preaching the gospel (8:4). Philip was one of them. When he came to Samaria, he "proclaimed to them the Christ" (8:5). There was a tremendous response. Many people came to faith. When the church at Jerusalem heard of this, the disciples sent Peter and John there. When they arrived, they asked the Holy Spirit to come also upon these people (8:15). On their return journey to Jerusalem the two preached "the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans" (8:25). The gospel had taken root also in Samaria.

Philip, who had preached the gospel in Samaria, was ordered to meet the Ethiopian eunuch on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza (8:26). He had come to worship in Jerusalem, and now was on his way home. With his conversion the gospel moved also into Ethiopia (8:39). The gospel was on the move: Judea, Samaria, Ethiopia in rapid succession.

The spread of the Gospel to Judea and Samaria was followed by the conversion of Paul (9:1-19) and of Cornelius (10:1-48), both of decisive importance for the mission of the church. The conversion of Cornelius became the basic argument used by the church for the Gentile mission (10:47; 11:17; 15:7-11). The conversion of Paul presented the church with a man who was to undertake the task of Gentile missions. During this time too a new missionary base was established. Because of the persecution in Jerusalem some of the disciples

went as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch; they spoke only to Jews. But the men from Cyprus and Cyrene "spoke to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus" (11:20). The Lord caused a great number of them to come to faith (11:21). The church at Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch. He strengthened the Christians there and urged them to remain faithful (11:23). Then he went and brought Saul to Antioch (11:25-26). The stage was set for the greatest expansion yet.

During the worship at Antioch the Holy Spirit commanded that Barnabas and Saul be sent out into the mission field (13:2). This was the upbeat of the final movement--"Jerusalem to Rome." On their first journey Paul and Barnabas worked at Salamis and Paphos (13:5-12). Next they came to Antioch in Pisidia (13:14). Everywhere the gospel caused reactions (13:42). Many accepted it and followed Paul and Barnabas (13:43). The Jews however opposed Paul (13:44-45). The Gentiles were the beneficiaries of this opposition; they rejoiced and many believed (13:46). This same history was re-enacted in Iconium (14:1-7). The other two stations which Paul and Barnabas established were Lystra and Derbe. On their way home the two missionaries strengthened the new converts (14:21,22,24-26). When they had returned to Antioch in Syria, they reported about the success of the work (14:27).

While Paul and Barnabas were at Antioch some Jewish Christians from Jerusalem came there. They strongly criticized Paul's mission policy. They asserted that all people had to become Jews before they could become Christians (15:1). Paul's

whole work was at stake; yes, the total Christian mission had a question mark before it if this assertion was true. The church at Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem to present this matter to the apostles and elders. The two missionaries described the success of the Gentile mission before the council (15:4). When Jewish Christians again demanded that all Gentiles had to become Jews before they could become Christians, the council in Jerusalem on the basis of the convincing arguments of Peter from the life of the church and James from the Old Testament decided that the Gentiles should not be burdened with circumcision. The council asked the Gentile Christians to "abstain from pollutions of idols and from unchastity and from what is strangled and from blood" (15:20). This decision of the council became the mission policy of the church (15:28-29). The churches responded gratefully to the decision of the council (15:30-31; 16:4).

The second journey brought Paul and his companions to Macedonia and Greece. Philippi was the first stop in Europe. In this city two prominent people came to faith, Lydia with her household (16:14-15) and the jailer (16:34). After Philippi came Thessalonica (17:1) and Berea (17:10). Faith and unbelief resulting in persecution were the reactions of people to the message of Paul (17:2-3, 12-14). Persecution brought Paul to Athens (17:15). There he argued with Jews and Gentiles (17:17). Some laughed at him; others listened. The sophistication of Greek philosophers blinded them to the

gospel. But some believed (17:34). From Athens Paul moved to Corinth, another important metropolis (18:1). Paul contacted both Jews and Gentiles (18:5-8). Since the Lord revealed to Paul that he had a great people in that city, Paul stayed there for a year and a half (18:11). On his way back to Antioch Paul made a short stop-over at Ephesus (18:22) looking over the mission possibilities for his next trip.

After a number of days in Antioch, Syria, Paul left for his third journey (18:23). After he had passed through Galatia and Phrygia, he came to Ephesus (19:1). Here Apollos had preached for some time (18:23) but had meanwhile proceeded to Corinth (18:28). Paul preached the gospel for three months in the synagogue (19:8). When the Jews refused to listen, he turned to the Gentiles, with whom he worked for two years (19:10). God worked many miracles in that city through Paul (19:11). Many came to faith in the Lord, and "the word of the Lord grew and prevailed mightily" (19:20). The riot of the silver smiths was an indirect result of the impact which the gospel had made on Ephesus and the surrounding territory (19:22-34). When the Christian mission had been exonerated by the town clerk (19:37-38), Paul left for Macedonia to visit the churches there and to strengthen the Christians (20:1). Through Greece, where he spent some months, Paul passed on his way to Jerusalem (19:21).

On his way to Jerusalem Paul took leave of the various congregations, for he was told by the Spirit that he would be

imprisoned in Jerusalem (20:22-23; 21:4 11). But Paul was ready both to live and to die for Jesus (20:24, 21:13). He was ready for the final mission on which he would be sent.

Already at his conversion Paul was told that he would be witness to all men of what he had seen and heard (22:15 cf. 26:16-18). His imprisonment made it possible for him to witness to Jesus before Jews and Romans, small and great (24:24-25; 26:1-23). The tribune Lysias (23:9), the governors Felix and Festus (24:22; 25:20), and King Agrippa (26:31-32) recognized Paul's innocence. But Paul had to appeal to Caesar because of the Jews (25:11).

Paul made use of every chance to had to witness to Jesus. On the way to Rome the ship on which Paul was transported was overtaken by a tornado. When there was no hope left, Paul assured the hundred twenty passengers on board that all would reach the shore safely; only ship and cargo would be lost (27:22-25). What Paul promised them came true; all on board were saved. At Malta Paul healed the sicknesses of many people (28:8-9). When Paul arrived in Rome, he contacted the Jews. He wanted to speak with them (28:17). When they came to him, he proclaimed to them the gospel and persuaded them from the law and the prophets concerning Jesus (28:23). Some believed; others doubted. The Jews heard the gospel but refused to believe it. Paul warned them with the words of Isaiah 6:9-10. The Gentiles, he told them, would listen (28:28).

The book concludes with the triumphant note: "And he lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ quite openly and unhindered" (28:30-31). The message began in Jerusalem; in Rome the book concludes the spread of the gospel. Rome was indeed a fitting place for the conclusion of the book, for it was the heart of the empire. The preaching of the gospel in Rome was symbolic of the future spread which the gospel was going to experience. Thus Rome is not really the end of the book. Each new generation of Christians carries forward the gospel "to the end of the world." The conclusion of the book points again to the beginning: "You shall be my witnesses . . . to the end of the earth (1:8).

From Jew to Gentile

As the gospel moved from Jerusalem to Rome, constant tension accompanied its progress. The forward thrust of the gospel shattered the nationalistic restrictions and opened vistas of world wide understanding. The church was neither Jewish nor Greek; it was universal--for all people, all ages, and all classes. The tension between the Christian church and Judaism mounted as the church moved away from Jerusalem. When the apostles preached salvation in Jesus Christ alone, the Jews intervened. The Sanhedrin had the apostles arrested and brought to trial (4:1-21). Yet their order could not

prevent the disciples from preaching the gospel (4:19-20). The Sanhedrin were stunned by their reaction. The members of this body had to regain their balance before they could act more decisively. When they had gained mastery over the situation, they acted with haste. The Christian heresy was getting out of hand. More and more people came to hear the gospel. The second arrest might have ended fatally if Gamaliel had not interposed and counseled caution. But God was with the apostles (5:19). "We must obey God rather than men" was the motto of the apostles (5:29).

Central in the thought of Judaism was circumcision and the law. The choice of Abraham, the father of the Jews, and the exodus were the two great events in the life of the Jewish nation. Circumcision related the Jew to God's covenant with Abraham. The covenant was the expression of God's will for his people. Christians, however, were speaking of Jesus, whom they called the Christ, as the center of their allegiance. As long as membership in God's people depended on descent from Abraham and on the law, only those could become members who submitted to Judaism. However, as soon as faith in Jesus became central, the basis of Judaism was abandoned. On this basis there was neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free. The equality of all was a necessary consequence of this basis. The ultimate criterion was faith in Jesus, the Christ (2:36-38). Between these two centers of allegiance no reconciliation was possible. Sooner or later the tension would lead to conflict.

Not long after this Stephen, one of the seven deacons, became involved in a dispute with some Hellenists. Since they were quite unable to withstand his wisdom, they took hold of him and dragged him into the presence of the Sanhedrin. Stephen, accused of slandering Moses and God, launched a defense (6:13-14; 7:2ff.). His defense was such an indictment of the Jews that it cost him his life (7:58-60). The tension between Judaism and Christianity exploded, and the time of uneasy tolerance was ended. From this time forth Judaism more and more persecuted Christianity. The Jews used persecution and if necessary destruction of the leaders to rid themselves of Christianity.

This reaction of Judaism to the gospel had a double effect on the Christians. (1) They became estranged from their fellow Jews. And (2) they realized more and more that Judaism could and would not accept Jesus as the Christ. This probably was one of the contributing factors for the Gentile mission. It seems rather significant that the first approach to the Gentile mission was made because of the persecution in Jerusalem (8:4-5). When the apostles and elders in Jerusalem heard of the success of Philip, they sent Peter and John to Samaria. With the acceptance of these people into the Christian church, the church had taken the first step toward the Gentile mission. Shortly after this incident the same Philip brought another "Gentile" into the church (8:38). These two occurrences were ground-work for that

which was to come. In this manner God prepared the disciples for the mission to the ends of the earth.

The next step was the conversion of Cornelius. This person, a full Gentile, entered the fellowship of the Christian church. Peter and the other Christians may have hesitated to accept the Gentile Cornelius and his household into their fellowship. But since they had received the Spirit just as the disciples, who was Peter or anyone else to "forbid water for baptizing these people?" (10:47). This marked the acceptance of the Gentiles into the Christian church (cf. 15:8-9). The movement from Jew to Gentile had in essence already taken place. At the council in Jerusalem this state of affairs became public. The circumcision party was silenced (15:5-12). The council asked the Gentile Christians to abstain from what could arouse the antagonism of the Jews. Their guiding principle was God's love in Christ for them and all men (15:28-29).

At the time of the conversion of Cornelius, Jerusalem was still the center of the church's missionary activities. But the missionary work of Paul had its center of operation in Antioch. This fact dramatized and visualized the movement from Jew to Gentile. Paul had a different spiritual and topographical center from that of the Jews (13:1-3). Henceforth Jerusalem was only mentioned when Paul visited it, and when he was imprisoned there. The work among the Gentiles with Antioch as center was the full realization of what was implicit in the Cornelius incident.

Usually on all his mission trips Paul visited the synagogue first. It was his point of contact. There he met both Jews and proselytes. Whenever the Jews rejected the gospel, Paul turned to the Gentiles, who accepted his message (13:46). However, if there was no synagogue, Paul turned directly to the Gentiles (13:7; 14:14-17). Both Jews and Greeks were objects of the church's mission. Wherever Paul went, this was his policy. When Paul returned from his missionary trip, he related to the church at Antioch how God used him and his fellow workers to open "a door of faith to the Gentiles" (14:27).

At the heels of the first Gentile mission came the test of Paul's work. Some Jewish Christians had claimed that circumcision was necessary for salvation (15:1). This matter came before the council in Jerusalem. At the council meeting the matter was clarified. From this time forth the antiquated nature of circumcision for the Christian was exposed. It was still a problem; but its continuation was only a matter of time. The decision of the council not only strengthened the Gentile Christians; it also opened wide the doors of the church to all Gentiles. This decision committed the church to accept both Jew and Greek on equal terms in the conviction that before God there was no difference (15:8; cf. 11:17).

Macedonia and Greece were the goal of the second missionary journey. We notice a greater contact with Gentiles during this journey (16:19-35). This greater association with Gentiles also caused frictions (16:20-21). When at Philippi the

missionaries Paul and Silas were accused of causing trouble in the city, the authorities recognized that it was not the Christians who had caused it. Yet they begged Paul and Silas to leave the city (16:39). The Christians were vindicated before the Gentiles. They were not inimical to the interests of the state. Even though the tension with the Gentiles was on the rise, the tension with the Jews had in no way decreased. The Jews still opposed Paul and Silas wherever they could (17:13; 18:12-13).

The third missionary journey of Paul brought out in a dramatic fashion the increasing tension between the church and the empire. The opposition of the Gentiles begins to match and exceed the opposition of the Jews. During this trip all the residents of Asia heard the "word of the Lord" (19:10). The preaching of the gospel also had powerful repercussions among the Gentiles (19:23-35). Again the Christians were accused. But the town clerk reproached those who started the riot, for the Christians were manifestly innocent (19:37-38). As the Christian church stepped out of the confines of Judaism, it entered a hostile climate. The religious atmosphere of the empire was syncretistic. Christianity, on the other hand, was as exclusive as Judaism in this respect. It is no wonder, therefore, that the gospel created tensions between Christians and Gentiles which later (c.A.D. 64) erupted into a full blown persecution. The Christian church was persecuted by both Jews and Gentiles until it

became a religio licita under Emperor Constantine, A.D. 313.

Paul's task was to preach the gospel to Jew and Gentile without distinction (22:15). He preached salvation in Jesus Christ alone (26:16-18). The Jews saw in this a threat to law and circumcision. Then tension between Jesus and the law erupted again and reached its climax in the attempt to destroy Paul. The life of Judaism was at stake. If Christianity was right, then Judaism was superseded. If Judaism wanted to maintain itself against all odds, a clash with the church was inevitable. The stubborn maintenance of views on law and circumcision by the Jewish people made peace impossible. The Jews accepted Paul as a Jew (22:3), but not as a Christian missionary to the Gentiles (22:21). Over against such a person they shouted, "Away with such a fellow from the earth! For he ought not to live" (22:22). If the Jews had had their way, they would have destroyed Paul (24:5-8; 25:7; 23:12; 25:3). But they could not, for the Roman empire interposed and saved Paul. Paul placed himself under the jurisdiction of the emperor, and therefore he had to go to Rome (25:11-12).

Paul's contact with the Jewish leaders in Rome and their reaction to him summarizes the reaction of the Jews to the gospel. Paul speaks to them the gospel (28:23). The majority of them rejected the message of Paul (28:24). And then Paul told them, "Let it be known to you then that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen" (28:28). The movement from the Jews to the Gentiles is

complete. The Jews had their chance, but they rejected it. The scene at Rome is symbolic of the new era in which the Jews would become less and less important in the Christian church. The Gentiles would be taking over more and more.

God Works Through the Disciples

God called Abraham and made a promise to him. Through his descendents all the nations of the earth would be blessed (3:25-26). In the fulness of time God sent his Son to be born of a Jewish maid. To bring forth the Messiah of God was the purpose of Israel's existence. While on earth Jesus gathered disciples around himself. He prepared them to be his witnesses. Before he left, he told them to wait for the "promise of the father" (1:4). After the disciples received the Spirit from the Father through the Son (2:2-4 33), they witnessed to Jesus "from Jerusalem to Rome." The people of the Old Testament bring forth the Messiah. The disciples of the New Testament era proclaim him to all the world under the power of God's Spirit. God prepared the mission; he also carries it out. He carries it out through the disciples.

When we look at the book of Acts, we find the actions of God described in various ways. God is spoken of as the creator. This fact provided comfort for the Christians in persecution (4:24). It also provided Paul with a means of contact with Gentiles in the preaching of the Gospel (14:15,

Lystra; 17:30-31, Athens).

The emphasis on God as redeemer, however, is predominant. Creation has taken place, also the fall. God, however, did not want the death of the sinner; rather he wanted him to repent and live. For this reason God chose a nation who was to be the bearer of his message and the "mother" (cf. Rev. 12:1-5) of the Savior. This choice began with Abraham (7:2-7). In the Egyptian bondage God prepared his people for single devotion (7:17-19). By the hand of Moses God led Israel out of Egypt (7:35-36). But the chosen nation became rebellious (7:35; 39-41). Nevertheless, God brought Israel to the promised land, Palestine, the thoroughfare of the ancient world (7:45). There Israel was to be a witness to his glory. Israel failed in its mission as bearer of God's message. Yet God realized his purpose; he chose David as an ancestor of the Messiah (7:45-46). The faithfulness of God stands over against the rebellion of the chosen nation.

When the time came, God sent his Son into the world. He was a descendent of David (13:23) and a prophet like Moses (7:37). God anointed him with the Spirit for his task (10:38). He was to save his people from their sins. In him God's ultimate purpose was fully realized--the salvation of all men. Through Jesus God worked "mighty works and wonders and signs" among the Jews (2:22). Jesus came to do the will of God, and therefore God was with him (10:38).

At the appointed time the Jews killed Jesus (2:23). But God raised him from the dead (2:24, 32; 3:15, etc.), and

manifested him to the disciples (10:40). In raising Jesus from the dead God fulfilled the promise made to the fathers (13:32-33). He also elevated Jesus to be both Lord and Christ (2:36). At the end of time Jesus will also appear as the judge of the living and the dead (10:42). In Jesus God had accomplished his purpose--to restore all men to himself.

Before Jesus ascended to heaven, he told his disciples to stay in Jerusalem until they had received the promise of the Father (1:4). The Spirit of power they would receive for their work. On Pentecost Peter declared that the prophecy of Joel had come true. God had poured out his Spirit "upon all flesh" (2:17). The evidence for this was the Pentecost event. God poured out the Spirit through the Son. "Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which you see and hear" (2:33). All the disciples received the Spirit. In the Old Testament only a few received him and then for a limited time. Pentecost was a partial fulfillment of Joel's prophecy that the Spirit would be poured out on "all flesh." Every time someone received the Spirit the prophecy was realized more fully. That was what Peter may have had in mind when he pointed out the similarity between the Spirit's reception in the case of Cornelius and the case of the disciples at Pentecost (11:17; cf. 15:8).

