

# THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

Message for Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2013

## Introduction

Today we celebrate the Baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ [by John the Baptist]. This event reveals several important factors.

- i. It signifies the commencement of the Messianic, Apostolic mission of our Lord Jesus Christ. Lord Jesus commenced His apostolic mission after being anointed by, and receiving the power thereon, of the Holy Spirit.
- ii. It demonstrates the need for Baptism of the Holy Spirit for man to perform apostolic service.
- iii. It demonstrates the necessity to perform the Will of God "In this way we shall do all that God requires" Matthew 3:15
- iv. Jesus belongs to God the Father. He is the dear Son of the Almighty God. "This is my own dear son, with whom I am pleased. [" Matthew 3:17]
- v. Through this Baptism, God approved the human nature of his son and his oneness with sinful mankind despite He Himself being free of sin.
- vi. This shows the necessity for man to receive the Baptism with water. Through Baptism with water, man partakes with the death and resurrection of the Savior.
- vii. It is the commencement of a life guided by the Holy Spirit. "At once the Spirit made him go into the desert" [Mark 1:12]

### 1. Read Matthew 3:1-6, and 3:13-17

- i. John the Baptist preached in the wilderness of Judea calling upon the people to repent and turn back to God. "People came to him from Jerusalem, from the whole province of Judea, and from all over the country near the Jordan river. They confessed their sins, and he baptized them in the Jordan."
- ii. Our Lord Jesus also arrived at the river Jordan to be Baptized by John the Baptist. Despite being free of sin He took upon Himself the sin of the entire humanity and became one with sinful man. Although the baptism was with water, it was in reality a receiving of a powerful Baptism of the Holy Spirit. From this point onwards His entire life was a life powerfully led by the Holy Spirit.
- iii. Hence, to commence His Apostolic Mission, our Lord

(a) received Baptism

(b) was anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit

2. i. John the Baptist introduces Jesus as the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. All four Gospels record this fact. [Read Luke 3:15-16]

All of us have been baptized with the Holy Spirit by the Lord Jesus. When was this? (Share with the person next to you)

ii. All of us have been Baptised with the Holy Spirit by our Lord Jesus on the day we received our Baptism. As we received this Baptism as an infant or child, we have received it without an understanding. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit was renewed and we received a special anointing on the day we received the sacrament of Confirmation at a more understanding age

iii. We renewed our Baptism and Confirmation on the day we Committed our lives to the Lord. On that day, we repented for our sins and accepted our Lord Jesus Christ as our one and only Lord, and received a powerful anointment of the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit stays with us forever.

Hymn: "Come Holy Spirit Creator Blest"

3. At our Baptism as infants we received the permanent seal of the Holy Spirit who will stay with us forever.
4. If the Holy Spirit is eternally within us, why do we sing '*Come Holy Spirit*' time and time again? Is there a reason for this? [Discuss among small groups]

- i. The Holy Bible reveals occasions where some of the Apostles and believers who were already Baptised experienced the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them over and over again.

Acts 4:31: "When they finished praying, the place where they were meeting was shaken. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to proclaim God's message with boldness."

Even St. Paul calls upon the Christians who have already been Baptised to be filled with the Holy Spirit again and again

Ephesians 5:18: "Do not get drunk with wine, which will only ruin you; instead, be filled with the Spirit."

(Be filled with the Spirit)

- ii. St. Thomas Aquinas says that the receiving of the Holy Spirit does not mean that the Spirit moves from one place to another; it means those who have made themselves Temples of the Holy Spirit will receive Him in a new manner. [Eg. When we start something new, when we have to do something beyond our limits, when we prophesy, when we have to extend love to another at great cost to us, when we have to let go of something we own, when we undertake a difficult task, when we suffer from pain, etc.]
- iii. The Church has received a new Pentecost. The Charismatic Renewal Movements in place all over the world is an example of the receiving of the Holy Spirit over and over again.

KithudanaPubuduwa is also an example of such a Renewal. It is said that there are approximately four hundred million members of such Renewal Movements throughout the world.

5. We experience an inflowing of the Holy Spirit each time we awaken to Him [Discuss within small groups]
  - i. Do you experience this constant awakening to the Holy Spirit?
  - ii. We have learnt to awaken to the Spirit at least seven times a day. What are these seven times? [when we get up in the morning, when we wash and cleanse ourselves, when we change our clothes, when we partake of meals and drinks, when starting a task or leaving for work, during 'my hour' personal prayer time, when we go to sleep]
  
6. Have you prayed to Abba Father for a special anointment, touch, guidance, or enlightenment from the Holy Spirit? Have you prayed with deep faith to the Holy Spirit to come into you? Share your experience/s with the person next to you.

Luke, 11:13: "Bad as you are, you know how to give good things to your children. How much more, then, will the Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"
  
7.
  - i. It is most important to confess and repent for sins when praying for a special Baptism of the Holy Spirit. At the end of his first sermon, the people asked Peter what they should do? Peter replied "*you should repent and turn back to God and receive Baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to receive forgiveness. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*"
  
  - ii. Most of us have been Baptized at a young age which we do not even remember; yet we received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit then. At our Commitment we entered into a true repentance for our sins to receive a renewal of our Baptism of the Holy Spirit. There after we accepted Jesus Christ as the one and only Lord in our life. On that day we experienced a most special anointing of the Holy Spirit.

[Exercise: separate into small groups.

The leaders should then lead the congregation to a deep repentance. Thereafter in small groups lay hands on each and pray. The person who kneels must state "*I accept Jesus Christ as my only Lord*" and the others in the Group must lay hands on the person who is kneeling and pray for a special anointing of the Holy Spirit, and sing a hymn praying for the receiving of the Holy Spirit. [Pubudu hymn No. 10]
  
8. Always awaken to the Holy Spirit. Whenever you awaken to the Holy Spirit, pray for a special anointing of the Spirit.

Pray for guidance of the Holy Spirit before embarking on any task or before making a decision