

Immersion From Above



Foundations (Day 138)
by Derek Prince

We have seen that the literal, root meaning of the verb phrase "to baptise" is "to cause something to be dipped or immersed." Thus, the phrase "to be baptised in the Holy Spirit" suggests that the believer's whole personality is immersed, surrounded and enveloped in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, coming down over him from above and from without.

We need to bear in mind that, in the natural order, there are two possible ways of being immersed in water. A person may go down beneath the surface of the water and come up from under it. Or a person may walk under a waterfall and allow himself to be immersed from above. This second form of immersion is the spiritual counterpart of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Without exception, in every place in the book of Acts where the baptism in the Holy Spirit is described, language is used which indicates that the Holy Spirit comes down over, or is poured out upon, the believer from above. For example, on the day of Pentecost:

> "There came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting." (Acts 2:2)

Later Peter twice confirms this interpretation of the experience. First he declares that this experience is the fulfilment of God's promise.

> "In the last days... I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh." (Acts 2:17)

And he says again concerning Christ:

> "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear." (Acts 2:33)

In each case the picture is one of the Holy Spirit being poured out over the believers from above.

In Acts 8:16 the phrase used for the same experience is that of the Holy Spirit "falling upon" the believers. Here again the language depicts the Spirit coming down over them from above.

In Acts 10, concerning the people in the house of Cornelius, both phrases are used one after the other. In verse 44 we read: "the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word." In verse 45 we read: "the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also." This shows that the phrases "to fall upon" and "to be poured out on" are used interchangeably in this connection.

Again, when Peter describes the same event in the house of Cornelius, he says:

> "The Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning." (Acts 11:15)

Here the phrase "as upon us at the beginning" indicates that the experience of Cornelius and his household was exactly parallel to the experience of the disciples in the upper room on the day of Pentecost.

The experience of which we are speaking is made up of two distinct but complementary aspects, one outward and the other inward.

1. Outwardly, the invisible presence and power of the Holy Spirit comes down from above upon the believer and surrounds, envelops and immerses him.
2. Inwardly, the believer, in the likeness of one drinking, receives the presence and power of the Holy Spirit within himself until there comes a point at which the Holy Spirit, thus received, in turn wells up within the believer and flows forth like a river from the inmost depths of his being.

Devotional

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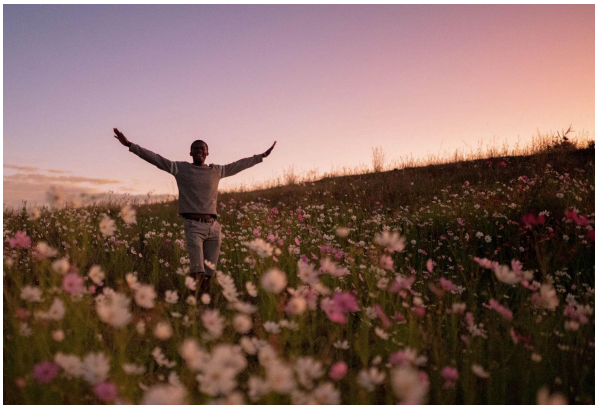

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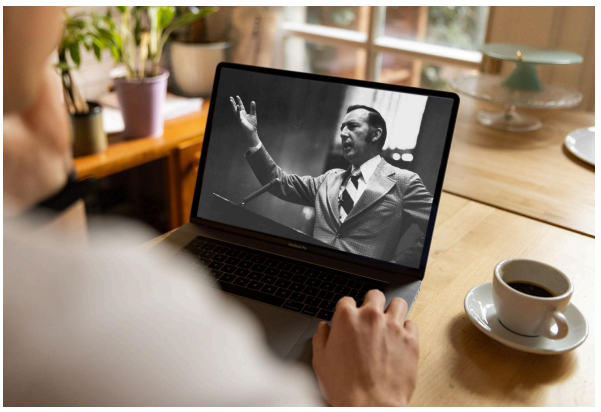

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