The time of the church began with the gift of the Holy Spirit. The disciples received his power. God was at work in and through the disciples and apostles to bring man to himself. At Pentecost Peter stated, "For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to him" (2:39). The call to repentance and faith goes out to Jews and Gentiles. That Peter points out at the meeting of the council in Jerusalem. James summarizes Peter's speech, "Symeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name . . ." (15:15). God called Gentiles as well as Jews, for he intended to make one people of both. For the first Christians, mostly Jews, it was difficult to follow God in his dealings with the Gentiles. God had to overcome their resistance. This work he began with Peter. Samaria had received the Spirit through the apostles, and had been incorporated into the church, a token of things to come. The Samaritans were a mixed breed of Jews and Gentiles (8:12,17). If they were accepted, then also the Gentiles could come. Yet God felt it necessary to prepare Peter for the task which he was about to carry out. God prepared him by means of a vision. And he told him, "What God has cleansed, you must not call common" (10:15). The full implication of this statement Peter did not realize until he came to the house of Cornelius. God had called the Gentiles also into the Christian church. He had cleansed all men in Christ. Peter obeyed the command of God. He went with the messengers

of Cornelius, for he concluded that God was not partial in any way. Everyone "who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him" (10:35). All men are alike before God. His judgment rests on all, since they do not live by his will; and his salvation is for all. Everyone who fears the Lord and does his will is acceptable to God.

God revealed his impartiality through Peter. He chose Paul to carry the gospel to the Gentiles. Beforehand he had chosen him to know his will, to see Jesus and to hear his voice. That vision was Paul's call to be a witness for Jesus to all men (22:14-15). Paul was to carry the message to Rome. God carried out his plan through him (14:27). He opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. When the Jewish Christians challenged Paul's method, he pointed out that God had worked through him (15:4,12). God accepted the Gentiles without reservations; the Christians had no right to demand more from them than God did. At the end of his career Paul could point back at his work as God's work (21:19). God worked with and through the disciples to accomplish his plan (14:27; 15:4,12).

Whenever Paul spoke with the Jews, he pointed out to them God's gracious dealings with their fathers which culminated in the sending of the Messiah, Jesus. On the basis of this history he called them to repentance and faith in Jesus as the Christ. However, when he contacted the Gentiles, he spoke first about creation. Creation the Gentiles had misused, worshipping the creature rather than the creator. Their

past God overlooked; but now he called all men to repentance (17:30). He also granted repentance unto life (11:18).

God controlled and directed the work of Paul. He brought Paul to Troas (16:6-8). In Troas Paul had a vision: a man from Macedonia called him to come over. God wanted them there (16:10). He also kept his messengers and enabled them to carry out their task. Before Festus and Agrippa Paul said, "To this day I have had the help that comes from God and so I stand here testifying . . . what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass . . ." (26:22). On his voyage to Rome Paul received assurance that he would not perish in the storm, but arrive there. Moreover, God also had granted him the lives of the people on board.

The power of God became manifest also in healing; sickness, suffering, and death had to give way. God took over. The power of God was manifest in word and work (5:12; 19:11-12). When the people wondered about the healing of the lame man, Peter pointed them to God, who had healed him. By this healing God had glorified his servant Jesus, whom the Jews "delivered up and denied" (3:13). God was changing the lives of people. The miracles were living demonstrations of God's power at work. People were overpowered; and they came to faith. The power of God in word and deed restored people to a right relationship with God. Day by day the Lord was adding to the number of those saved. He brought men to himself (2:47).

God had also other ways and means by which he acted. One of these was angels (12:11). An angel rescued the apostles Peter and John from prison (5:19). Another time an angel led Peter out of prison (12:7-11). Directives come from angels to the Christians. An angel told Philip to meet the Ethiopian (8:26). While Cornelius was praying an angel appeared and told him what to do (10:3-6). An angel also carried out God's judgment upon Herod (12:23).

God spoke to his people also by a "voice." The voice of the Lord" addressed Moses from the bush and sent him to lead Israel out of bondage (7:32-33). Peter heard a voice from heaven three times, "What God has cleansed, you must not call common" (10:15). Later he states, ". . . God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean" (10:28). The "voice of the Lord" called both Moses and Peter to an important task--exodus and Gentile mission.

God chose Israel as his people. Israel was to be a holy nation. The Messiah was to come from its midst. Israel failed, but not God. The Messiah did come. When the time came, God sent his Son into the world. In Jesus God was active to bring about the salvation of men. Jesus died on the cross, but God raised him again and made him Lord and Christ for those who believe. He also made him judge of the living and the dead. On his return to the Father the Son poured out the "promise of the Father" upon the disciples. The disciples received the commission to continue the work which Jesus began. Through the witness of the apostles and disciples God was

restoring man to himself. In this history the action of the Holy Spirit is of central importance. For this reason we shall next turn to the study of the Holy Spirit as the power in the fellowship of believers.

The Holy Spirit is the Power of God

The Holy Spirit is central in the book of Acts. The work is used about 55 times. Wikenhauser thinks that the activity of the Holy Spirit is the theme of the book. "Die Apostelgeschichte schildert die durch die Kraft des Heiligen Geistes begonnene und von ihr gewirkte universale Ausbreitung des Christentums."²

The Spirit fills the church and the disciples. The source of the Spirit is God. Jesus was anointed with the Spirit by God (10:38). Priests and kings were anointed with oil for their particular tasks. Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit to fulfill all righteousness. God promised the Spirit to all people (2:17). He was not poured out until Jesus had ascended to the Father. Jesus received the Spirit from the Father and poured him out on his disciples (2:33). The Spirit came from the Father through the Son according to the promise (2:17-18). All those who obeyed God received the Spirit (5:32). The result of obedience to the word was

² Alfred Wikenhauser, "Die Apostelgeschichte," Das Neue Testament, edited by Wikenhauser, Kusz, et al. (Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 1951), V, 8.

the coming of the Spirit. The story of Cornelius brings this out well. While Peter spoke, the Spirit fell upon those present. At Jerusalem Peter stated that it was God who gave the Spirit to them as he had given him to the disciples at Pentecost (15:8).

The gift of the Spirit did not come independently of Jesus. He was the mediator of the Holy Spirit. During Jesus' presence with his disciples he instructed them through the Holy Spirit (1:2).³ When Jesus ascended to the Father, he received from him the Holy Spirit. He poured the Holy Spirit out upon the church (2:33). The fulfillment of God's promise took place in Jesus. From this Peter concluded that God had accepted Jesus as the Christ. Whoever rejected Jesus as the Christ refused to acknowledge God's working through him and the Spirit's being given by him.

God gave the Spirit to the believers through Jesus (2:33). The descent of the Spirit upon the disciples is described in various ways. The most striking of these seems to be the metaphor of "baptism." Shortly before Jesus left his disciples he commanded them not to leave Jerusalem until they had received the promise of the Father (1:4). The promise of the Father was the Spirit, ". . . for John

³There are differences among the commentators as to whether "through the Holy Spirit" goes with the verb "to command" or "to choose." The opinions are divided. We follow Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles, in this point.

baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (1:5). John's characteristic ministry was his water baptism. The disciples, however, would receive the Spirit from the Father through the Son. This statement of Christ's⁴ Peter recalled when he was asked about his role in the conversion of Cornelius. The descent of the Spirit on the hearers reminded him of this word of the Lord (11:16). These Gentiles received the Spirit as the disciples had received him. God did not make any difference between them and the first disciples. What right did men have to make any difference? The conversion of Cornelius and of his household may be considered a "second Pentecost."

The Spirit is also said to "fall upon" people. When Peter preached to the household of Cornelius, the Spirit fell upon them (10:44). At other times the Spirit came upon the believers in response to prayer and the laying on of hands (8:15, 17; 19:6). The Jews were amazed when they saw the Spirit fall upon the Gentiles, but they could not prevent the baptism of these Gentiles, for the Spirit had pointed out the way. God had called the Gentiles, too, to be his people. After the Spirit had fallen upon the Gentile hearers, Peter asked, "Can anyone forbid water for baptizing these

⁴In the Synoptics this statement is transmitted only as the word of John the baptist (Mt. 3:11 Mk. 1:8 Lk. 3:16).

people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" (10:47). Clearly there was no one who would dare to deny these people baptism after God had given them the Spirit. These people were baptized. They became the first group of Gentiles to enter the Christian church. When the Jews at Jerusalem argued with Peter about his going into the house of uncircumcised Gentiles, Peter told them how he had been led there. God had acted. The Holy Spirit fell on those Gentiles in the same way in which he fell on the disciples (11:15). Peter could not refuse to stay with them since God treated them as he treated the disciples. They were Christians on equal terms with all others. Treating them differently would have meant to disregard God's lesson and command. Peter could not but do what God commanded him. When the Jews heard this, they ceased their objections and praised God.

The main verb used to describe the reception of the Spirit is "receive." After his address to the crowd at Pentecost, Peter issued a call to repentance, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (2:38). Consequent to repentance and baptism would be the reception of the Holy Spirit. The disciples in Samaria had been baptized but had not received the Spirit. When Peter and John came there, they prayed that the Samaritans might receive the Spirit (8:15). Here the Spirit came upon people who had already been baptized. They received the Spirit a considerable time after their

baptism. When the apostles laid their hands upon them, the Spirit came upon the new converts (8:17). Simon too wanted the power to grant the Spirit. Peter told him that the Spirit is God's gift and is not obtainable by purchase (8:19-20). God gives the Spirit to all those who believe and have been baptized. The listeners to Peter's sermon also received the Spirit (10:47). Thereupon Peter asked them to be baptized. The gift of the Spirit preceded baptism. This happened for a good reason. This was God's way of moving the disciples into action. Had God not taken such drastic steps, the Jewish Christians might never have crossed the gulf that separated them as Jews from the Gentiles. However, when it had taken place, it served as a precedent for all times (cf. 11:17; 15:8). This was the basis and motivation for the mission work among the Gentiles. Paul in Ephesus found twelve disciples.⁵ He asked them whether they had received the Spirit after they came to faith (19:2). Apparently Paul was missing something in their Christian life which should have been present had they received the Spirit. They responded, "No, we have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit" (19:2). They had only been baptized into the baptism of John. Paul then told them about Jesus Christ, to

⁵Usually if the term "disciple" is used in the absolute sense it has reference to Christians (cf. 6:1, 2, 7; 9:10, 19, 26, 38; 11:26; 18:23, 27; 19:9, 30). This would seem to be the meaning also here. Yet there is something about these people that seems strange. They do not have the Spirit. How is this to be explained?

whom John was pointing. After their instruction, they were baptized. When Paul laid hands on them, they received the Holy Spirit (5-6).

To summarize: the people who believed the word of the apostles and repented of their sins and were baptized for the forgiveness of their sins received the Holy Spirit. But in the case of Cornelius the whole sequence was inverted. While Peter was speaking to the group, the Spirit fell upon them. Faith in Jesus may have been created in their lives. They had not received baptism. For them baptism came after the gift of the Spirit. Generally the Spirit was received right after baptism. If a person did not have the Spirit right after baptism, he lacked something. He then received him by the laying on of hands.

The Spirit whom the disciples received pervaded their total life. The words which are used to describe the all-pervasive power of the Spirit are "filled" and "full." The first time we meet the word in connection with the Spirit is in the Pentecost account. When the Spirit descended on the disciples, they were all "filled" with the Spirit, and they spoke in different languages as the Spirit enabled them (2:4). The Spirit filled their life and took over their speech mechanism. He produced the sounds which he wanted. The disciples could not but speak as the Spirit moved them. The gift of tongues was a consequence of their being filled with the the Spirit. When Peter stood before the Sanhedrin and was asked with what power he had healed the lame man, he was

filled with the Holy Spirit. He spoke to the rulers of the people (4:8). The speaking is consequent upon being filled with the Spirit. The Spirit guided and controlled the speech of the disciples. After Peter and John had reported to the church what had taken place before the Sanhedrin, the church prayed. At the close of the prayer, the place was shaken, and they ^{were} filled with the Holy Spirit. They all spoke the word of God with boldness (4:31). Filled with the Spirit they could continue boldly to confess Jesus in the face of persecution. As Paul was praying Ananias came and told him that the Lord had sent him that he might gain his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit (9:17). Shortly after this Paul appeared in the synagogue and proclaimed Jesus as the Christ (9:20). His proclamation and teaching were so powerful that the Jews were amazed. When they could no longer endure him; they wanted to kill him (9:22-23). Elymas the magician resisted the message of Paul when he was speaking to Sergius Paulus (13:8). Paul, filled with the Spirit, looked at him and said to him, "You son of the devil . . . you shall be blind and unable to see the sun for a time" (13:10-11). Immediately he became blind and had to seek someone to lead him around. When the Jews of Iconium stirred up the city and forced Paul and Barnabas to leave, the disciples were not disconcerted by this. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and with joy (13:51).

The word "full" is used in similar contexts. The early church chose seven deacons. They were full of the Spirit

(6:3, 5). The implications of this fact are not immediately apparent. However, when we read about Stephen's argument with the Hellenists, we realize what the fullness of the Spirit means. The Hellenists were unable to withstand Stephen's words. They had to admit defeat (6:10). When the Jews were about to stone him, he, full of the Spirit, was able to see the glory of God, and the Son of man at God's right hand (7:55). The Spirit enabled him to gaze into God's presence. Barnabas, a man full of the Spirit, was sent to Antioch where a Christian congregation had been formed. He exhorted the new converts to remain faithful to their Lord (11:24). A large company of believers was added to the church. After Pentecost all Christians were filled with the Holy Spirit, especially the apostles and teachers; theirs was the task of teaching in the church and preaching to all people. Speaking with power is traced back to the Spirit. Stephen spoke by the Spirit (6:10) just as had David (4:25). They made known the will of God. Apollos was a strong witness for the Lord. He was "zealous in the Spirit" (18:25). Boldly he was speaking in the synagogue. He proved to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ (18:27-28).

The Spirit enabled the Christians also to foresee future events. When a famine was about to take place, Agabus foretold it by the Spirit (11:28). The Christians who heard his message decided to help according to their ability. On his trip to Jerusalem the Christians kept telling Paul by the Spirit that he was going to be imprisoned.

They asked him not to travel to Jerusalem (21:4). Paul had decided in the Spirit to go to Jerusalem (19:21). Apparently the friends of Paul did not wish that he endanger his life. Paul had to go to Jerusalem, for he was "bound in the Spirit" (20:22). He was willing not only to be imprisoned, but also to die for the Lord (21:13).

The Spirit spoke through the Christians witnessing to Jesus as the Christ. He also gave Christians insight into the future events for the guidance of the whole church. Both forthtelling and foretelling have their place in the church, for both come from the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit spoke through people. In the Old Testament He spoke through David (1:16), and Isaiah (28:25). In the New Testament era he spoke through the disciples (11:28; 13:2; 24:4, 11). The writings of the Old Testament were as much the living voice of the Spirit as the individual Christian in the church when the Spirit spoke through him.

The Spirit spoke to individual Christians guiding them in their actions. When the Spirit wanted Philip to meet the Ethiopian eunuch, he commanded him, "Go and join this chariot" (8:29). Peter was pondering the words which had come to him from heaven when the Spirit spoke to him, "Behold, three men are looking for you. Rise and go down, and accompany them without hesitation; for I have sent them" (10:19-20). The Spirit had sent these men; he saw to it that they did not return without Peter. At Jerusalem Peter stated, "And the Spirit told me to go with them without hesitation" (11:12).

Who dares disobey the Spirit of the Lord when he commands? While the congregation at Antioch was worshipping, the Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them" (13:2). The church did what the Spirit commanded; it sent out the two men designated by the Spirit. Paul and Agabus met in Caesarea. Agabus bound his hands and feet with Paul's girdle and stated that Paul would be bound in this manner when he comes to Jerusalem. He prefaced his statement, "Thus says the Spirit . . ." (21:11). The Spirit was speaking through him to Paul and the church. In the case of Philip and Peter the Spirit was speaking to them directly. But at Antioch and at Caesarea the Spirit was speaking through people.

There were a number of other activities which the Spirit carried out in the church. The Spirit seized Philip and carried him to Azotus after he had baptized the eunuch (8:39-40). After the close of the persecution instigated by Paul the Christians lived in the fear of the Lord, and were multiplied "in the comfort of the Holy Spirit" (9:31). The Holy Spirit is the source of the comfort which brings about an increase of the disciples.⁶ The apostles sent out by the church were sent out by the Spirit (13:4). The Spirit was at work in the church. Through the church he carried out

⁶The genitive "of the Holy Spirit" is most likely subjective genitive. The Spirit is the source of the joy in which the disciples were living their daily life.

the purposes of God. At the council in Jerusalem the disciples recognized that the Spirit was active in their deliberations. The letter to the churches states, "For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us . . ." (15:28). The Holy Spirit was deliberating with them; he guided them in their decisions. On his second missionary trip Paul was guided by the Spirit toward Troas. Twice the Spirit prevented him from entering a territory where he did not want him (16:6-7). The Spirit directed the work of Paul. He directed the work of all the disciples. This is not always said, but it is everywhere assumed. He controlled the word and the work of the disciples. He worked through the disciples to accomplish God's purposes. In this Spirit Paul made decisions. He planned to go to Rome (19:21). He did not know how he was going to get there. He was willing to travel the way which the Lord had determined for him. Going to Jerusalem he was "bound in the Spirit" (20:22). This was Spirit's way. What would happen there? He did not know. But the Spirit led the way. That was enough. At Ephesus Paul told the leaders, "Take heed . . . to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you guardians" (20:28). The authority of their office came from the Spirit. He also held them responsible.

The book of Acts describes the Spirit as permeating the whole fabric of the church. The decisive moment was Pentecost. Jesus poured out the Spirit upon the church. He was the promised gift of the Father. After this event the church was

CHAPTER III

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BAPTISM AND THE SPIRIT

The Reception of the Spirit Before Baptism

It is interesting to note that the Lutheran Confessions have only two references which state that the Holy Spirit is given through baptism (Apology II, 35) and that baptism promises and brings the Holy Spirit.¹ Other passages state that the Holy Spirit works through Word and Sacrament (Apology XXIV, 70 cf. Epitome II, 1 Solid Declaration II, 65 III, 16). This reticence in speaking of the Spirit as given through baptism seems to reflect the temper of Scripture. There does not seem to be any passage in the New Testament which states that the Spirit is given through baptism. The Spirit seems to be associated not so much with baptism as with the preached word, the gospel. Through the gospel the Spirit brings about repentance, faith, and endurance in the Christian life. When we look at Acts, we notice a similar relationship. There is no causal connection between baptism and the Spirit. Sometimes the reception of the Spirit precedes baptism. At other times it follows. Usually, however, the reception of the Spirit follows baptism.

¹Martin Luther, "Der grosze Katechismus," Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche (2nd edition; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1952), p. 699.

