

The Presence of God

JESUS
GETTING BAPTISED

And when Jesus was baptised,
he went up straightway out of the water:
and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him,
and he saw the Spirit of God descending
like a dove, and lighting upon him:
Matthew 3:16

THE HOLY SPIRIT
CAME DOWN IN POWER

This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.
Matthew 3:17

“ So we shall
be separate,
Your people and I,
from all the people who are
upon the face of the earth.”
Exodus 33:16

OLD AND NEW

OLD COVENANT THE LAW	NEW COVENANT THE SPIRIT
 <p>Written in stone. It showed us God's holiness and our need for a Saviour. <i>Exodus 31:18</i></p>	 <p>Written on our hearts. The Holy Spirit dwells in us, leading, guiding and transforming. <i>Jeremiah 31:33</i></p>

CALLED OUT TO BE HIS
Set apart. Chosen. Holy.

**WE BELONG TO GOD ALONE.
SEPARATE FROM THE WORLD, UNITED IN HIM.**
2 CORINTHIANS 6:17

We'll read how God had delivered Israel from slavery in Egypt with mighty signs and wonders. He **had parted the Red Sea**, defeated Pharaoh's army, provided manna from heaven, and brought His people to Mount Sinai. There He entered into covenant with them,

While Moses was on the mountain receiving God's instructions, the Israelites grew impatient. They persuaded Aaron to make a golden calf, and they worshipped it, they rebelled against the God who had just rescued them. But God still did not leave them, His presence was still accessible.

Exodus 33.7 Moses took his tent and pitched it outside the camp, far from the camp, and called it the tabernacle of meeting. And it came to pass that everyone who sought the Lord went out to the tabernacle of meeting which was outside the camp. 8 So it was, whenever Moses went out to the tabernacle, that all the people rose, and each man stood at his tent door and watched Moses until he had gone into the tabernacle.

9 And it came to pass, when Moses entered the tabernacle, that the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses. 10 All the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the tabernacle door, and all the people rose and worshipped, each man in his tent door.

11 So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle.

12 Then Moses said to the Lord, "See, You say to me, 'Bring up this people.' But You have not let me know whom **You will send with me**. Yet You have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight.' 13 Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation is Your people."

14 And He said, "**My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.**"

15 Then he said to Him, "If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. 16 For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us? So we **shall be separate**, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth."]

Sin Separates Us From God.

God is Holy and just, but also merciful and forgiving. He still accompanies the people into the promised land. God reminds us that we all have sinned against Him at one point but offers us the same mercy and forgiveness, the God of 2nd chances. God is always willing for us to get back into a relationship with Him, if we turn our heart fully towards Him.

Baptism

Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. (1 Corinthians 10:1–4)

For us today, the Lord does not need to part the Red Sea for us to be baptised. Instead, He sent His Son Jesus to die on the cross, paying the penalty for our sins. When we repent and believe in Him, we are brought into a new covenant with God.

Whereas before, sin separated us from God, something wonderful now happens: that separation is reversed. Through Christ, we are brought near to God and made new in Him.

Presence and Rest

God said to Moses these wonderful words: "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." Baptism is the entry point where we pass from our old life into newness of life. It is a public declaration that we have died with Christ and have been raised to walk in a new life.

As believers, we are now led by the personal presence of God, who goes with us each day to guide us, strengthen us, and keep us in the ways of the Lord. Instead of being separated from God by sin, we have now been separated from sin unto God.

As Moses prayed: "So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth."

God's presence is what makes His people different. It is not our abilities, our traditions, or our works that set us apart, but the living presence of God dwelling with and within us.

So Christ also prayed Luke 3.21 When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; **and while He prayed**, the heaven was opened. 22 And the **Holy Spirit descended** in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "**You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.**"]

The Presence of God

As we turn our hearts to the baptismal service today, we must all remember the words of Christ, and the direction given through the preaching of the Holy Spirit:

"Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.'" (Acts 2:38–39)

Let us end in prayer, for those getting baptised, that they would receive the Holy Spirit, and for all who are here. For those who have already been baptised but have not yet experienced the fullness of the Holy Spirit, we ask God to meet with them afresh.

For the Holy Spirit is the One whom the Father has sent, God's presence and peace with us, leading us all the way to eternal life.