

THE OAKWOOD ROAD

CONTENDER

"...exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith..."

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Volume 1

April 23, 2017

Issue 14

IN ONE SPIRIT

I answer the following question: I read, years ago, your article in Lard's Quarterly on "By one Spirit are we all baptized into the one body," etc. J. J. Haley claims for it Holy Spirit baptism. Have you changed your view, or do you believe now as you did then? - W. C. Rogers.

I remember the article referred to, but I long ago gave away the copy of the Quarterly which contained it, and I can not now consult it. The article had rather a singular origin. Bro. Lard and I agreed as to the meaning of the passage; but he had some misgivings about it, so he made the proposal that I should write a defense of our interpretation; that he should make under an assumed name the strongest objections to it that he could, and that I should then make a short rejoinder. It has been so long since I read my article that I can not now recall all the course of my argument, and I am not sure that I did not say some things that I would not now repeat; but my understanding of the apostle's meaning has undergone no change, and I will try to set it forth in brief.

As given in the Revised Version, the language of the text is this: "For in one spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13). Two facts in the past experience of the disciples are here set forth: first, that in one Spirit they had all been baptized into one body; and second, that they had all been made to drink of one Spirit. I

think that it will not be denied that the word "drink," in the latter clause, is a metaphor for the enjoyment of the Holy Spirit; and that the reference is to that gift of the Holy Spirit promised to all who repent and are baptized. This enjoyment of the Spirit, which begins of course with its reception, is represented by the apostle as being preceded by the other fact that all had been in one Spirit baptized into one body. In other words, being baptized into the one body had preceded being made to drink of the one Spirit. Can the baptism then mean the baptism in the Holy Spirit? I think not; for he who is thus baptized begins in the act to drink of the Spirit, and this drinking would not be spoken of as a subsequent and separate experience.

Again, in all passages where the word "baptize" is connected with that in or into which the act brings the subject, the verb is placed first. For example, "I baptize you in water;" "He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire;" "All who were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death." Even in our passage, "baptized into one body." Now, if the apostle had meant to say that this baptism into one body was the Holy Spirit baptism, he would have expressed himself, according to the universal usage, differently. He would have said, "We were all baptized in one Spirit into one body." This would have been unambiguous. But, connecting the ex-

pression "into one body" with the baptism, he places the expression in "one spirit," not between them, but before both. What, then, does he mean by this latter expression? This is the real issue.

It is well known that Paul, in a few instances, uses the expression, "in the Spirit," for the state of one in whom the Spirit dwells; but it is also used to indicate the controlling guidance of the Holy Spirit; and the latter usage is more frequent than the former. What is more to the point, the latter usage is the one that prevails throughout the context of the passage under discussion. The introductory remark of the context is this: "Wherefore, I give you to understand that no man speaking in the Spirit of God saith Jesus is anathema; and no man can say Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit" (v. 2). Now, a man can say Jesus is Lord without being in the Holy Spirit in the sense of having the Holy Spirit dwelling in him, but he cannot say it without the Holy Spirit as his guide to a knowledge of Jesus. The Spirit's guidance in the matter is exercised through the word of truth. Farther on the apostle adds: "For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom; and to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit; and to another the gift of healing, in the same Spirit" (vs. 8, 9); where the expressions "through the Spirit," "according to the same Spirit," and "in the same Spirit," are equivalents, and all specify the action of the Holy Spirit in the several instances, and not the state

of being in the Holy Spirit. If there could be any doubt of this, it would be removed by verse 11, which is a summary of the preceding specifications of the Spirit's work: "But all these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as he will." In such a connection, when the apostle adds, "in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body," it appears incontrovertible that he is adding another specification of what the Holy Spirit does--that by its guidance, which was known to be exercised through the preached Word, the disciples had been baptized into the one body. The baptism could be understood by his readers only as the same by which they were baptized into Christ, and into his death; that is, the baptism in water.

I may add that, in the only two instances of baptism in the Holy Spirit expressly so styled in the Scriptures, this baptism did not introduce its subjects into the one body. The first was that of the apostles on the great Pentecost, and the second the family and friends of Cornelius. In the former instance the subjects of the baptism were already members of the body, and in the latter they became such afterward by being baptized, as Peter commanded in the name of Jesus Christ.

-J.W. McGarvey

Article appeared in Truth Magazine in February 1962

DAILY BIBLE READING

April 23	2 Kgs. 7-9
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April 26	2 Kgs. 16-18
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NEWS AND NOTES