Our first investigation begins with the passage of Acts in which the reception of the Spirit precedes baptism (10:44-48). To refresh our minds we shall give a synopsis of the material. Cornelius, a pious Roman centurion, was praying. An angel of God appeared to him. He told him to send men to Joppa and ask for Simon Peter. Immediately the centurion sent three men to fetch Peter from Joppa. In the meantime Peter also had a vision. God made clear to him that all people were acceptable to him. The Spirit commanded Peter to go along with the three men who would come to call him. When they came, Peter went along with them to Caesarea. Cornelius met them at the gate. After he had greeted Peter, he led him into the house. A great number of people were gathered. After Cornelius had told him the reason for calling him, Peter began to speak. While he was speaking to these people, the Holy Spirit fell upon them. They began to speak in tongues. Since God had made known his will, Peter asked that these people be baptized.

To judge from the length and detail of the treatment Luke must have thought this incident to be very important; in fact, at the council in Jerusalem Peter deems it basic in determining the mission policy of the early church (15:7-9). Chase calls this event "the Pentecost of the Gentile world."²

²F. F. Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952), p. 227.

Now let us look at the part of the chapter which is important for our study. "While Peter was still saying this, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word" (10:44). The adverb **ἔτι** emphasizes what the present participle **λαλοῦντος** tries to communicate. While Peter was in the process of speaking the Holy Spirit fell upon them. The verb **ἐπέτελεν** describes the sudden descent of the Spirit. Bengel,³ Nösgen⁴ and Steinmann⁵ feel that the sermon was not yet at an end when the Spirit fell upon them. The gift of the Spirit interrupted the sermon. Bauernfeind,⁶ Haenchen⁷ and Wendt⁸ assert that the sermon of Peter was finished when the Spirit descended upon the hearers. Haenchen⁹ goes so far as to state

³Johann A. Bengel, Gnomen oder Zeiger des Neuen Testaments, translated by C. F. Werner (Stuttgart: Verlag von Paulus, 1853), I, 624.

⁴Carl F. Nösgen, Commentar über die Apostelgeschichte des Lukas (Leipzig: Dörffling und Franke, 1882), p. 226.

⁵Alphons Steinmann, "Die Apostelgeschichte," Die Heilige Schrift, edited by Fritz Tillmann (Bonn: Peter Hanstein, Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1934), IV, 108-9.

⁶Otto Bauernfeind, "Die Apostelgeschichte," Theologisches Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament, (Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1939), V, 151.

⁷Ernst Haenchen, "Die Apostelgeschichte," Kritisch-exegetisches Kommentar über das Neue Testament (12th edition; Göttingen: Vandehoek & Ruprecht, 1959), III, 298-9.

⁸Hans H. Wendt, "Die Apostelgeschichte," Kritisch-exegetisches Kommentar über das Neue Testament (5th edition; Göttingen: Vandehoek & Ruprecht, 1913), III, 185.

⁹Op. cit., 298-9.

that the interruption of Peter's speech is a stylistic device of Luke to heighten the urgency of the situation (cf. 11:15). Whether this is so or not is rather difficult to determine. However, if we take the position that Luke faithfully recorded what had taken place, we would be inclined to accept his statement at face value. Most likely Wendt is right when he states that the Spirit fell upon the hearers immediately after the close of the sermon, perhaps even while the last few words were spoken.¹⁰ Since Peter remained "for some days" at the house of Cornelius, Steinmann feels that the speech of Peter was an introduction to further instruction (cf. 11:15).¹¹

The Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. Since the text speaks of "falling upon," Bengel¹² concludes that the Spirit must have fallen upon these people visibly. At Pentecost visible and audible signs were present after the Spirit had fallen on the disciples. The similarity between these two events would make it likely that the descent of the Spirit was noticeable. And indeed there was an audible manifestation of the Spirit's presence; the listeners all spoke in tongues (10:46). "Speaking in tongues" is usually evidence of the fact that the Spirit is present (2:4; 19:6).

¹⁰Op. cit., p. 185.

¹¹Op. cit., p. 108-9.

¹²Op. cit., p. 624.

Bauernfeind, Bengel, Beyer, Nösgen, Beyer and Wendt point out the reason for the Spirit's coming before baptism. If Peter had preached to those people and God had not acted in such a drastic fashion, Peter might not have dared to baptize these Gentiles and accept them as full Christians. This was a crucial moment for the Christian church. God had led Peter so far. Now he also guided him the rest of the way. When we look at this story, we see how God controlled every step. Cornelius and Peter did not act on their own; God was acting, guiding them in what they should do. Peter, therefore, could state that God had given the Gentiles the same gift as the disciples had received at Pentecost (11:17). When the Spirit fell upon them, there was only one thing left to do--obey God's will. This incident was of basic significance for the Christian church. Later it was decisive in molding the will of the disciples as they faced the missionary obligations to the Gentiles (15:7-9).

When "the believers from among the circumcised" saw what took place, they were beside themselves. Christians of Jewish background were surprised to see the Spirit fall also upon the Gentiles. They and Peter might have had great difficulties accepting these people into full membership had the Spirit not fallen upon them at the close of Peter's address. As it was, they could only marvel that God had given the Gentiles too the "gift of the Holy Spirit." It seems quite evident that with this reaction Luke wanted to indicate the universal

emphasis of this incident. Cornelius and his household were "representatives" of all the Gentiles (cf. 8:14; 11:1,18; 14:27). They were the "first fruits" of those which were to follow. God had poured out the Spirit upon the Gentiles. The Jewish Christians now had to accept this fact and live with it until it would become part of them. This was God's way, and if they wanted to follow him, they would have to accept this action too as his.

Peter and his companions heard the Gentiles "speaking in tongues and extolling God" (10:46). As the present participle seems to indicate, the speaking went on for some time. The content of their speaking was the praise of God. Nösgen reminds us that the phrase "extolling God" sounds very similar to "telling . . . the mighty works of God" (2:11).¹³ The people who listened understood them. Bengel¹⁴ feels that "speaking in tongues" has reference to different languages. This seems rather unlikely. The text does not indicate anything of this sort. There is indeed a great resemblance to Pentecost (2:4; 6:11), but the speaking in foreign tongues does not seem to be in the mind of the writer here.¹⁵ This "speaking in tongues" was most likely quite intelligible since Peter and his companions could hear them

¹³Op. cit., p. 227.

¹⁴Op. cit., pp. 624-5.

¹⁵Op. cit., Haenchen, p. 299; Wendt, pp. 83-90, 185-6.

praise God. Those present recognized the presence of the Holy Spirit in these Gentiles. God gave these whom the Jews considered a "lesser breed" the same Holy Spirit, whom they too had received. The "speaking in tongues" was full evidence of this.

In the Christian life "Spirit-baptism" is important, but it never stands alone. It is always closely associated with water-baptism. After the Gentiles had received the Holy Spirit in a manner apparent to all present, Peter asked, "Can anyone forbid water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" (10:47). The *μήτι* in the beginning of the sentence expects a "no" answer. Since these people had received the Spirit as the disciples had, who could deny them the water for baptism (11:15,17)? The Gentiles had received the Holy Spirit before witnesses from the "circumcision." This was justification for Peter to have them baptized without asking them to submit to the Mosaic regulations.

Here the gift of the Spirit preceded baptism. This is quite unusual. In most other instances in Acts baptism precedes the gift of the Spirit (cf. 2:38; 8:16-17; 19:5-6). The gift of the Spirit before baptism points out that God also wanted the Gentiles to become members of the Christian church. This incident is the only one on record in the New Testament in which the gift of the Spirit preceded baptism.

Water-baptism is so important to the disciples that Peter orders it to be carried out after the reception of the

Spirit.¹⁶

The gift of the Spirit is not a substitute for water-baptism.¹⁷ Upon the command of Peter the converts are baptized "in the name of Jesus Christ," as the converts at Pentecost were (2:38). Even though these are the first Gentiles who are converted, the text does not mention anything about circumcision.¹⁸

After the converts had been baptized, Peter accepted the invitation of Cornelius to stay with him (10:48). He was willing to go all the way, even to accept table fellowship with Gentiles, something forbidden to Jews (10:28). The wish of the centurion was granted. Peter accepted the consequences of his action. He was ready to accept these Gentile converts as full Christians even though they were uncircumcised. Cornelius was the first Gentile to enter the Christian fellowship uncircumcised.

It is through the express guidance of the Spirit, with the closely related method of divine revelation through visions and angelic appearances, that St. Peter is led to understand that the sphere of

¹⁶Nösgen, op. cit., p. 227.

¹⁷F. F. Bruce, "Commentary on the Book of Acts," The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1954), pp. 230-1.

¹⁸Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles, op. cit., p. 228.

the Kingdom, and so of the Spirit's activity, must embrace Gentile as well as Jew.¹⁹

When Peter returned to Jerusalem, he had to give an account to the "circumcision party" (11:2). "Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?" was their query (11:3). Apparently they were criticizing Peter not for baptizing Gentiles but for eating with them. Because of this, Haenchen²⁰ thinks that Luke is minimizing the protest of the Jewish Christians. He is of the opinion that they were actually protesting against the baptism, but Luke has them protest only against table fellowship. Bruce²¹ maintains that the "thought of eating with Gentiles" was repulsive and repugnant to the Jew since their food was not kosher. Eating with Gentiles also would tie in with the vision of Peter on the roof of Simon's house (10:10-16). When Peter replied to the charge, he simply told what happened. Justification for his action was the action of God.

When Peter came to the incident of the Spirit's falling upon the hearers, he said, "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning" (11:15). In chapter ten the writer states that the Holy Spirit fell

¹⁹G. W. H. Lampe, "The Holy Spirit in the Writings of St. Luke," Studies in the Gospels, edited by D. E. Nineham (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955), pp. 196-7.

²⁰Op. cit., p. 299.

²¹Op. cit., p. 234.

on them "while Peter was still saying this" (10:44). There seems to be a conflict between the two accounts. Haenchen²² assumes that Luke wanted to impress the decisive nature of the Spirit's descent on his readers. We should, however, not press the infinitive ἄρξαομαι, for it may be a "Semitizing redundant auxiliary" (cf. 2:4).²³ There need not be any tension between the two accounts. Both state that the Spirit fell upon the hearers while Peter spoke the last words. The second account lays less stress on the fact of the occurrence rather than on the exact time of the Spirit's descent. The ἐν ἀρχῇ in this verse refers to Pentecost (cf. 10:47). The Holy Spirit fell on the Gentiles in the same way in which he descended on the disciples at Pentecost.

When Peter recounted the Cornelius incident, he made reference to the words of Christ, "John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (11:16 cf. 1:8). The occurrence at Caesarea too was a fulfillment of the promise of the risen Lord. The Holy Spirit was active in bringing to remembrance what Christ taught the disciples (John 14:26). The Holy Spirit brought Peter to see that the Gentiles were also included in this promise. The promise to the disciples was also for the Gentiles. God had accepted the Gentiles. Peter followed God's guidance.

²²Bruce, The Book of Acts, op. cit., p. 300.

²³Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles, op. cit., p. 233.

There is no mention of baptism in this section, but it may very well be implied in verse 17 (cf. 10:47).

In the Cornelius incident God had acted and shown the disciples the way. Peter was willing to follow God's guidance. He accepted the Gentiles as full Christians. His task it was to convince the other disciples.

The Reception of the Spirit after Baptism

We have just discussed the descent of the Holy Spirit upon people before baptism. More important and more numerous are the passages which mention the reception of the Spirit after baptism.

The first reference to baptism and the Holy Spirit which we shall consider here is 2:37-38. This passage describes the situation after the Pentecost address of Peter.²⁴ When people came together, they heard an unusual speech. Some understood it; others did not. They thought that the disciples were drunk. Peter stood up and corrected them. The Holy Spirit, whom God had promised, had been poured out before their eyes. The giver of the Spirit was Jesus, who had received him from the Father. This Jesus God had made both Christ and Lord. Him they had crucified. When they heard this, they asked, "Brethren, what shall we do?" (2:37). Peter responded,

²⁴The prior reference to baptism and the Holy Spirit (1:5) we shall treat in connection with "The Gift of the Spirit without Mention of Baptism."

"Repent, and be baptized . . . and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (2:38). Those who believed the word of Peter were baptized.

This is a summary of the passage. Now we turn to the detailed study. When those present heard the words of Peter, they were convicted of their guilt in the death of Jesus. They were "cut to the heart" (cf. Ps. 108:16, LXX). Shocked to hear that they had murdered their Messiah, they asked the disciples what they should do. With this question they made public what went on in their hearts. Since they were helpless in this situation, they asked the disciples to give them direction. That they asked the disciples for direction and called them "brothers" seems to indicate that the words of Peter had won them over.

Responding to their inquiry, Peter told them what they should do: (1) repent and (2) be baptized upon the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. Consequent to baptism they would receive the Holy Spirit. "Repent"--this call both the Baptist (Mt. 3:2) and Jesus had already sounded (Mt. 4:17). It was part of the good news (3:19; 8:22; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20). Repentance is the "condition" for God's forgiveness. Without repentance there is no forgiveness. Submission to baptism is an expression of repentance.

The baptism at Pentecost was associated with the name of Jesus, the Christ. Calling out the Lord's name over the convert in baptism submits the person to the power of Jesus. At the same time the convert also confessed Jesus as the

Messiah (22:16). The name of the Lord came from the lips of the baptizer and the baptized. The former acted in the name of Christ, with his authority, and the latter submitted himself to Christ. Since this baptism took place in the era of the Spirit, the baptized received the gift of the Spirit (cf. 8:20; 10:45; 11:17; 19:5-6). The promise of the Spirit was given to all who would respond to the call of the gospel. Repentance and baptism as a whole gave forgiveness of sins, because "for the forgiveness of your sins" goes with both verbs, "repent" and "be baptized."²⁵

Usually the gift of the Spirit followed right after baptism (2:38; 19:5-6). Where the situation was different, there was good reason for it (8:16; 10:44). In two out of the four instances mentioned the presence of the Holy Spirit manifested itself in speaking with tongues (10:44-46; 19:5-6). In the other two no such manifestation is mentioned. There are also a number of passages in which only baptism is mentioned without the gift of the Spirit (2:41; 8:36; 9:18; 16:15,33; 18:8; 22:16). On the basis of these data Haenchen²⁶ asserts that at the time of Luke the Holy Spirit descended on people without any externally visible signs. The presence of the visible signs was an exception. On the basis of the evidence another conclusion is possible. Luke's account goes

²⁵Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles, op. cit., pp. 97-8.

²⁶Op. cit., p. 147.

back to the apostolic times, for it betrays a "primitive conception of baptism and the Spirit."²⁷ Since Luke's concept of the Spirit is not as rich and variegated as Paul's even though Acts was most likely written later than many of Paul's epistles, we would be inclined to agree with Bruce against Haenchen. Luke is very likely reproducing the early apostolic conception of baptism and the Holy Spirit.

Usually the gift of the Spirit follows baptism (cf. 2:38; 8:16-17; 19:5-6). The interval between baptism and the gift of the Spirit varies; the Spirit may be given immediately after baptism (2:38) or as much as several days later (8:12, 16-17).

We shall now look a little closer at this last passage. When Philip preached Christ to the Samaritans, many who believed his preaching were baptized (8:12). When the disciples at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John there. When they had arrived, they prayed that the Samaritan converts might receive the Holy Spirit. Then they laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

We look closer at the text. "When the apostle at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent to them Peter and John . . ." (8:14). "Samaria had received the Word of God," the text states. Most likely

²⁷Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles, op. cit., pp. 97-8.

it was not all of Samaria, but only a certain section, perhaps Sebaste and its environs. Yet, according to Christian tradition, whatever country had Christian congregations was considered Christian (cf. Rom. 15:26; 1 Cor. 9:2). Bauernfeind²⁸ feels that the number of the converts could not have been very large, since otherwise Luke would have mentioned it. This may be so. The disciples sent Peter and John into Samaria. Through these two men the disciples wanted to convince themselves of the truth concerning the report which they had heard.²⁹ Wikenhauser³⁰ and Steinmann³¹ go further than this. They claim that Peter and John were sent to establish a connection between the new church and the mother church in Jerusalem. Samaria was half Gentile. Accepting these Samaritans into the fellowship of the disciples meant accepting "half Jews." It may well be that this concern was part of the reason why the disciples sent Peter and John into Samaria. The purpose of the trip was not to give the Holy Spirit as someone may infer.³² The apostles were watching over the spread of the gospel. It was

²⁸Op. cit., p. 126.

²⁹Nösgen, op. cit., p. 182.

³⁰Alfred Wikenhauser, "Die Apostelgeschichte," Das Neue Testament, edited by Wikenhauser, Kusz, et al. (Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 1951), V, 78.

³¹Op. cit., p. 81.

³²Ibid.

their concern that the mission follow the paths which the Lord had laid out for it. For this reason the disciples were also concerned with the converts in Samaria. Not everything started with the apostles; but everything focused on them.³³

When the apostles arrived in Samaria, they discovered that the Samaritans had not yet received the Holy Spirit. They had only been baptized (8:12). This seems rather unusual at first. Scholars using the higher critical method really have a "feast" on this passage. Käsemann is sure that he has the answer to the difficulty.³⁴ He reconstructs the text in the following way: Without authorization Philip went to Samaria and evangelized the people. When the disciples in Jerusalem heard of his success, they faced a dilemma. What should they do? Should they accept or refuse to accept them into their fellowship? If they decided not to accept them, they would have a new church on their hands, a competitor. If they accepted, they would silently encourage unauthorized evangelization. Since the disciples did receive the Samaritans into their fellowship, Luke could not take the narrative as it was. He had to remold it or else he would have endorsed unauthorized activities in his own day. He presents Philip as a person who can give only water

³³Bauernfeind, op. cit., p. 126.

³⁴Ernst Käsemann, "Die Johannesjünger in Ephesus," Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1960), I, 165-66.

baptism. Peter and John have to give the Spirit. The authority of the apostles and their legitimate successors was safeguarded, even though Philip's picture had been somewhat distorted. We have given such a lengthy description of Käsemann's reconstruction to show where a person can end up when he attempts to look "behind" the text. Ultimately there is no check for such reconstruction. For this reason we want to stay away from reconstructing the text in this fashion. We have to face the text and stay with it.

