

From the Book of the

ACTS

In the fifth book of the New Testament the history of the early Christian Church, from the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ until the end of the two year imprisonment of apostle Paul, is narrated.

The Acts of the apostles tells how the early Christians, led by the Holy Spirit, spread the message of the Gospel, according to the Lord's command: **"..and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."** (Acts 1:8).

The author of the book, Luke "the beloved physician", accompanied the apostle Paul on many of his apostolic journeys, as can be inferred by the use of "we" in several passages of the book. (Acts 16:10-17, 20:5-21:18, 27:1-28:16).

The style of Luke in the Acts is like the style in his Gospel, pure, crystal clear and lively. The book is a priceless source of information regarding the life of the ancient Christian Church and also of the life in Palestine, Asia Minor, Italy and Greece, where most of the action took place.

Acts 1:5 **"For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."**

In the above verse and also in: Mk. 1:8, Lk. 3:16 and Jn. 1:26,31,33, where the baptism in water and in the Holy Spirit is referred the Greek preposition **en** (**ἐν** : in) with dativ: **hydati** (**ὕδατι** : in water), **Pneumati Agio** (**Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ** : in the Holy Spirit) is used.

So we read: **"For John truly baptized in water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Ghost not many days hence."**

The translation: "with water" and "with the Holy Ghost" is not correct and may lead into misconceptions. One may understand that John the Baptist was "pouring water" upon those that he baptized or was "sprinkling them with water".

The correct translation is: "baptize in water" and means to sink the whole body in water, so as to be covered completely. It symbolizes the burying of the old self. **"we are buried with Him (Jesus Christ) by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."** Rom. 6:4.

Likewise during the baptism in the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ is sinking the believer in the Holy Spirit. It is one thing to drink water or wash yourself and another to sink into the water.

(see also Mk.1:8).

Acts 2: 17-21 **"17. And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:**

18. (and yet - καὶ ἔτι) on My servants and on My handmaidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit, and they shall prophesy:

19. and I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke:

20. the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

21. and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

In the Greek text, at the beginning of the verse 18, the small but highly significant particle "ge", exists, which sheds light to the whole passage. It means: "And yet", or "once more". It divides the above passage into two entities: The first one is verse 17 and the second is from verse 18 to the end.

The first one speaks of the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit, that started on the day of Pentecost. It was the fulfilment of the promised "**former rain**" in Joel's prophecy (Joel 2:23).

We read from verse 18: "**And yet, on My servants and on My handmaidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit, ...that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved**".

These verses refer to the last days of the last days and are the fulfilment of the promised "**latter rain**" in Joel's prophecy.

And "ge" means: "and yet" or "and once more".

The first outpouring of the Holy Spirit was in the days of the first apostolic church and represents the former rain. The second outpouring of the Holy Spirit is now in the last days, to prepare us for the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The former rain proceeded decreasing but the latter rain, that has started at the beginning of the century (1909), is going on increasing. The first blessing went "decrecendo", whereas the last blessing is going "crescendo" and will end up into the glorious final with all the instruments of the great heavenly orchestra, when Jesus Christ our Lord appears.

Acts 25:7 "And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove."

Instead of "...complaints.." in the Greek text the word: **aitiomata (αἰτιώματα)** is used, which means: charges or accusations.

So we read: "**And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood about, and laid many and grievous accusations against Paul, which they could not prove.**"

The Jews had in their mind to condemn Paul to death, by using false accusations.

Lord Jesus Christ says: "**Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake.**" Mt. 5:11.