

EXPERIENCE WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

Baptism

In the late 1980s, one day, I woke up feeling discouraged and full of doubts. It was as if God was far away from me. I felt insecure and helpless. In other words, I was extremely weak spiritually. All my experiences with God, such as deliverance from addictions, changes in circumstances, and even reading encouraging texts in the Bible, in short, nothing was satisfying me. Nothing kept me going, nothing gave me courage. That day, I literally needed something more.

I left for work and when I got there, I went to talk to a Jewish friend who also worked there. Even though I didn't go to his house and he didn't go to mine, and we had different religious backgrounds, and I never saw him outside of work, I considered him a friend because, whenever we had the chance, we talked a lot about various subjects, including the Bible.

I started talking to this friend about religion, since he gave me the freedom to do so, even hoping that he would tell me something about Israel, about God, something that would lift my spirits. And then, without much conviction, thoughtfully, he told me the following: Sometimes I think that this religion thing is a creation of man himself. We are the ones who created it and then, to satisfy our desires, our needs, to encourage ourselves when necessary, we cling to it more and more. And we can even obtain or achieve some things, but this comes from our own effort and dedication. There is nothing supernatural about it.

For anyone hoping to hear something encouraging, what he told me was frustrating.

Then I said: But what about the prophecies? How do you explain it? Someone says one thing, and after several years, everything happens exactly as it was said.

Then he replied: You are right about that. Isaiah said that we would return to our homeland in silver eagles. And that really happened. After the second war, in 1948, with the creation of the State by the UN, we returned there in airplanes, literally, just like he said.

That was all I needed to hear.

I asked him to excuse me and went straight to the bathroom. When I got there, I started speaking in tongues. I didn't speak for long, because it was a new experience, but it was wonderful. It renewed me, cleared up all my doubts, and gave me the encouragement I needed.

There is no way to explain what I felt, but the Bible has a single text that perfectly describes what the baptism with the Holy Spirit is. It is in **Acts of the Apostles 2:25 to 27**. "For David says of him: I foresaw my Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover my flesh also shall dwell in hope." _____

This was said by the Apostle Peter, in his first speech after the descent of the Holy Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, making reference to **Psalms 16: 8 and 9**.

We truly feel a supernatural joy, unlike anything we have ever felt, and our tongue exults. Exulting, according to the best dictionaries, is losing control. The word BAPTISM

It comes from the Greek language and its translation would be diving, immersion. And that is exactly what happened. For a few moments, we dived, we immersed ourselves completely in another dimension. Yes, in a spiritual dimension. We did not lose control of ourselves; it was our tongue that lost control.

So, when the work day was over, I went home and looked in the Bible for Isaiah's silver eagles. I didn't find them in my version. But I did find something very interesting.

Here, I will use the version of the Bible Translation in Today's Language, 1st Edition - 1988, where, in the book of Isaiah, C 60: 8 and 9, it reads: "What are these ships that come gliding like clouds, like doves returning to their dovecotes? They are ships that come from far away: the largest ones come in front, bringing God's people back to their land. They also bring silver and gold to offer to the Holy and Eternal God of Israel, who has given you, his people, great glory".

Ships gliding, or flying as in some versions? What would that be? A surrealist vision?

It turns out that at the time of Isaiah, when he prophesied, the only major means of public transport, or mass transport if we can call it that, that existed were ships. Airplanes, buses, trains, etc., did not even cross anyone's imagination, and so it would be almost impossible to describe them.

That is why the Lord God, in his unfathomable wisdom, used the ships of that time to describe contemporary airplanes. Isaiah wrote about ships because they were the only large means of public transportation that he knew.

RICARDO LINHARES TAMY Biblical

text extracted from the JOÃO FERREIRA DE ALMEIDA version – Revised and Updated.