Where lies the solution of this difficulty? The Samaritans had been baptized, but the gift of the Spirit did not come. / According to Haenchen³⁵ Luke here does not mean the Holy Spirit as such but the ecstatic manifestation of the Spirit. These people did not speak in tongues, and therefore the presence of the Spirit could not be verified. Wendt³⁶ advanced this view earlier. He thinks that the term "Holy Spirit" here has reference to a miraculous, noticeable gift (cf. v. 18; 2:4ff; 10:4ff; 19:6). Bruce,³⁷ The Acts of the Apostles, concludes that we have here a reference to the external manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Nösgen³⁸ feels that the converts in Samaria did receive the Holy Spirit, but

³⁵Op. cit., p. 254.

³⁶Op. cit., p. 157.

³⁷Op. cit., pp. 186-7.

³⁸Op. cit., p. 183.

that he did not show his presence in ecstatic speech. Philip may have left this matter up to God whether he wanted to give them the ecstatic Spirit or not. The apostles, however, wanted them to have the gift of the Spirit then and there.

When we look at the text, we notice that Luke does not mention any speaking in tongues even after the apostles had imparted to them the "ecstatic Spirit." If they had received the Holy Spirit after baptism, then they could have received only the ecstatic Spirit when the apostles laid their hands on them. But where was the evidence of this ecstatic Spirit? The solution which the scholars make creates more difficulties than it solves. The solution which the text suggests seems to be more satisfactory. The converts in Samaria did not receive the Holy Spirit right after baptism. They had to wait until Peter and John came to Samaria to impart to them the gift of the Spirit. In Acts the gift of the Spirit does not come through baptism nor is it a necessary consequence of baptism (cf. 2:4; 10:44-48). Baptism and the gift of the Spirit can be separated for a long time. Yes, the gift of the Spirit can precede baptism. It would, therefore, seem possible that Luke could separate baptism and the gift of the Spirit by an interval of time without destroying the relationship between the two factors. Philip baptized these Christians. But only when they were received into full membership of the Christian fellowship did they receive the Spirit. In this case it was the apostles

who transmitted the Holy Spirit to these people. People who became full members of the Christian church received the Holy Spirit. This would seem to be the emphasis of this incident, not the division of the Spirit into an ecstatic and a non-ecstatic part. Those who receive the Spirit receive him completely, not in parts. Bauernfeind seems to be of the same opinion. He states,

Lukas hält es nicht für ganz unmöglich, dasz christliche Taufe und Geistesbegabung voneinander getrennt sind. Das wird für ihn eine Ausnahme sein, aber vielleicht doch eine nicht ganz seltene.³⁹

The difficulties of the third section (19:1-6) are equal to those of the second, if not greater. When Paul came to Ephesus, ". . . he found some disciples" (19:1). The absolute use of the word *μαθητής* seems to suggest that these people were Christians (cf. 6:1,2,7; 9:10,19,26,38; 11:26; 18:23,27; 19:9,30). Paul inquired of them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" (19:2). This question seems rather sudden and startling. The text does not give any clue which would indicate what made Paul ask the question. Bauernfeind⁴⁰ reminds us that we should not ask the text questions which it will not answer. The question of Paul should not be a surprise to us. There appears to be a similarity between these twelve disciples and Apollos, "who had been instructed in the way of the Lord" (18:26). The

³⁹Op. cit., p. 126.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 229.

aorist participle *πιστευούσας* is inceptive, "on coming to faith did you receive the Holy Spirit?" Luke could just as well have written "when you were baptized" instead of "when you believed."⁴¹ For Luke baptism and the gift of the Spirit were closely connected. These people answered Paul, "No, we have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit" (19:2). These people are Christians. How was it possible that they never heard of the Holy Spirit? Even if they had been disciples of John, they should have known something about the Spirit, for John spoke of him (cf. Mk. 1:8; Mt. 3:11-12; Lk. 3:15-17). On account of this difficulty most commentators feel that either we have here an abbreviated form of response or something has gone wrong with the transmission of the text. Bauernfeind would most likely be representative of this latter group.⁴² There seems to be only one commentator who would take the text as it stands, and that is Haenchen.⁴³ This he does for a good reason. As it stands, the verse gives him a good reason to reconstruct the original situation. His solution is similar to Käsemann's.⁴⁴ These twelve were disciples of John whom Paul converted to Jesus Christ. Apollos may have been their leader. Luke, Haenchen avers, could not

⁴¹Haenchen, op. cit., p. 488.

⁴²Op. cit., p. 228.

⁴³Op. cit., p. 228.

⁴⁴Op. cit., pp. 166-8

write this, for as far as he was concerned there were no schisms in the early church. This reconstruction seems to load the text unduly. The text does say "we have not heard that there is a Holy Spirit." However, when we take *πνεῦμα ἅγιον* in the special sense as a reference to the Pentecostal Spirit, then we may be able to avoid this difficulty.⁴⁵ They knew about the Holy Spirit, but they had not heard about the outpouring upon the disciples. This is also what some textual variants seem to suggest, which have *λαμβάνουσίντινες*.⁴⁶ In this case the best interpretation would be to take *ἔστιν* in the sense of *πάρεστιν*.

Paul then asked them, "Into what then were you baptized?" (19:3). What kind of baptism had they received, since they did not know that the Holy Spirit had come? We might expect *εἰστίνα* rather than *εἰς τί*. The question of Paul seems to suggest a connection between baptism and the reception of the Holy Spirit. If they had received the Christian baptism, they would know about the Holy Spirit (cf. 2:38). Yet they must have received some kind of Christian baptism, since they were disciples. What kind of baptism did they receive? There is something wrong with the

⁴⁵Barrett in his The Gospel According to St. John (London: S.P.C.K., 1960), p. 272, states in reference to John 7:49: "John does not mean to deny the earlier existence of the Spirit. . . . He means rather that the Holy Spirit was not given in the characteristically Christian manner and measure until the close of the ministry."

⁴⁶Papyri 38 and 41, Bezae Cantabrigiensis, the Syriac versions h, m, g and the Sahidic version.

baptism of a person if he did not receive the Holy Spirit (cf. 8:14ff). The particle *οὐ* seems to support this assumption. From their response Paul inferred that something was not quite right with their baptism.

To Paul's question the disciples responded, "Into John's baptism" (19:3). "To be baptized into a baptism" is a difficult expression. Bauernfeind⁴⁷ thinks Luke wanted to show that these disciples did not understand Paul's question. This may be the case. Formally the answer corresponds to the question. In substance, however, they answer only indirectly the question of Paul. Maybe Bruce⁴⁸ has the solution. He claims that *εἰς* is an equivalent for *ἐν* instrumental. According to his interpretation, the response of the disciples would mean that they had been baptized with the baptism of John (cf. 1:5; 11:16; 13:24f.; 18:25; John 3:22ff.). This makes more sense. It would also be consonant with what we know about John's baptism in the New Testament. Steinmann⁴⁹ and Zahn⁵⁰ have a similar solution to the difficulty. These "disciples" had received the baptism of John, either from John himself or, what is more likely, from one of his disciples.

⁴⁷Op. cit., p. 227.

⁴⁸Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles, op. cit., p. 354.

⁴⁹Op. cit., pp. 230-1.

⁵⁰Theodor Zahn, Die Apostelgeschichte des Lucas (Leipzig: Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1921), II, 674.

From what we know of that time, we can see that there existed a strong following of John until the third century. These people probably belonged to such a group. By the time Paul encountered them they had joined the fellowship of the Christians. Since the baptism of John was pre-Pentecost, it was for repentance and a believing reception of the coming Messiah. According to the description which Luke gives of these people they were imperfect Christians at best.

Paul then explained to them what had taken place after the baptism of John. He also interpreted the meaning of John's baptism. "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus" (19:4). He pointed out the relationship between John's baptism and the baptism practiced by the Christians. John's baptism was for repentance. He told people to believe in the Coming One (cf. Mt. 11:2; Lk. 3:16; John 1:15,30). Paul uses "the Coming One" because John had used it. The conjunction ^υ ~~ινα~~ is joined to the verb instead of standing at the beginning of the clause. In this way "in the Coming One" is given a prominent position. The preparatory nature of John's ministry receives greater stress. According to the Synoptics John spoke only of the Coming One. But in the Fourth Gospel John explicitly called to faith in Christ (1:26ff.; 3:25ff.). Paul referred the Coming One to Jesus with the explanatory clause ~~τουτ' εστιν~~. Jesus fulfilled the expectations of John's proclamation. We may not find an exact correspondence to the words of Paul. He was not

necessarily referring to a particular statement of John. Paul used a summary of what John taught during his life. The whole life and work of John was preparatory for the Coming One. Baptism in his name was the fulfillment of John's promises.

"On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (19:5). They accepted the instructions of Paul in faith. The instruction probably lasted for some time.⁵¹ At the completion of the instructions they were baptized "in the name of the Lord Jesus." We do not know whether these "disciples" had been baptized into the name of Jesus. Since this is the case, can we say that they submitted to re-baptism?⁵² It all depends on whether we consider the baptism of John still valid at a time when the Christian baptism is in force. The apostles were not baptized with the Christian baptism. They only received the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. These people most likely received their baptism after Pentecost. After the Holy Spirit had come and Christian baptism was in force, the baptism of John had served its purpose; it was no longer functional. Whoever submitted to John's baptism after Pentecost, had not received a baptism which initiated into the waiting people of God, but had received a false baptism. When Paul baptized them,

⁵¹Zahn, op. cit., II, 675.

⁵²Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles, op. cit., pp. 354-5.

they received true baptism for the first time.

They did not immediately receive the Holy Spirit. In this incident the Holy Spirit came upon the people through the laying on of hands. "And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spoke with tongues and prophesied" (19:6). God gave the Holy Spirit to them through the hands of the apostle (cf. 8:17). After they had received the Holy Spirit, "they were speaking with tongues and they were prophesying." The manifestations of the Holy Spirit's presence Luke mentions here because of the missionary implications. In Ephesus Paul remained for about two years teaching Jew and Gentile and preaching to them, "so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks" (19:10).

According to the testimony of Acts the Holy Spirit was not a necessary consequence of baptism. The Holy Spirit usually came after baptism, twice by the laying on of hands (8:16-17; 19:5-6). Sometimes the Holy Spirit followed right after baptism (2:37-38; 19:5-6), sometimes days elapsed until the disciples received him (8:16-17). In any case the Holy Spirit does not seem to have followed a definite scheme. He works in freedom through human agents, men whom God uses to carry out his work. In this connection we should note that God used the total personality of the disciples, but especially their words. The witness of the disciples changed the lives of people, for it was God who was speaking to people through them.

The Gift of the Spirit Without Mention of Baptism

Before we enter upon the discussion of the one major text in this connection, we shall look at the statements which according to Luke came from Jesus himself. One is a statement which Christ himself made (1:5). The other is a reference to this statement by Peter standing before the disciples in Jerusalem and defending his actions in Caesarea (11:16).

After his resurrection Jesus was with his disciples for forty days before he ascended into heaven. During that time he spoke with them about matters concerning "the kingdom of God" (1:3). While he was together with them, he commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem until they had received the "promise of the Father" (1:4; cf. Lk. 24:49). The promise of the Father was the Holy Spirit. ". . . John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit . . ." (1:5).

Now let us take a closer look at this text and its re-appearance in chapter eleven (11:16). We note that the New Testament does not know of such a word of the Lord outside Acts. In the gospels an almost identical statement is known to come from John (cf. Mt. 3:11; Mk. 1:8; Lk. 3:16; John 1:26-27). It may well be that this was also a saying of Christ, however, recorded only in Acts. At any rate, Luke presents this statement as coming from the Lord himself.

Peter labeled it "the saying of the Lord" (11:16). Perhaps Jesus adapted a saying of John to this new situation, thereby showing that John's promises would come true after his ascension. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that Luke understood this to be a word of the Lord (cf. 11:16).

According to this word of Christ, John granted only water-baptism. The disciples would receive the Holy Spirit. It would seem that Haenchen⁵³ goes too far when he opposes the baptism of John to the baptism administered by the Christians. This statement does not seem to have any reference to Christian baptism. Christ merely states that the disciples will receive the Holy Spirit soon. Its primary reference is to the disciples (*ὑμεῖς*, 1:5). The gift of the Spirit would equip them for their task. ". . . you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses . . . to the end of the earth" (1:8). What Jesus did was not to contrast the baptism of John with the gift of the Spirit. The baptism of John was preparatory for the coming Messiah, who would give the Holy Spirit to his followers. With the gift of the Spirit the time of salvation had come.⁵⁴ This time, the time between the ascension of

⁵³Op. cit., p. 111.

⁵⁴Hermann W. Beyer, "Die Apostelgeschichte," Das Neue Testament Deutsch, edited by Paul Althaus and Johannes Behm (Göttigen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1949), V, 8.

Christ and his second coming, is the prelude to the end. This is the time of the Spirit, whom Jesus gave to his disciples (2:33; cf. Lk. 24:49; John 16:7).

The Holy Spirit is called "promise of the Father" (1:4) because he was promised already in the Old Testament (cf. Ez. 11:19; 36:26; Joel 3:1-5) and by John (cf. Mt. 3:11; Mk. 1:8; Lk. 3:16; John 1:26-27). However, Christ localized the promise to a particular group of people. This promise was given for the disciples. The baptism of John was "with water" while the baptism which the disciples would receive would be "with the Holy Spirit." The preposition ² should most likely be taken instrumentally, corresponding to the Aramaic ⁷ (cf. Mt. 3:11; Mk. 1:8). The preparatory baptism of John was fulfilled and completed by the baptism "with the Holy Spirit." The contrast is between promise and fulfillment. The baptism of John was important and valid in its place. The fulfillment of his baptism by the gift of the Spirit also marked its end. The Christian baptism supersedes the baptism of John (cf. 19:1-6), for in Christian baptism the gift of the Spirit comes upon the person baptized. "Spirit-baptism" did not invalidate the baptism of John; rather it confirmed it. Apollos had only the baptism of John. However, since he did have the Spirit, he was not baptized again (18:25). The twelve disciples, on the other hand, were baptized by Paul since they did not have the Holy Spirit. Apollos may have received the Holy Spirit in a way similar to the

disciples.⁵⁵

Now we come to the Pentecost scene. First Luke describes the occurrence in two sensuous images. Then he gives the result of the incident, telling us what happened to the disciples. "And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting" (2:2). This is the first description of Pentecost. The Spirit's coming is described with the word ἦχος which is compared to φερομένης πνοῆς βιαίας. Luke does not at once tell us that this ἦχος is the Spirit. We do not find out that he is talking about the coming of the Holy Spirit until later (2:4). There Luke tells us "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit." The first description appeals to the ears of the reader. The ἦχος which the people heard was like a "wind storming along" (cf. Gen. 1:2, LXX). The mighty and forceful sound filled the whole house in which the disciples were gathered. The word οἶκος reminds us of Isaiah (6:4) where the prophet states that "the house was filled with smoke." Whether the word οἶκος refers to the temple or simply to an ordinary house cannot be determined from the text itself. However, since the writer is careful to use ἱερός when he speaks of the temple (22 times), it seems very likely that he has reference to an ordinary house here rather than to the temple. For the Greek mind πνοή and πνεύμα

⁵⁵Bruce, The Book of Acts, op. cit., p. 386.

are related concepts. Indeed "wind" is a symbol of the Spirit; so is "fire." In this as well as in the next panel Luke seeks to convey in intelligible terms what is really indescribable.⁵⁶ Philo (De Decalogo 33) writes that God created an ἦχος on Sinai which changed into πῦρ (cf. 2:3), and this fire became audible to those far and near.

The second impression which Luke conveys to the reader is visual. "And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them" (2:3). That the γλῶσσαι were objectively present can be seen from the verb ὁράω (cf. 7:2,30; 9:17; 26:16; 1 Cor. 15:5,7). In the passive the verb means "become visible, appear."⁵⁷ The verb most likely is intransitive and should be translated "appeared."⁵⁸ That which has been described as ἦχος before is now portrayed as διακερισόμεναι γλῶσσαι . πῦρ here is only a means of comparison for human understanding. Philo (De Decalogo 46-48) mentions that at Mount Sinai fire was the bearer of the word of God. This word was heard by all far and near (cf. De Decalog 33). In Justin (Diologus cum Trypho Judaeo 88) fire is associated with the presence of the Spirit at the baptism of Jesus. On the one hand, words are associated with fire; and on the other hand, the presence of the Holy

⁵⁶E. M. Blaiklock, "The Acts of the Apostles," Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, edited by R. V. G. Tasker (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), pp. 54-5.

⁵⁷William F. Arndt & F. Wilbur Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c.1957), p. 581.

⁵⁸Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-2.

Spirit is also associated with fire. When the disciples had received the gift of the Spirit, they began to speak in "other tongues" (2:4). The "distributed tongues" seem to have a close relationship to the "speaking in tongues." They were symbols of the power given them to speak the gospel to all people. The participle *διαμερισόμενοι* is most likely middle here; the "tongues as of fire" distributed themselves upon the disciples. In this connection the verb *ἐκάδιβεν* presents difficulties. It is in the singular. The noun which grammatically should be its subject is plural. *πῦρ* is most likely not the subject since it is a descriptive genitive. Perhaps the writer thought of one "tongue of fire" settling down on each one of the disciples present.

The "tongues" which appeared on the disciples' heads remind the reader of Jesus' baptism. After Jesus had been baptized, the Holy Spirit descended as a dove (Mt. 3:16; Mk 1:10; Lk 3:22). Upon the disciples the Spirit descended in "tongues as of fire." The "Spirit-baptism" of the disciples seems to have two similarities to the baptism of Jesus. The one was already mentioned. But when we look closer, especially at the Markan narrative of Jesus' baptism, we note that also at his baptism the Holy Spirit came with "violence"; Jesus "saw the heavens being cleft" (Mk. 1:10). The verb *ἐξισόμενος* does seem to suggest violence (cf. Mt. 25:51; Lk. 5:36; John 19:24; Act 14:4; 23:7; Wis. 5:11). If this interpretation is correct, we

would have here a counterpart to the "rush of a mighty wind" at Pentecost.

Luke did not yet mention what the force was which had been heard as a "sound" and then appeared as "tongues of fire." In verse four he tells us. He states, "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." This verse tells us in bald words the power behind all the commotion. In pictures Luke attempted to describe what went on. Luke chose the traditional symbols of "wind" (cf. Ex. 37:9; John 3:8) and "fire" (cf. Mt. 3:11; Lk 3:16). Luke goes on to describe what happened to the disciples. "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit." This is what really took place. The Holy Spirit was the power for the "speaking in tongues." He made the miracle possible (cf. 4:8,31; 8:17-19; 10:44-47; 11:15,24; 13:2; 19:6). There has been considerable discussion concerning the precise meaning of *ἑτέρας γλώσσας*. Haenchen⁵⁹ argues that the whole story of Pentecost is a Lukan construction. The only historical evidence which Luke had was to the effect that the disciples received the Holy Spirit. Most of those present understood Greek and Aramaic. There does not seem to be any need for foreign languages.⁶⁰ There is most likely a connection between the "appearance of tongues"

⁵⁹Op. cit., p. 132.

⁶⁰Blaiklock, op. cit., pp. 55-57.

and the "speaking in tongues."⁶¹ The Holy Spirit granted the ability to speak in other tongues. This speaking was not normal. The Holy Spirit drove them to speak. The reason why some understood what was said and others did not seems to lie with the listeners, whether they were receptive or not (cf. 1 Cor. 1:18). The speaking of the disciples was ecstatic but intelligible. The natural response to Peter's speech would seem to underline this fact, for those present were convicted by his words. The verb ἀποφθέγγομαι seems to stress the ecstatic, for this term is used in connection with "weighty and oracular utterances" (cf. 1 Chr. 25:1; Micah 5:12; Act 2:14; 26:25).

The day of Pentecost was the day of the reception of the Holy Spirit (1:5; cf. Lk. 24:49). The disciples were ready for the task--to witness of Jesus Christ "to the end of the earth." Immediately after this incident the disciples began to witness. One of the two promises of Joel (3:1-5) had come true. The Spirit had come. The end of the world, however, was not yet. The disciples had to carry the message of Jesus to the end of the earth. Then the end would come. Under the power of the Holy Spirit the disciples proclaimed and still proclaim the gospel of Jesus, the Christ, until the end comes.

⁶¹Wikenhauser, op. cit., p. 33.

Baptism Without Mention of the Holy Spirit

We have considered the three categories in which the Holy Spirit is mentioned. In this section we want to look at those passages which do not mention the Holy Spirit in connection with baptism. Since there are a number of references to baptism without mention of the Holy Spirit, it would seem as though Luke could conceive of a baptism without the Holy Spirit. However, as we study these passages, we shall see that this is not the case. The gift of the Spirit was so naturally and regularly associated with baptism that Luke did not have to mention the Holy Spirit every time he mentioned baptism. The readers would naturally assume that those baptized received the Spirit.

Our first passage underlines this point. After Peter's Pentecost sermon there was a great number of people who accepted the gospel. "So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls" (2:41). When these people asked Peter what they should do, he called them to repentance and baptism. Those who believed Peter's word submitted to baptism. The phrase *οἱ μὲν οὖν* begins a new section; it also establishes connection with the preceding.⁶² This section begins a new thought, yet this thought is connected with what went on before. This is important to remember. We notice that Luke

⁶²Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles, op. cit., p. 99.

does not mention the gift of the Spirit in connection with the baptism here. When Peter called the listeners to repentance and baptism, he promised them the gift of the Spirit (2:38). Either these people did not receive the Holy Spirit in spite of Peter's promise, or they did receive him but Luke does not mention it since he could assume that the readers would infer this. If these people did receive the Holy Spirit even though Luke does not mention the fact--this seems to be very likely in view of the context--we have one instance in which baptism and the gift of the Spirit were so closely associated that the mention of one would immediately recreate the total baptismal situation. This conclusion is also supported by the following verses. The converts joined the fellowship of Christians, in whose midst the Holy Spirit dwelt (cf. 9:31).⁶³

In this connection caution is in order. We cannot tie the Holy Spirit to baptism as such. If we do, the conversion of Samaria will not harmonize (8:12-13,15-17). Philip baptized the Samaritans after they had come to faith in the Christ, whom he preached. However, the text seems to indicate that they did not receive the Holy Spirit until Peter and John came to them and prayed that they might receive the gift of the Spirit. In this case it would seem that baptism and the gift of the Spirit are separated by a short period of time.

⁶³Bruce, The Book of Acts, op. cit., p. 79.

Let us look at the text a little more closely. "But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (8:12). The verbal force of *πίστεύω* and *ἀποδέχομαι* (2:41) seems to be quite similar. The people at Pentecost "received" the word of Peter, and then they were baptized. These people "believed" the preaching of Philip, and then they were baptized. The aorist *ἐπίστευσαν* seems to be ingressive, "when they came to faith . . ." Faith preceded baptism, faith which came about through the preaching of Philip. There is a close link between faith and baptism. The converts received baptism after they had come to faith.

The work of Philip made such an impression on Simon, the magician, that he too became a believer. After he was baptized, he constantly followed Philip (8:13). Formerly he had a great following. However, he had not only lost his following; he himself had become a follower. What a witness to the power of the gospel! Whether his motives were fully honest or not, does not detract from the force of the fact that he did attach himself to Philip.

Since these disciples did not receive the Spirit until Peter and John came to Samaria, baptism and the gift of the Spirit must have been separated, or were thought of as being separable. Most likely such a separation was unusual, yet not singular. There may have been other occurrences of like nature. The Spirit is associated with baptism, but does not

necessarily come as a consequence of it; the association is rather loose. Yet the association is maintained, for the Spirit comes most of the time after baptism, or better, in the baptismal context. On the basis of the text it seems best to conclude that the Samaritans did not receive the Spirit until Peter and John came and transmitted him to them.

In the first two instances we had a more or less clear indication that the baptized received the Holy Spirit after their baptism. The baptism of the eunuch presents more difficulties in this respect. Nevertheless, there are some clues which might be able to help us. After Philip had explained the pericope which the eunuch was reading (Is. 53:7-8), the eunuch asked Philip, "What is to prevent my being baptized?" (8:37). He had faith and there was water. Most likely Philip had spoken about baptism to the eunuch. He was ready for it. When the eunuch had brought his chariot to a halt, both of them went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. Since Philip did not answer the eunuch's question, it would seem that Philip's agreement was assumed. When the two came out of the water, the Spirit carried Philip away. The eunuch, however, "went on his way rejoicing" (8:39). The eunuch's rejoicing is not mere padding. It may indicate that he had received the Holy Spirit, for the Spirit is associated with joy in Luke (Lk. 1:41-42; Act 8:8; 13:52; cf. Rom. 14:17; Gal. 5:22; 1 Thes. 1:6). The joy may

have been a result of the Holy Spirit's presence.⁶⁵

The baptism of Saul is another incident in which the gift of the Spirit is not mentioned in immediate association with baptism, yet in the context it is stated that Paul was to receive the Holy Spirit. This incident helps strengthen the argument that the Holy Spirit was associated with baptism. Since there is no mention that the gift of the Spirit came later (cf. 8:12,17), we may conclude that Paul received the Holy Spirit after baptism, especially since the gift of the Spirit is mentioned in the context (cf. 2:38,41).

When Ananias had entered the house where Saul stayed, he came over to him, placed his hands upon him and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you came, has sent me that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit" (9:17). Since there is no mention of the Holy Spirit after baptism, some commentators (Bengel and Bruce) feel that the laying on of hands transmitted the Holy Spirit (cf. 8:17; 19:6). Others (Bauernfeind, Steinmann, and Wendt) think that the Holy Spirit came upon Saul after baptism. The laying on of hands was for the purpose of restoring Saul's eyesight.⁶⁶ As far as the text goes, either of these solutions is possible. Jesus had sent Ananias

⁶⁵G. W. H. Lampe, The Seal of the Spirit (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1951), pp. 64-65.

⁶⁶Steinmann, op. cit., p. 91.

to give Saul sight and the fulness of the Holy Spirit. The laying on of hands might indicate his reception. In two incidents in which the Holy Spirit was granted through the laying on of hands, baptism preceded the gift of the Spirit. Peter and John (8:17), and Paul (19:6) laid their hands on baptized disciples and they received the Holy Spirit. There is a similarity in these three stories. However, there is also a difference, the important incident mentioned above. The sequence of incidents which Ananias mentioned to Saul seems to support the assertion that the Spirit did not come through the laying on of hands but rather after baptism, for Ananias stated that Paul was to receive his eyesight first, and then receive the Holy Spirit (9:17). Most likely Luke did not mention that Saul received the Holy Spirit, since Ananias had promised him to Paul after his eyesight had been restored. The gift of the Spirit came upon Saul after the baptism.

This passage too strengthens the argument that the Holy Spirit was closely associated with baptism. The Holy Spirit was promised Saul by Ananias. He would come upon him after his eyesight was restored. After his eyesight had been restored, "he rose and was baptized" (9:18). At this time the promise of Ananias was fulfilled. Saul received the Holy Spirit (cf. 9:17).

When Paul pleaded his innocence before the Jews (22:3-21) he mentioned a statement of Ananias. "And now why do you wait? rise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling

on his name" (22:16). Since *ἀπολούω* has reference to baptism (1 Cor. 6:11), we can establish a connection with the answer of Peter to the listeners at Pentecost (2:38). In baptism their sins would be washed away and they would receive the gift of the Spirit. If this connection is proper, then this reference too would support the thesis that Saul received the Holy Spirit after baptism.

There is another baptismal incident in which we may have a clue to the reality of the Holy Spirit's operation. On their second missionary journey Paul and Silas were involved in some difficulties in Philippi. They were thrown into jail until the next day. During the night an earthquake freed all the prisoners. The jailer was ready to kill himself when Paul intervened. "Men, what must I do to be saved?" he cried (16:30). Paul responded, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household" (16:31).

Whether the jailer knew the full implications of the word *ὁ λόγος* or not, is not really to the point. Luke wants to point out with this incident that the real salvation lies in Jesus Christ. This was what Paul told this man, who did not know whether he was coming or going. Then Paul proceeded to instruct the jailer and his house in the "word of God," the gospel. Right after the instruction the jailer showed by his actions that he had faith in the Lord Jesus. He took the prisoners to the prison well and washed their wounds. They in turn washed him with the water of life, him and his whole household (16:33). There is no mention of the Holy Spirit.

However, in the following verse we read about his joy. In the story of the eunuch we already pointed out that in Luke there is a close connection between joy and the Holy Spirit. If this holds, then ἡγαλιάσατο would be an indication that these people at Philippi had also received the Holy Spirit after baptism as that eunuch had received him.⁶⁷

Now there are two baptismal incidents left in which we have no clue at all in the context, which might permit us to conclude that the Spirit had been received. However, if we examine these two stories against the background of what we have said before, then we shall see how they fit into the total baptismal pattern, and the baptism-Spirit relationship.

The first incident of this nature we have in 16:15. This is the story of Lydia's conversion. "And when she was baptized, with her whole household, she besought us, saying, 'If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.' And she prevailed upon us." Luke does not recount the baptism of Lydia. He merely states that after she was baptized, she asked them to stay at her home. The stress in the story seems to lie on her willingness to take the missionaries into her home. The action of Lydia was a proof of her conversion.⁶⁸ In the other two "whole-house" baptisms it is the man of the house and his household that are

⁶⁷Lampe, The Holy Spirit in the Writings of St. Luke, op. cit., p. 198.

⁶⁸Bruce, The Book of Acts, op. cit., pp. 331-2.

baptized. Here it is a woman and her household. This has led some commentators (Bruce, Steinmann) to suspect that she was not married at this time. Until now the missionaries most likely lived on their own means. From this time on they could draw on the resources of this wealthy woman.

Lydia came to faith in the Lord through the word of Paul (16:14). Upon the confession of her faith she was baptized. The text does not mention that she received the Holy Spirit. From the connection which we have established between baptism and the Holy Spirit it would seem logical to assume that Lydia and her household did receive the Holy Spirit. Luke may not have found it necessary to mention this since he could safely leave this to his readers to infer after having read the book so far.

The last incident takes place in Corinth. When Paul arrived in Corinth, he went into the synagogue to preach Jesus, the Christ of God. Since the Jews refused to listen, he left them and went to the Gentiles. Through the preaching of Paul many people came to faith. "Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with all his household; and many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized" (18:8). Through the preaching of Paul these people came to faith in Christ. When they had declared their faith, they received baptism. This incident, like the two preceding ones, brings faith and the preaching of the word into closest connection. The preaching of the word created faith in the hearts of these people. Faith precedes

baptism. When these people evidenced faith, they received baptism. Since the Spirit is associated with baptism, we would naturally infer that these people too received the Holy Spirit unless there were something in the text which would make such a conclusion impossible. Lampe states the point well when he says:

It is fairly clear, in view of Acts 2:38 and the prophecy of Joel, that St. Luke believes the gift to be conferred on all Christians, and it is very probable that he deems it unnecessary to mention in every case of baptism that the baptized person received the Spirit. It could safely be left to his readers to infer so much.⁶⁹

The last section has no independent value. However, it is of great importance if we view it on the background of the other passages in which the gift of the Holy Spirit is clearly mentioned. If we proceed in this manner, we see how natural it was for Christians to connect the Holy Spirit with baptism. Luke did not have to mention the fact that the baptized received the Holy Spirit every time a baptism took place. When it was imperative for the incident that Luke mention the gift of the Spirit in connection with baptism, he did (cf. 2:38; 8:12,17; 10:44-48; 19:5-6). But when there was no such stress on the critical importance of the incident, then Luke mentioned only the baptism without stating specifically that these people received the Spirit. This the readers could supply, for they knew that baptism without the gift of the Spirit was an anomaly (cf. 19:2-4). The two belonged together.

⁶⁹Lampe, The Holy Spirit in the Writings of St. Luke, op. cit., p. 198.

CHAPTER IV

THE BAPTISMAL COMPLEX

The Baptism of Jesus Christ

Before we look at the baptism of Jesus itself, we want to consider the baptism of John. What kind of baptism was it? What did it give? What was its purpose?

The kind of baptism which John administered in the Judean desert was quite novel. It was "baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Mk. 1:4). As far as we know there was no baptism quite like that of John. Among the Jews we do find a kind of "baptism," ritual ablutions. A person ritually unclean had to wash himself before he could return to the community (Lev. 15:5-8, 10-13, 21-22, 27; 16:26, 28; 17:15-16). In the Qumran sect too such ritual ablutions were carried out (Manual of Discipline III 4-5, 9; IV 21; V 13; Zadokite Document X 10-13). In these ablutions the person himself carried out the "baptism" (cf. Lev. 15:5-8; Zadokite Document X 10-13). By these "baptisms" a person could cleanse himself from ritual uncleanness. In the baptism of John, however, the idea of ritual uncleanness seems to be absent. He did not deal with ritual impurity but with sin (Mk. 1:4). From the above passages it seems evident that the washings among the Jews were repeated whenever a person had become ritually unclean. The baptism of John, on the other hand, was not repeated; it was given only once (Lk. 3:7-8).

The only baptism vaguely resembling the baptism of John was proselyte baptism. God had chosen Israel for his special people; they were a holy nation from among all the people on earth. Gentiles were unclean since they were outside of the camp of Israel.¹ If a Gentile wanted to join the Jewish community, he had to go through the experience of the exodus, for " . . . the converted stranger must enter the 'promised land' as Israel had done, through water."² How did the Gentile enter the promised land "through water"? He was circumcised, if a male, and had to baptize himself in the presence of Jewish authorities. Baptism represented his exodus from Egypt.³ Thus he entered the promised land and became a member of the chosen race.

Proselyte baptism was usually associated with circumcision. However, in the case of women baptism alone was administered. When an argument arose as to which was more important, baptism or circumcision, the Hillelite school held that baptism was the more important, since it could be administered to male and female alike.⁴

¹Joachim Jeremias, "Der Ursprung der Johannestaufe," Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, XXVIII (1929), 312-20.

²Geoffrey W. Lampe, The Seal of the Spirit (Longmans, Green and Co., 1951), p. 24.

³Jeremias, op. cit., pp. 316-17.

⁴W. F. Flemington, The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism (London: S. P. C. K., 1957), p. 6.

The origin of proselyte baptism can be traced back to the first century A.D. At that time it was already well established as part of the initiation rite of Judaism. Since it was well established already at the end of the first century A.D., it most likely goes back to the early part of our era, or even further.⁵

In the baptism of John then we have some resemblance to proselyte baptism. John went out into the desert. He began to preach, calling people to repentance, "for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt. 3:2). He was calling people out of their comfortable surroundings into the ~~the~~ desert.⁶ He was preparing a people ready to meet God. In their present state all people were God's enemies. What separated them from God was not any ritual uncleanness or an infraction of the law. It was their total life situation. All men lived by their own impulse and not by the will of God. When John called people into the desert, they were asked to repent, "for the kingdom of heaven was at hand." (Mt. 3:2). Only those would be ready for the approach of the kingdom who turned away from their present egocentrism,^{ic} ^{AND} turned to God. Nothing could save a person but this "exodus"; he had to experience the "exodus" if he wanted to be ready. Once

⁵Jeremias, op. cit., p. 313.

⁶At the exodus God brought his people through the Red Sea into the desert. In proselyte baptism the convert relived the exodus of Israel. John called to a baptism in the desert.

he experienced it, he was ready to meet God. John baptized those who obeyed his call and repented.

The baptism of John was a bath of death and life. He who submitted to it thereby left behind his former way of life and established a new one. He became part of the people waiting for God, who was coming. The baptism of John was a passage from a people doomed under God's judgment to a people ready to meet God, who was about to come.

The most important aspect of the baptism of John was the forgiveness of sins. Sin was the basic problem of man. Man had turned his back on God; he wanted to live by his own will. Such a way of life, however, meant ultimate destruction, for it was lived away from God. God had created man to live under him forever. John came and called people to repent while it was still time. God was on his way to meet his people. He wanted to establish a new relationship with man. Through John, God readied a people for himself. Those who obeyed John's call, repented and were baptized, were ready for God's visitation.

God came to his people in Jesus Christ. Those who had listened to John later also received Jesus (cf. John 1:37). Those who did not take John seriously, were not able to receive Jesus (Mt. 21:23-27). The tax-collectors and the prostitutes believed John (Mt. 21:32). They were the ones who also received Jesus (Mt. 9:10). Those who did not listen to John, could not receive Jesus, for they were not ready for God's coming through him. John's call to repentance was

urgent. There was not much time left. He was marking the faithful before the coming of the Lord in judgment (cf. Ez. 9:4-11). Barrett says,

. . . those who were in this way made secure against the eschatological future were banded together in the ranks of the true Israel; or better, their security lay in their membership of the purified people of God, which they entered in a manner analogous to that in which a proselyte was initiated into the ordinary Judaism of the time.⁷

This was the kind of baptism to which Jesus himself submitted. What did this mean for him and his work? John was preparing a new people of God by the "sacrament of the new age." In submitting to John's baptism, Jesus made plain that he assented to John's mission and message. Both John and Jesus stood in the same prophetic and eschatological tradition. They were harking back to what God had said and done, and they were looking forward to what he was going to do, yes, what he was doing right then and there. Like the other people Jesus submitted to the baptism of John. They forsook their old allegiances and began a new way of life. Jesus became part of this movement. With the people he experienced the exodus to the promised land.

This means that Jesus too (as of course we know was the case) was concerned about the near approach of the Kingdom of God and the ethical demands which its imminence made.⁸

⁷Charles K. Barrett, The Holy Spirit and the Gospel Tradition (London: S. P. C. K., 1958), p. 34.

⁸Ibid., p. 35.

Now let us look at the three accounts of Jesus' baptism. It is commonly held among scholars that the account of Mark is the more original of the three. The accounts of Jesus' baptism becomes more complex as we pass from Mark to Matthew, to Luke. The appearance of the Holy Spirit is described more concretely too. In Mark we have the account in the first chapter (vv. 9-11).

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opened and the Spirit descending upon him like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "Thou art my beloved Son; with thee I am well pleased.

The important points in this narrative are (1) Jesus was baptized, (2) he came up from the water, (3) he saw the heavens opened, (4) the Spirit descended like a dove upon him, and (5) he heard a voice from heaven. In the Matthaean narrative we have a close correspondence to Mark. However, Matthew mentions John's reluctance to baptize Jesus. Jesus persuaded John to baptize him anyway, since he had to fulfill all righteousness. The Spirit is called the "Spirit of God." The voice from heaven speaks of Jesus in the third person rather than in the second.

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased (3:13-17).

Luke too has some changes in his account of Jesus' baptism. The accent in Luke lies on Jesus' prayer rather than on his baptism. The Spirit is called the "Holy Spirit" while Matthew has the "Spirit of God" and Mark simply "Spirit." The Spirit is also described as coming upon Jesus in bodily form.

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form, as a dove, and a voice came from heaven, "Thou art my beloved Son; with thee I am well pleased." (3:21-22).

Flemington⁹ points out that according to the Markan account the "significance of the baptism was for Jesus himself." In Matthew's narrative both Jesus and John recognize the significance of the baptism, for Matthew writes, ". . . and behold the heavens were opened" (3:16). Luke emphasizes the objective character of the descent of the Spirit at Jesus' baptism with the phrase "in bodily form" (3:22). These observations are interesting and informative, but the delineation may be a little too rigid. The accounts cannot be fitted into a neat scheme like Flemington's. It seems that the account of Matthew varies in a greater degree from Mark than Luke's account. Even though the accounts do have different emphases, they agree fully in (1) that Jesus submitted to the baptism of John, (2) that he received the Holy Spirit, and (3) that the Father spoke to him from heaven.

⁹Op. cit., p. 26.

All three accounts of Jesus' baptism are Christological in nature. The person of Jesus can be understood only in the light of his Messiahship and the Holy Spirit. God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit to carry out the task which he gave him. At Jesus' baptism the promise of God to his ancient people came true (Is. 42:1-2). In Jesus the Son of God was present ready to undertake the task of the suffering Servant.

The historicity of Jesus' baptism has been questioned. However the elimination of Jesus' baptism raises many more questions than it solves, and some of them much more fundamental. There are also difficulties which arise when the baptism of Jesus is not accepted. Usually the lesser is baptized by the greater. The Christian church saw in Jesus the greater. Why would Christian writers portray Jesus' submitting to John's baptism if it had not been so? They would have spared themselves much embarrassment. Later the followers of John could point to the fact that Jesus had been baptized by John. From this they could claim that Jesus was inferior to John and that John was the Messiah and Jesus an usurper. Flemington¹⁰ feels that already Matthew's narrative (3:14-15) was trying to meet the objection "that Our Lord's submission to the 'baptism of repentance unto remission of sins' involved a tacit acknowledgment of wrongdoing." He concludes that this section is not historical; it is rather a

¹⁰Ibid.

construction of Matthew. However, this seems to go further than the evidence. We really do not know much about John the baptist and his relationship to Jesus outside the gospels and Josephus. We are dependent on that which the gospels tell. When we doubt their historicity on this matter, we must do it mainly on the basis of our presuppositions. However, that later writers did have difficulties with Jesus' baptism is quite evident. Justin Martyr held that baptism served to identify Jesus as the Christ of God.¹¹ Irenaeus¹² thought that Jesus received the Spirit to enable his manhood to carry out the task assigned to him. For Jerome¹³ the baptism of Jesus pointed out to men which was the real baptism. According to Cyril¹⁴ Jesus worked by the Spirit which was in him. Already early in the history of the Christian church Christians had trouble in viewing the baptism of Jesus in the proper light. The difficulties which the baptism of Jesus at the hand of John could and did create for the Christian church are one reason why we can accept the baptism of Jesus as historical. There is, however, another reason for doing so. Jesus would not stand aloof from a movement which made people ready

¹¹Dial. c. Tripko, 88.

¹²Adver. Haer. III.17,1.

¹³Dial. c. Lucif., 6.

¹⁴Explic. 12.

for God's visitation. Jesus thought highly of John (Mt. 11:7-11 Lk. 7:24-28). John, the greatest born of women, was the prophet of God come to call people to repentance and to prepare them for God's coming in Jesus, the Christ (Mt. 3:2; Lk. 17:21). In Jesus God himself was present. Jesus counted himself among those people who were waiting for God's coming. In their midst he began the fulfillment of God's promises. He was the person for whom they were waiting. Through him they would have life.

Yet when we have said that Jesus received the baptism of John, we have to add that he received more than just his baptism. He received the Holy Spirit. This "more" John's baptism usually did not give. When Jesus was baptized, he not only entered the community of those waiting for God's coming; he also received the Holy Spirit, and the commission for his mission--to make possible for men the gift of the Spirit (cf. 2:38). In Jesus' baptism the baptism of John received the complement which Christian baptism was to grant--the Holy Spirit. The disciples, like Jesus, were to receive both elements, baptism from John and the Spirit from Jesus (1:5; 2:33). The baptism of Jesus is very important for Christian baptism, for it became one of the reasons for its universal use in the Christian church.

Flemington remarks:

This [the fact that Jesus received the Spirit at his baptism and was declared to be the Son] would seem to suggest that in our attempt to describe the antecedence of Christian baptism we do well to give

a conspicuous place to the baptism of our Lord.¹⁵

But what is more important is that at the baptism of Jesus water baptism and the gift of the Spirit were associated. John could only promise the gift of the Spirit. When Jesus received the Holy Spirit after baptism, the promise came true in him. Lampe, The Seal of the Spirit, notes, "The expected baptism with the Holy Spirit actually happened, so far as one of John's followers was concerned, when Jesus came to be baptized by him."¹⁶

The baptism of John was the means which God used to anoint his Chosen One with the Holy Spirit. This datum points us back to Isaiah (42:1 cf. LXX) where the author states, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my Chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him, he will bring forth justice to the nations." The suffering Servant is to be anointed with the Holy Spirit and thus to become the Messiah. The suffering Servant as the anointed One is to bring the salvation of God to man. Davies notes:

The descent of the spirit upon Jesus is both His inauguration to the office of the Messiah and at the same time the means by which He is equipped by that spirit for His ministry. The baptism is his anointing with the ruach of God; thereafter He is the Messiah, the Christ, i.e. the anointed one.¹⁷

¹⁵Op. cit., p. 29.

¹⁶Op. cit., p. 32.

¹⁷J. G. Davies, The Spirit, the Church and the Sacraments (London: The Faith Press, Ltd., 1954), p. 18.

When Jesus received the Holy Spirit, there came a voice from heaven, "Thou art my beloved Son; with thee I am well pleased" (Mk. 1:11). The Holy Spirit and the voice from heaven are associated. The other two accounts have the same association. The Holy Spirit descends on Jesus in the form of a dove (Mk. 1:10; Mt. 3:16; Lk. 3:22). There is a Jewish tradition in which dove and voice are associated.¹⁸ In Berachoth 3a the writer states, "I heard a Bath Qol moaning as a dove" Flemington further notes, "In comments on Eccles 7. 9 and 12. 7 the Bath Qol is connected with 'chirping' or 'with the voice of a bird'."¹⁹

There is also an association of Holy Spirit and dove. The voice of a turtle dove is "the voice of the Holy Spirit of salvation" (Targum to Song of Solomon 2:12). With reference to creation the Babylonian Haggadah 15a states, "And the Spirit of God was brooding on the face of the waters like a dove which broods over her young but does not touch them." This last reference is rather suggestive. If we can draw a parallel between the Spirit's work at creation and the Spirit's appearing at Jesus' baptism, we may see here a new creation taking place. God was at work in Jesus Christ restoring fallen mankind. Barrett asserts, ". . . a new

¹⁸The "voice" is called זִיב נְיָ, "daughter of the voice"; the זִיב נְיָ is a substitute for the Word of God given through the prophets by the Holy Spirit.

¹⁹Op. cit., p. 28.

thing was wrought in the waters of baptism comparable with the creation of heaven and earth out of primeval chaos."²⁰ Jesus was the firstborn of the new creation.

This new creation, however, was not fully realized until Jesus had gone to the cross. He was to be the first-born of the new creation, but through suffering. In Isaiah (42:1; cf. 53:10-11) it is stated that the Chosen of God, who is to bring justice to the nations, will do this through suffering. To accomplish this task God will give him his Spirit. At baptism Jesus received the Holy Spirit for his task and heard the voice from heaven calling him to be the suffering Servant, who is to bring about the new creation. Jesus through death ascended to the Father. From him he received the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on his disciples (2:33). All those who are baptized in his name also receive the Holy Spirit (cf. 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5-6).

At baptism Jesus received the Holy Spirit and the commission to be the suffering Servant. The reception of the Holy Spirit was the basis for his task (10:38). We have here a complex of three ideas: (1) Jesus was anointed (2) with the Holy Spirit (3) for his task among the people. A similar complex we find in Isaiah 61:1, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted . . ." (cf. Lk. 4:18-19). There is no mention

²⁰Op. cit., p. 39.

of his suffering death at the hands of men. But we have seen in a preceding servant poem of Isaiah (53:1-9) that he will die for the sins of the people. There is then an association of Messianic office, Holy Spirit, and the suffering Servant. This association constitutes the basis of the baptism narrative. Barrett notes:

Accordingly, it appears that the Messiahship, since it underlies the office of Jesus as the Servant of the Lord, his status as son of God and the descent upon him of the Spirit, is the key to the understanding of the baptism narrative, and apart from it the whole event, as it is recorded in the Gospels, is meaningless.²¹

There is an association of Messiahship, suffering Servant, and the Holy Spirit. But there is more. We also have an association between Son and Holy Spirit. When Jesus received the Holy Spirit, the voice from heaven declared, "Thou art my beloved son; with thee I am well pleased" (Mk. 1:11). We have here a conflation of two Old Testament passages (Ps. 2:7 and Is. 42:1). The Psalm reference gives the first part of the compound sentence, while the Isaiah reference gives the second. It seems to be clear that the selection of these two portions of Old Testament Scripture have been collated with a purpose. The voice declared Jesus to be the Son of God, on whom his pleasure rested, since he was going to carry out his will on the cross. It would seem that there was no adoption taking place at the river Jordan. Rather Jesus was being manifested as the Son, who received

²¹Op. cit., p. 44.

the Spirit for his task as the suffering Servant. Matthew's account has a note which underlines this. He reports Jesus as saying, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (3:15). Jesus came to fill (πληρώω) all righteousness because he was the righteousness which the law required. In him the law was filled completely. He was what the law required.²² In surrendering his life on the cross he sealed his obedience to the Father. That he was the fulfillment of the law, of all righteousness, became fully evident at his death on the cross.²³ It was the Son who received the Holy Spirit to fulfill all righteousness on the cross. Lampe notes:

The ancient prophecies of the bestowal of ruach on the Messiah find their realization in something far more profound, a permanent condition of unity with the Father, discernible throughout the earthly ministry and illustrated with special clarity in the prayer at Gethsemane.²⁴

When Jesus left the scene of his baptism, he was full of the Holy Spirit, ready for the task which his heavenly Father had assigned to him. He was ready to actualize God's new creation. When through his death he had ascended to his Father, he gave the Spirit to his disciples who were to carry the good news of God's re-creation to all nations. God made

²²Henrik Ljungman, Das Gesetz Erfüllen (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1954), p. 124.

²³Ibid., p. 95.

²⁴Lampe, The Seal of the Spirit, op. cit., p. 35.

possible a recreation through baptism in the name of Jesus. Those baptized in his name would receive the Holy Spirit. In the baptism of Jesus this was prefigured and proleptically completed.

Although the Advent of the New Covenant and the general outpouring of the Spirit still await the death and resurrection of Jesus by which alone they can be brought into being, the age of hope is already giving place to the age of fulfillment, and in the light of that fulfillment the Christian interpreter can look back to John's mission as the beginning of the Gospel . . . ²⁵

What, then, is the meaning of Jesus' baptism? It has a double thrust. (1) It foreshadowed the consummation of Jesus' work as the suffering Servant; and (2) it made possible the gift of the Spirit to the disciples. The goal of Jesus' baptism was the cross. At the cross the baptism of John received its fulfillment, for there Jesus achieved a "baptism" for all men, a "general baptism."²⁶ In this connection Lampe writes,

. . . the Baptism of Jesus was proleptic, signifying and summing up in a single action the entire mission and saving work of the Servant-Messiah, which was to be unfolded and revealed gradually in the course of his life, death, resurrection, and ascension . . . ²⁷

²⁵Ibid., p. 32.

²⁶Oscar Cullmann, Baptism in the New Testament, translated by J. K. S. Reid (London: S. C. M. Press Ltd., 1950), p. 19.

²⁷Lampe, The Seal of the Spirit, op. cit., p. 45.

This link between baptism and death is not a human invention. Christ himself forged this link. On two occasions he did this. When the sons of Zebedee asked to sit at his right and left hand, he replied, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" (Mk. 10:38). It seems to be quite evident that Jesus was referring to his death. He describes his death by the metaphors "cup" and "baptism." Perhaps Lampe is right when he calls attention to the metaphors. It may well be that Jesus was thinking of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Both baptism and the cup pointed to the cross. While talking to the people Jesus remarked, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how I am constrained until it is accomplished!" (Lk. 12:50). Here too Jesus seems to have referred to his death. The connection between baptism and death is emphasized when we remember that Jesus himself did not baptize, only his disciples (cf. John 4:1-2). The reason for his not baptizing may be this that for him "baptism" meant "death." Cullmann states:

It is he, Jesus, who will not only baptize individual men with water like John the Baptist but will complete the general Baptism, for all men, and once for all, at the moment of his atoning death.²⁸

The other thrust comes through not so much in baptism as in what surrounded it. The baptism of John did not give the

²⁸Op. cit., pp. 19-20.

Spirit. When the disciples of Jesus baptized, we hear nothing of the gift of the Spirit (John 4:1-2); in fact, John states that "as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (7:39). The Holy Spirit was still the promised Spirit (cf. Lk. 11:13; 12:10). At the close of Luke's gospel we read, "And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high" (24:49). While Jesus was on this earth bodily, the Holy Spirit was working through him. Only after Pentecost was the Holy Spirit to work in and through the disciples.

So far as Christ's followers were concerned, therefore, it was the completed baptisma of his death, and not merely His Baptism in the Jordan, which enabled them to receive the "Holy Spirit of promise." Indeed, for Jesus Himself the Spirit-baptism at the Jordan was in a sense proleptic, anticipating his "reception" of the "promise of the Holy Ghost" when he had been exalted at the right hand of God (Act 2:33).²⁹

The significance of Jesus' baptism for Christian baptism has generally been underestimated in the past. Seeing his baptism in the proper light helps to explain the importance of baptism in the early Christian church. It also helps to explain the association of baptism and the gift of the Spirit. After Jesus had been baptized, he received the Spirit. At Pentecost he poured out the Holy Spirit on his disciples. From that time on baptism and the Holy Spirit were associated in the baptismal context. At Jesus' baptism the

²⁹Lampe, The Seal of the Spirit, op. cit., p. 41.

association of baptism and Holy Spirit was established. In Christian baptism this association was continued and still prevails today. Jesus received the Holy Spirit for his task as Messiah. The disciples received him to be witness for Jesus to "the ends of the earth" (1:8).

The Association of Baptism and the Spirit

We shall discuss the material from two points of view. First, we shall examine the relationship between baptism and the Holy Spirit. Secondly, we shall look at the time sequence of baptism and the gift of the Spirit.

When we look at the relationship between baptism and the Holy Spirit in Acts we find three main categories. The first category is that one in which the baptism of John is contrasted with the baptism which the disciples were to receive (1:5; 11:16). The second category is the one in which the gift of Spirit is received right after baptism (19:5-6). And the third is the one in which the gift of the Spirit is received some time after baptism (8:12, 14-17).

The passages in which water and the Holy Spirit are contrasted constitute what is perhaps one of the most important categories, for they have a direct bearing on the question whether the disciples were baptized or not. The fact that these words are spoken by Jesus makes the contrast all the more emphatic. Beyer states, "Während die Johannesstaufe nur auf das Kommen des Messias vorbereiten sollte,

bricht mit der Geistestaufe die Heilszeit selbst herein."³⁰
 At first glance it seems as though Jesus were placing the two baptisms in opposition to each other. Each one is apparently exclusive of the other. However, this does not seem to be the purpose of placing the two over against each other. The baptism of John was not an end in itself; it pointed forward to a greater, the baptism with the Holy Spirit. The baptism of John was preparatory for the Spirit-baptism which the disciples later experienced.³¹ John's baptism was complemented by the gift of the Spirit. John's baptism and the gift of the Spirit at Pentecost foreshadowed Christian baptism. In this baptism water and the gift of the Spirit were constituting elements.

In Jerusalem Peter underscores this fact. When he preached to Cornelius in Caesarea, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard him preach (10:44). Peter then ordered those people baptized (10:48), since they had received the Holy Spirit just as the first disciples had (10:47). The clause "just as we have" already alerts us to the fact that Peter had Pentecost in mind. However, there is an even stronger note. When Peter was questioned about his going into the home of a Gentile and eating with him, Peter pointed out to

³⁰Hermann W. Beyer, "Die Apostelgeschichte," Das Neue Testament Deutsch, edited by Paul Althaus and Johannes Behm (5th edition, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1949), V, 8.

³¹Bruce, The Book of Acts, op. cit., p. 37.

his interrogators what happened. It was God acting through his Holy Spirit. While he was speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon his Gentile listeners (10:44; 11:15). The scene in the house of Cornelius reminded Peter of Pentecost, for he stated, "And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, 'John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit'" (11:16). These people received the Holy Spirit just as the disciples had received him (11:15). Peter did not dispense with baptism. He commanded that these people be baptized. This fact points up how closely baptism and the Holy Spirit were associated. Whether baptism or the gift of the Spirit came first, was not so important as that both of them should be present. Wherever one was present, there the other must also be. Wherever one or the other was missing the disciples did not consider such a person fully a member of the Christian fellowship (8:15-17; 19:1-6; cf. 18:25).

From the fact that Peter links the two occurrences so closely, and the fact that in the latter baptism is definitely administered, it would seem that the Cornelius incident (10:44-48 cf. 11:15-16) underlines the unity of thought of 1:5, where we have the promise of the gift of the Spirit. There is thus established an association of concepts which seems to tie water baptism and Spirit-baptism very closely. Spirit-baptism is actually the completion of the water-baptism which John administered. When the disciples began to baptize, we find the two united and present in one rite.

As we turn from the first to the second category (19:5-6), we come to what can be called the most perfect case history on the relationship between baptism and the Holy Spirit. In this situation we find three factors: (1) baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus, (2) the laying on of hands, and (3) the reception of the Holy Spirit. At Ephesus the Holy Spirit did not fall upon the people during the instructions of Paul. Paul laid his hands upon them, and they received the Holy Spirit. In his call to repentance on Pentecost Peter does not mention the laying on of hands. He promised the gift of the Spirit as a consequence of baptism. How the Spirit was going to come upon the converts Peter does not mention. "Those who received his word were baptized," but we do not read whether they received the Holy Spirit or not (2:41). If they did receive him, we are not told how, whether directly as the disciples and Cornelius did, or through the mediation of the apostles' hands.

In both of these narratives (2:38; 19:5-6) we have a close association of baptism and the Holy Spirit. We also notice that baptism precedes the gift of the Spirit. This seems to have been the case quite generally. The number of references in which baptism alone is mentioned seems to support this point of view. If these people did not receive the Holy Spirit, then the promise of Joel had not been fulfilled (2:17 39; cf. Joel 3:1). The gift of the Spirit was for all who came to faith through the word of the disciples (2:38-39). These two passages are the most solid. Using

these as a basis of operation we can try to grasp the meaning of the other passages in which baptism and the Holy Spirit are associated. Viewing the other passages from this vantage point definitely gives us a greater insight into the others. We are able to detect nuances which we might otherwise have overlooked. We see little hints and suggestions which make the others meaningful in the context established by these two passages.

The laying on of hands has some importance in this connection. It is mentioned once more with definite reference to the gift of the Spirit (8:17). As for the other reference (9:17), this passage may have reference to something else than the gift of the Spirit. The text mentions the laying on of hands only before baptism (9:17). We would take exception to Swete's statement:

The facts create the presumption that the laying on of hands after baptism by an Apostle was a recognized custom of the whole Church and one which it had pleased God to honor with special gifts of the Spirit of Christ.³²

The laying on of hands after baptism occurs only twice in Acts. From this we cannot infer the existence of a custom. God honored the laying on of hands by the gift of the Spirit. But it cannot be shown from the Book of Acts that the whole church ever practiced it.

³²Henry B. Swete, The Holy Spirit in the New Testament (London: Macmillan and Co., 1921), pp. 107-8.

As we come to the third category, we confront a somewhat peculiar situation. Some scholars³³ construe from this narrative that baptism was not the important sacrament, but the laying on of hands. The main passage on which they rest their thesis is this one (8:17). They emphasize this one occurrence so much that they overlook the context and the missionary emphasis of the book.³⁴

There does not seem to be any passage in the Book of Acts which states explicitly that the gift of the Spirit was given in baptism. But we read in several passages that the people received the Holy Spirit either shortly before baptism (10:44-48) or right after baptism (19:5-6). The Samaritan converts, however, did not receive the gift of the Spirit after baptism. Why Philip did not grant these converts the Spirit the text does not tell us. We only read that Peter and John came to Samaria and gave them the Holy Spirit. From the context we discover that the conversion of the Samaritans was an important step toward the Gentile mission. For this reason God may have wanted to make sure that the disciples in Jerusalem would be fully cognizant of this fact. God was leading the disciples toward the conversion of Cornelius. With the granting of the Holy Spirit the disciples acknowledged God's action. They accepted the converts into their fellow-

³³Dix, Thornton, Mason

³⁴Lampe, The Seal of the Spirit, op. cit., p. 72.

ship. This incident was preparatory for greater things to come.

Here we also have a close association of baptism and the gift of the Spirit. Even though the converts did not receive the Holy Spirit right after baptism, and this for a good reason, they did receive him not long after their baptism. The gift of the Spirit completed the baptism which they had received from Philip. The Christian baptism included both elements, baptism and the gift of the Spirit. In the Christian church the Holy Spirit and baptism were always associated.

In the baptism-Spirit association we have a complex of ideas: (1) the preaching of the word, (2) faith in Jesus, (3) baptism, (4) the remission of sin, (5) the laying on of hands, and (6) the reception of the Holy Spirit. In the different chapters these various elements appear with greater or lesser emphasis. Some of them may even be omitted. But three of these elements are always present: (1) the preaching of the word, (2) baptism and (3) the gift of the Spirit.

As a rule, baptism preceded the gift of the Spirit. However, before baptism was administered, the person was called to repentance. If he responded in faith to the call, then he received baptism (cf. 2:38; 8:12; 19:5). The gift of the Spirit followed after baptism. This is the reason why Paul was dubious about the "disciples" in Ephesus (19:2). If they had received Christian baptism, they would have the Holy Spirit. However, according to the account of Acts we cannot

say that baptism gave the Holy Spirit; rather we have to say that the gift of the Spirit came usually after baptism. In general we seem to have a progression from the preaching of the word through faith to baptism and the gift of the Spirit. In this progression some steps may be omitted. This may be the explanation for those passages in which baptism alone is mentioned. There is thus a close relationship between baptism and the gift of the Spirit, but this relationship is not causal. Baptism does not give the Holy Spirit. He comes to the believer after baptism. Stonehouse seems to have found a happy formulation:

The two [baptism and the Spirit] are intimately associated, and the gift of the Spirit may well be regarded as the normal concomitant of baptism, but it never appears as the inevitable or immediate consequence of baptism.³⁵

The reason why baptism and the gift of the Spirit are so closely associated may perhaps go back to the baptism of Jesus. After his baptism he received the Holy Spirit. When he later gave the Holy Spirit to his disciples and they began to baptize people, water baptism and the gift of the Spirit were associated as the outer and inner reality of the "sacramental rite."³⁶

³⁵N. B. Stonehouse, "Repentance, Baptism and the Gift of the Holy Spirit," Westminster Theological Journal, XIII, 1 (November 1950), 14.

³⁶Lampe, The Seal of the Spirit, op. cit., pp. 34-35.

In this section we noted two emphases. On the one hand we have the close connection between baptism and the gift of the Spirit. Christians usually received the Holy Spirit after baptism. On the other hand, the writer does not say that the Spirit was not given through baptism. The Spirit came rather after baptism. Baptism and the gift of the Spirit are co-ordinated in the Book of Acts.

Instances Where Only One Factor Appears

The bestowal of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost presents more difficulties than the Cornelius incident, though both occurrences are closely related.³⁷ Yet at Pentecost the disciples were not baptized after they received the Holy Spirit. At Caesarea the people were baptized. Since Peter stated, "Can any one forbid water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have" (10:47), he seems to imply that the disciples too had received baptism. Again when he remarked, "If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God" (11:17), he re-emphasized the point of similarity. Why was baptism so important to Peter at Caesarea? When we assume that baptism was also what the disciples had received before the Holy Spirit came upon them, then we can understand why Peter could not think of the Holy Spirit without baptism. For him baptism

³⁷Swete, op. cit., p. 29.

and the Holy Spirit went hand in hand.

What is the evidence which leads us to assume that the disciples received the baptism of John? There are no explicit statements in the New Testament which would support such a supposition. Since this is the case, we cannot construct an air-tight case. However, we can show that it is not only possible for the disciples to have received baptism from John; it is quite probable. The first piece of evidence which we want to submit is the well-known fact that two disciples, John and Andrew (John 1:37-40) were disciples of John. Whether any more of the disciples were followers of John we do not know, since the New Testament is silent in this matter. However, there is a good possibility that James and Peter, brothers of John and Andrew, were also followers of John. Peter, like John and Andrew, was looking for the Messiah (John 1:41). This seems to have been the general mood of the Jews before and during the time of Jesus. When John came and created such a stir in Palestine (cf. Mt. 3:5-7), it is hard to imagine that men who later became disciples of Jesus would not go out to this John to see him and perhaps to become his disciples.

This is not all our evidence. There is another passage which we have to consider in this connection. In the Gospel of John we read that Jesus baptized (4:1), but the writer clarifies his statement by saying, ". . . Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples . . ." (4:2). We know

that Jesus in the beginning of his ministry took up the message of John (Mt. 4:17; cf. 3:2). His disciples later on had the same message to proclaim (Mt. 10:7). When we combine these two factors, we note: (1) John the Baptist called to repentance, for the kingdom of heaven was at hand; (2) when Jesus began his ministry, he had the same message, and (3) Jesus' disciples proclaimed the same message. Side by side with his message John baptized. In the early part of his ministry Jesus and his disciples baptized. Later in his ministry neither he nor his disciples baptized. Since the disciples baptized others, it is quite possible that they too had received baptism either at the hands of John or one of their companions.

There is another point which we have to consider. Jesus put great value on baptism (cf. Mt. 28:19). He himself was baptized (Mk. 1:8). He described his death as a baptism (Mk. 10:38; Lk. 12:50). Since baptism was so important for Jesus, and since Jesus himself received baptism at the hands of John, it is very likely that the disciples of Jesus too were baptized at the hand of John. This would also help explain the early and regular use of baptism in the Christian church. As soon as the disciples had received the Holy Spirit, they baptized (2:41) and promised the Holy Spirit (2:38). The gospels mention "baptism" only in connection with John the Baptist, in the early ministry of Jesus, and toward the end of Jesus' life, when he called his death on the cross a

"baptism" (Mk. 10:38-39; Lk. 12:50), and the baptismal command (Mt. 28:19). When the Christian church admits people into its fellowship, it is by repentance and baptism. This fact can best be explained if we assume that the disciples were convinced of the importance of baptism and that they were baptized themselves.

There is yet another factor which seems to support the assumption that the disciples were baptized. When we look at the story of Cornelius, we note that Peter mentioned explicitly the parallel between this incident and the occurrence at Pentecost (10:47; 11:17). Since he insisted that these people receive baptism after they had received the Holy Spirit, this would indicate the importance of baptism in connection with the Holy Spirit. But may it not show more? Since Peter made the comparison with the gift of the Spirit, may he not also imply that these people had to receive baptism just as the first disciples had received it? In connection with the other points this seems to have some weight; it also adds some force to the argument that the disciples did most likely receive the baptism of John.

Granted that this is the case, we notice the similarity between the baptism of Jesus and the baptism of the disciples. Jesus received the Holy Spirit after his baptism by John. The disciples did not receive the Holy Spirit, for he "was not yet" (John 7:39). When Jesus was raised from the dead to the right hand of the Father, he received the Spirit from him

and poured him out on the disciples (2:33), but cf. John 20: 22-23. The gift of the Spirit at Pentecost completed the baptism of the disciples. They, like their Lord, received both baptism and the Holy Spirit. In this context it is understandable that the disciples insisted upon the baptism of all those who came into their fellowship. Those who entered the Christian fellowship were to receive baptism and the gift of the Spirit just as the Lord and his disciples had. Christian baptism goes, ultimately, back to the Lord himself.

We note that only the disciples who followed Jesus during his three years on earth received baptism from John and the gift of the Spirit from Jesus (cf. 19:1-6). They had experienced the physical presence of the Lord. Later disciples of Jesus had the same experience, however, through baptism. In baptism they met Jesus, into whose name they were baptized. Flemington remarks, "Thus we might say that for the average convert baptism 'symbolized' the Gospel of the Resurrection."³⁸ The disciples had met the Lord physically. The converts too met him but symbolically in baptism. Every Christian met his Lord either directly or through the word and baptism.

Pentecost was, therefore, first of all the completion of the water-baptism which the disciples had most likely received from John. John's baptism was the basis for Christian baptism. John was the messenger sent before Jesus

³⁸Op. cit., The Seal of the Spirit, p. 46.

(Mt. 11:20; Lk 7:27). What John began in the desert Jesus continued and completed. Lampe insists that there would be no Christian baptism if John had not baptized. He also states in this connection:

The work of Jesus was a continuation, or rather a fulfillment, of John's mission, and there was evidently a most intimate connection between the movement initiated by John, on the one hand, and Jesus and His followers, on the other. Christianity, in fact, sprang from John's mission of preaching and baptizing, a truth that the Synoptic Gospels clearly indicate.³⁹

There is a continuity which runs from the baptism of John through the baptism of Jesus and the disciples to Christian baptism. The basis of Christian baptism is the baptism of John and the command of the Lord (Mt. 28:19). The similarities between the two baptisms also seem to point in that direction. Both (1) were for the forgiveness of sins, (2) initiated into a new community, and (3) prepared for the gift of the Spirit. But there was something in the Christian baptism which the baptism of John did not have--the Holy Spirit. Lampe notes:

The baptism of John, as we have seen, was an act of prophetic symbolism expressive of the cleansing of the faithful Remnant in preparation for the expected 'baptism' of the Spirit and fire in the Messianic age. The Christian rite, as we meet it after Pentecost, is still a baptism of water accompanied by repentance, but it is administered in the name of Jesus and through it the Spirit is actually bestowed. It is still an eschatological rite, for it looks forward to the final redemption which is still to come at the Lord's return in glory; but, considered in relation to John's baptism, it represents a realization and ful-

³⁹Op. cit., p. 20.

fillment of Israel's hope. Hence the emphasis in Christian thought is shifted from the prophecy of a coming baptism of fire to the realization of a present baptism of Spirit (1:8).⁴⁰

Pentecost was the fulfillment of John's promise. The Holy Spirit came upon the disciples. In his power the disciples were bringing people to the knowledge of Jesus Christ and under his rule. The converts met the risen Lord in baptism and received the gift of the Spirit.

Pentecost was the completion of John's baptism and the beginning of Christian baptism. The baptism of John had done its work. Jesus had completed his baptism on the cross. When he had ascended to his Father, he poured out the Holy Spirit upon his disciples (2:33). When the people who heard Peter preach asked what they should do, he told them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (2:38). There are two important features in Christian baptism: (1) baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, and (2) the gift of the Spirit. These are something new, a part of the baptism which began with Pentecost. At the same time they go back to the baptism of Jesus.

Cullmann writes in this connection:

That this is the hour of the birth of the Church
Baptism is congruous with the temporal course of
salvation history: the atoning work of Christ is
completed here. The temporal center of all history,

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 33.

the death and resurrection of Christ, is also the center of the history of baptism. But Pentecost represents the decisive turning point for the subsequent course of this history, not only because it completes the salvation events but also because the further unfolding of salvation history begins from here. The Church is constituted here as the locus of the Holy Spirit, as the Body of Christ crucified and risen. Thus the baptismal death of Christ completed once for all on the cross passes over into Church baptism.⁴¹

In Christian baptism Christology and pneumatology are very closely related. Every baptism into Christ becomes a sharing in the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus gives to those who received baptism.

There are a number of passages in which baptism alone is mentioned without any reference to the Holy Spirit (2:41; 8:38; 9:18; 16:15,33; 18:8; 22:16). What shall we conclude from these passages? Can we go along with Lampe, who states:

It is fairly clear, in view of Acts 2:38 and the prophecy of Joel, that St. Luke believes the gift to be conferred on all Christians, and it is very probable that he deems it unnecessary to mention in every case of baptism that the baptized person received the Spirit. It could safely be left to his readers to infer so much.⁴²

In the sections in which baptism and the Holy Spirit are associated we have a complex of ideas. The complex is made up of the following: (1) preaching of the word, (2) repentance, (3) baptism upon the name of Jesus for the

⁴¹Op. cit., p. 22

⁴²The Holy Spirit in the Writings of St. Luke, op. cit., p. 198.

forgiveness of sin, (4) the gift of the Spirit (2:38); (1) preaching of the word, (2) faith, (3) baptism, (4) laying on of hands, and (5) the reception of the Holy Spirit (8:12-17); (1) preaching the word, (2) the gift of the Spirit, (3) baptism (10:44,48); (1) teaching the word, (2) baptism, (3) laying on of hands, and (4) reception of the Holy Spirit (19:5-6). In each of the instances enumerated above we have three elements: (1) the preaching of the word, (2) baptism, and (3) the gift of the Spirit. It may not be impossible to show that in each instance also faith was present before baptism was administered.

In Luke-Acts the verb **ΜΕΤΑΝΟΕΩ** can mean "to turn away from" as in the story of Simon the magician (8:22). This is the narrower use of the word. When Peter and John spoke to the people in the temple, they used the word in this sense (3:19; cf. 26:20). At other times **ΜΕΤΑΝΟΕΩ** can include both "turning from" and "turning to." At Athens Paul stated, "The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all men everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed" (17:30-31). In the Gospel of Luke we also have some passages in which **ΜΕΤΑΝΟΕΩ** is taken in the larger sense (13:3, 5; 15:7, 10; 16:30). Most of the time when the verb **ΜΕΤΑΝΟΕΩ** is used alone it has reference to the total change of a person's life. When Peter told his hearers to repent, he called them to faith in the Lord Jesus. Thus we have two passages in which faith either occurs or is implied (2:38;

8:12,17).

When we look at the story of Cornelius, we note that the Holy Spirit fell upon all those "who heard the word" (10:44). In Acts the word **ἀκούω** is very important. It is used about 88 times. We shall consider only those passages in which hearing and faith or believing are expressly associated. The first such passage we have in 4:2 (cf. 15:7). "But many of those who heard the word believed . . ." This took place after the preaching of Peter in the temple. When Paul preached in Corinth, many of the Corinthians "hearing Paul believed and were baptized" (18:8). We have here three passages in which **ἀκούω** and **πιστεύω** are explicitly associated. There are also instances in which the verb is used absolutely in the inclusive sense, meaning "hear and believe" in one. Such an instance we have in Paul's discussion with the twelve disciples in Ephesus. We read, "On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord" (19:5; cf. 2:37). There are only two instances in which the word **ἀκούω** is used in the inclusive sense. Both of these have baptism succeeding them. It seems quite evident that the verb **ἀκούω** has something to do with faith.

We have thus four common denominators in all of the sections which deal with baptism and the Holy Spirit: (1) the speaking of the word, (2) faith, (3) baptism, and (4) the gift of the Spirit. Now we shall look at those sections which mention only baptism and compare the two. We shall see that there is a great similarity between the two, only in the

latter the gift of the Spirit is not mentioned.

The first account in which baptism alone occurs we have in 4:41. The incident took place after the sermon of Peter. The word which Peter preached effected a change in the lives of the hearers. Luke notes two things concerning them: (1) they received the word, and (2) they were baptized. The word *ἀποδέχομαι* meaning "receive" is used five times in Acts. But there is no parallel to this instance. However we find the simplex of this verb, *δέχομαι*, used in exactly the same sense in 8:14 and 11:1 (cf. Lk. 8:13). In both of these instances the writer uses *δέχομαι* to describe the acceptance of the gospel by the Samaritans. "Receiving" the word would then stand for "accepting" or "believing" the word. Thus we get the sequence: (1) preaching the word, (2) believing, and (3) reception of baptism.

The section which relates the conversion of the eunuch (8:26-40) describes the following sequence of events: (1) Philip explained the meaning of Isaiah 53:7-8 to the eunuch, (2) the eunuch asked, "What is to prevent my being baptized" (10:36)? and (3) Philip baptizes the eunuch. That the eunuch asked to be baptized seems to imply that he had faith in the Lord Jesus. The sequence of events would then be similar to the one above.

In the story of Paul's baptism we have this complex of ideas: (1) Ananias laid his hands upon Paul's head, (2) he spoke to him about what had happened, and promised him healing

and the Holy Spirit, (3) the healing took place, and (4) Paul arose and was baptized. The "speaking of the word" was prominent at the conversion of Paul (cf. 22:13-15). Ananias explained to Paul that which took place and what he was to do. Then the healing took place. From the gospels we know that healing takes place where there is faith. Acts too states this connection (3:16; 14:9). Thus we may conclude that healing was the result of Paul's faith in the Lord (cf. Mt. 9:22). Again we have the sequence of (1) word, (2) faith, and (3) baptism.

In chapter sixteen the writer relates two occurrences of baptism without the mention of the Holy Spirit. The first one speaks of Lydia's conversion (16:15). When Paul spoke to the women at the bank of the river, the Lord opened the heart of Lydia to receive the word which Paul preached. Thereupon she was baptized. She evidenced her faith by urging the missionaries to stay with her (16:14-15). We notice the complex of (1) word, (2) faith,⁴³ and (3) baptism. The second occurrence relates the conversion of the jailer in Philippi (16:33). After a shocking earthquake had taken place, the terrified jailer asked the missionaries what he must do to be saved. Paul told him, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household"

⁴³ *προβέχω τοῖς λαλουμένοις* means as much as *πιστεύω* (cf. 8:6 10 11).

(16:31). Paul spoke the word of God to him and to the members of the household (16:32). The jailer then took them, washed their wounds, and was baptized with his whole house. He gave them food, and rejoiced that he had come to faith in God. The text states clearly that the jailor had faith. ". . . he rejoiced with all his household that he had believed in God" (16:34). That he had this faith before he was baptized can be seen (1) by Paul's injunction to believe in the Lord and (2) by his action. The sequence here is the same as in the other accounts, (1) word, (2) faith, and (3) baptism.

The last text is a classic which brings out the sequence which we have observed so far, very clearly (18:8-9). Through Paul's preaching Crispus and many Corinthians believed in the Lord, and they were baptized. The sequence consistently appearing in the other texts is here stated clearly and unambiguously. (1) The preaching of Paul (2) produced faith in the hearers; (3) they were baptized.

There is another text, but we shall not enter into a discussion of it here, since it deals with Paul's conversion and baptism which we have already treated in 9:18 (22:15-16).

After we have analyzed the passages which mention baptism alone, we note three features which appear consistently: (1) the preaching, teaching or transmitting of the word, (2) the response in faith, and (3) baptism. In some stories the presence of faith is not explicitly stated. But when we look more closely we find "faith" present in all

of the incidents. How does this reoccurring complex compare with the features of the first group? The two almost coincide. The only feature which is absent in these but found in the former is the gift of the Spirit. From this fact we can conclude that Lampe is right when he states,

. . . it is very probable that he [Luke] deems it unnecessary to mention in every case of baptism that the baptized person received the Spirit. It could safely be left to the readers to infer so much.⁴⁴

It seems evident that Luke, even though he does not mention the Holy Spirit, means to say that the people who received baptism also received the Holy Spirit. Only at decisive moments does he mention the Holy Spirit.

The texts which we have examined show how closely baptism and the gift of the Spirit are connected. When baptism was mentioned, people of the first century immediately assumed that the Holy Spirit had been given too. Perhaps the fact that Luke does not mention the gift of the Spirit is a stronger argument for his presence than if he had mentioned him. However, this argument from silence is only valid if and when it can be shown that there is a close correspondence between the passages which mention both baptism and the Holy Spirit and those which mention only baptism. Since we have done this, and we trust with some success, we may use the argument from silence to support the thesis that baptism and the gift of the Spirit are closely and

⁴⁴Lampe, The Holy Spirit in the Writings of St. Luke, op. cit., p. 198.

organically related.

The Baptismal Context

As we survey the path which we have traversed through the Book of Acts, we notice that the gift of the Spirit was not received by Christians in a uniform manner. Sometimes the Holy Spirit came upon people before baptism, sometimes after; sometimes he came immediately after baptism, sometimes an interval of time elapsed. Why does Luke present the activities of the Spirit in this way? Luke did not write a systematic account of the activity of the Spirit. He described his actions in and through the disciples of the early church. When the Holy Spirit is at work, there is at work, there is variety and freedom, for his is the Spirit of God. The best approach to the Book of Acts is an open heart which is ready to hear and willing to obey. Only in this way can we fully appreciate this unique book and see its great value.

When we approach the Book of Acts as a description of the Spirit's activity, we can more readily trace his "foot-steps," discover how he has been at work in and through the disciples, and learn something about the relationship which exists between baptism and the Holy Spirit. This relationship we should like to call "baptismal context." The Holy Spirit comes before or after baptism. But Luke does not report any incident in which the Holy Spirit comes to people outside the baptismal context. Baptism and the Holy Spirit

are not always given through the same human agent. We find Philip baptizing and the apostles conferring the Holy Spirit (8:12,17). Yet there is a unity between the two. Baptism without the Holy Spirit is impossible (19:1-4). The gift of the Spirit outside the baptismal context does not occur.⁴⁵ Baptism is usually followed by the gift of the Spirit also where this is not specifically mentioned.

There are about seventy occurrences of the word *πνεῦμα* in the Book of Acts. Of these, eleven do not speak of the Holy Spirit (unclean spirits 5:16; 8:7; 16:16; 19:12-13, 15-16; the human spirit 7:59; 17:16; a spirit 23:8-9). Which of those passages remaining mention the gift of the Spirit? The following passages come into immediate consideration: 1:5,8; 2:4,17-18,33,38; 8:15,17-19; 10:38,44-45,47; 11:15-16; 15:8; 19:2,6.

Other passages which also merit investigation but are not of such decisive importance are: 4:8,31; 6:3,5; 7:55; 9:17; 11:24; 13:9,52. These have either *πλήρης* or *πλήρημι* together with the Holy Spirit. It is especially the second verb which we want to study in its various contexts, since it has a dynamic aspect to it. We want to see whether it can mean "receiving the Holy Spirit."

First we shall study the passages which clearly speak of gift of the Spirit. In chapter one (1:5,8) we have two

⁴⁵This has reference only to the reception of the Holy Spirit by converts.

passages which mention the gift of the Spirit. These passages occur in the final discourse of Jesus to his disciples. Jesus promised them the Holy Spirit "before many days." The Holy Spirit was to enable them to be witnesses for Christ to the end of the earth. The fulfillment of Jesus' promise took place on Pentecost (2:4,17-18,33). In his sermon Peter pointed out that the Holy Spirit came from Jesus, who had received him from his Father (2:33). The Holy Spirit could not be bestowed before the ascension of Jesus (Lk. 24:49; cf. John 7:39). He was a gift of the ascended Lord to his disciples. God had promised his Spirit upon all flesh (Joel 3:1-5). In Jesus this promise of God was proleptically fulfilled. Now it was being fulfilled in the apostles; the gift of the various tongues points to the further fulfillment of the promise through the apostles. They would carry the message of Jesus to all men. Those who would accept their message would be baptized and receive the Holy Spirit. For the disciples, too, the gift of the Holy Spirit came in the baptismal context, for the disciples had received baptism at the hands of John earlier in their life.

In chapter two we have another significant passage about the gift of the Spirit (2:38). When those who listened to Peter asked, "Brethren, what shall we do?" (2:37, Peter told them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (2:38). Here we have a clear connection between baptism and the Holy Spirit.

Peter asked them to submit to baptism; then they would receive the gift of the Spirit. Reception of the Holy Spirit was in connection with baptism.

Next we come to chapter eight. Here we have the pericope which deals with the conversion of the Samaritans. Philip preached in Samaria with great success. When those who heard him preach came to faith, Philip baptized them. However, he did not give them the Holy Spirit. After the news of Samaria's conversion reached Jerusalem, the apostles and elders sent Peter and John to Samaria. When they came to Samaria, they prayed that the converts might receive the Spirit. Then they laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. Here baptism preceded the gift of the Spirit by a greater interval of time than usual. But this was the way which the Holy Spirit chose. Here too we have the Holy Spirit coming in the context of baptism.

The conversion of Cornelius is one of the most important incidents in the Book of Acts (10:44-48). While Peter was still speaking about Jesus, the Holy Spirit fell upon his listeners. The Jews who had come with Peter from Joppa were amazed that the gift of the Spirit was poured out upon the Gentiles also. Peter recognized the similarity between the outpouring of the Holy Spirit here and at Pentecost. He used this similarity as an argument for the baptism of the Gentiles. He challenged the Jews with these words, "Can any one forbid water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" (10:47). Then these people were

baptized. Here we have an inversion of the two factors. First comes the Holy Spirit, and then baptism. This order, however, has a good reason. Peter might never without divine prompting and guidance have dared to baptize these people in order that they might thus receive the Holy Spirit. God showed him the way. In this way Peter was assured of God's will, and he was encouraged to proceed with baptism. Since God had acted, Peter could only assent and carry out God's will. Also here we have the baptismal context as the unifying element. Baptism and the Holy Spirit are closely associated in this context.

When Peter stood before the apostles and elders in Jerusalem, some of the Jewish Christians criticized him for going to Gentiles and eating with them. Peter pointed to the action of God. While he preached, the Spirit fell upon the Gentiles. Since the Holy Spirit came upon them as he came upon the disciples, God evidently considered the Gentiles like the Jews. God had made both one. For this reason Peter also felt compelled to accept their table fellowship (10:15-16). When the Jewish Christians heard this, "they were silenced" (10:18). Peter mentioned this incident again when the disciples met at the council in Jerusalem to discuss the matter of circumcision (15:5). He pointed out that "God who knows the heart bore witness to them giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us . . ." (15:8). To ask any more of the disciples of Gentile background was to go against God. God had accepted them as they were. Who could ask any more?

Again "all the assembly kept silence; and they listened . . ." (15:12). The Gentiles received the Holy Spirit in the baptismal context. More they did not need. More than that the disciples could not demand.

The final passage which mentions the reception of the Holy Spirit we have in chapter nineteen (19:26). When Paul came to Ephesus, he met some Christians who did not give any evidence that they had received the Spirit. He asked them whether they had received the Spirit when they came to faith. Apparently these people had received baptism.⁴⁶ However, baptism without the Holy Spirit is not the right baptism. The "disciples" had not even heard that the Holy Spirit had been given.⁴⁷ Since they had received only the baptism of John, Paul instructed them in the meaning of John's baptism. After they had been baptized, Paul laid his hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. Here also baptism and the Holy Spirit are associated. Baptism which does not bring the Holy Spirit cannot be Christian baptism, for Christian baptism is followed by the gift of the Spirit.

In each instance we have seen that baptism and the Holy Spirit occur conjointly. To converts the Holy Spirit is never given outside the baptismal context. Only in this context does the Holy Spirit come into the lives of the disciples.

⁴⁶ ΠΙΣΤΕΥΟΜΕΝΟΙ is the same as "als ihr getauft wurdet," Haenchen, *op. cit.*, p. 488.

⁴⁷This is the way most commentators on Acts take 19:2b.

Now we turn to those passages in which either the adjective *πλήρης* or the verb *πίμπλημι* appears. We note that these two words are never used when converts receive the Holy Spirit. Only in chapter two is the verb used together with the first reception of the Holy Spirit (2:4). This reception of the Holy Spirit completed the baptism of John which the disciples had most likely received. Therefore, the gift of the Spirit came in the context of baptism. The verb gets its particular meaning from the context. The adjective *πλήρης* can mean "filled, full," as a basket full of pieces (Mk. 8:19), or "complete," as a complete reward lacking nothing (2 John 8).⁴⁸ Thus we see that the adjective has descriptive features. The verb, on the other hand, shows dynamic features. In connection with the verb Schweizer states, "Der Glaubende 'hat' den Geist nicht anders als er durch Jesus Christus den treuen Gott 'hat,' auf dessen immer neues Handeln er sich verlassen darf."⁴⁹ The verb connotes the idea of a constant gift rather than a static possession. Only as God gives the Holy Spirit to man does man have him.

The adjective *πλήρης* would not play into the discussion since it does not connote the idea of a gift, but rather of a possession. The following passages would thus be eliminated from our consideration: 6:3,5; 7:55; 11:24. The other

⁴⁸William F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c. 1957), pp. 675-6.

⁴⁹Eduard Schweizer, "Πνεῦμα," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Friedrich (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, G.m.b.H., 1959), VI, 404.

passages (4:8,31; 9:17; 13:9,52) have the verb. These we have to consider.

Before we enter this the discussion we should point out that all those who were "filled" with the Holy Spirit were Christians and had most likely received the gift of the Spirit. There are only two cases which are an exception to this fact (2:4; 9:17). In 4:8 it is Peter who was filled with the Holy Spirit when he faced the Sanhedrin. In 13:9 it is Paul who was filled with the Holy Spirit when he faced Elymas. The disciples at Antioch in Pisidia were "filled with joy and the Holy Spirit" (13:52). These passages would not come into consideration since they do not speak about the first reception of the Holy Spirit.

Actually there are only two passages which speak clearly of the first reception of the Holy Spirit in connection with the verb *πίμπλημι* (2:4; 9:17). The third passage, the only one which we have not yet mentioned, speaks of Christians who are "filled" with the Holy Spirit (4:31). "And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness." Davies takes this passage to refer to Pentecost, since the Holy Spirit cannot be given more than once. "Here we have then, without question, the Old Testament conception of the ruach adonai, which is to be poured out in the latter days."⁵⁰ However, there

⁵⁰John G. Davies, The Spirit, the Church, and the Sacraments (London: Faith Press, 1954), p. 27.

does not seem to be a problem. The difficulty arises when a person makes the assumption that the Holy Spirit cannot be granted more than once. Christians have the Holy Spirit only as God gives him to them. The Holy Spirit is not a static possession but a constant gift (cf. 1 Cor. 12:7; Eph. 1:17). The other two passages speak of the first reception of the Holy Spirit (2:4; 9:17), but both of them have the baptismal context, in which the disciples receive the Holy Spirit. The disciples were most likely baptized by John the Baptist. Paul was baptized by Ananias; the gift of the Holy Spirit completed the baptism which the disciples and Paul had received. That they were "filled" with the Holy was a result of the Holy Spirit's descent on them after baptism.

We have seen that the first gift of the Spirit was not received outside the baptismal context. The baptismal context is the field of operation of the Holy Spirit. In that field he meets the converts, sometimes before, sometimes after baptism; sometimes right after baptism, sometimes after a longer interval. However, baptism and the Holy Spirit are never severed. The two belong together for the converts. The passages which do not mention the gift of the Spirit in connection with after baptism are a strong argument in favor of the baptismal context, for Luke could assume that the Christian readers would supply the reception of the Spirit in such contexts. Baptism and the gift of the Spirit were associated very closely. When Luke notes the fact that the Holy Spirit came upon the converts, at the time of

their conversion, he wants to emphasize the point that God is in control at all times, including the crucial moments of the Christian fellowship and its mission into all the world.

CONCLUSION

The disciples have a mission, to carry the good news of Jesus, the Christ, "to the end of the earth" (1:8). For this task Jesus promised them the "power" of the Spirit. Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit upon his disciples on Pentecost. These are the two poles of Acts--the mission and the Holy Spirit. The disciples are caught in the middle.

Against this dynamic background Luke wants us to understand the working of the Holy Spirit in Acts. Reading the book for a few times a person might be tempted to schematize the relationship between baptism and the Holy Spirit in the following manner: (1) the Christian fellowship is the redeemed community which has the Holy Spirit. (2) Baptism is an initiation into the community. (3) The convert initiated into the community receives the Holy Spirit. This is a rather neat scheme. Almost all of the passages would seem to fit into such an outline with the notable exception of one. That is the passage in which we read that the Holy Spirit fell upon the listeners while Peter was still preaching (10:44; cf. 11:15). If we want to account for this passage, we have to revise our scheme or abandon it. The latter seems the better course in view of the evidence. The Holy Spirit is not a dynamo operative within the Christian fellowship, to whom people have to be attached by baptism before they will give light. He is

rather a person, the third person in the Trinity (not in rank but in enumeration), who works in the Christian fellowship preparing for himself people who will carry the good news of Jesus, the Christ into all the world. He uses the words and the hands of the messengers to reach people with word and baptism and to bring them into the Christian fellowship where he prepares them for service. This approach gives us a dynamic view of the Holy Spirit as he works in and through the Christian fellowship. The Holy Spirit is sent by God to glorify Jesus Christ through the Christian fellowship by means of the word and water.

When we look into our Confessions, we note that this is where the emphasis lies (Apology XXIV 70 Epitome II I Solid Declaration II 65 III 16). The Holy Spirit works per verbum et sacramentum (Apology XXIV 70). Our Confessions clearly expound the Scriptures carefully and properly.

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