

Are You Saved and Sealed and Healed and Filled? : Part 1

Copyright 1994 - 2018 Bill's Bible Basics

Published On : July 7, 1997

Last Updated : March 21, 2018

Is Water Baptism Necessary For Salvation, Thief On The Cross, Baptism Of The Spirit, Jesus Never Water Baptized, God Is Not A Respector Of Persons, The Apostles Followed The Old Mold, John The Baptist And Baptism With Fire, The Mosaic Laws Were A Schoolmaster To Bring Jews To Faith In Christ, Ministry Of John The Baptist, Water And Fire Signify Physical Birth And Spiritual Birth, Our Difficulty In Understanding God's Word, More Old Testament Archetypes: Noah And The Flood, Moses And Israelites Crossing Red Sea, Joshua And Israelites Pass Over Jordan River, Jonah And Jesus, Three Days And Three Nights, Joshua and Jesus, Forty Days, God's Prophetic Tapestry, We Pass Through The Water In Our Mother's Womb, Water And Fire

A number of years ago I was involved in a discussion on my old BBS -- or Bulletin Board Service -- concerning the topic of water baptism. One participant was inquiring as to whether or not water baptism is necessary for one's Salvation, as is believed and taught by certain denominations and religious organizations. In this particular case, the Scriptures which were used to substantiate this claim were the following:

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Mark 16:16, KJV

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

Acts 22:16, KJV

Another participant who was involved in our conversation at the time responded with the following wise answer:

----- Begin Quote -----

"So far as I know, the thief on the cross next to Jesus was never baptized, but Jesus said he would join Him that day in paradise. If you think of baptism as spiritual rather than physical, all the passages make more sense. There is much in the Bible which I believe is intended to be interpreted spiritually, but is instead taken physically ("unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood" ...) by some Churches. I find it interesting that none of them take all the passages one way or another. Lots of picking and choosing going on, and lots of doctrines in Bible-based Churches which are not Bible-based."

----- End Quote -----

I have to agree wholeheartedly with the previous comments. Taken in that light, the above verses make a lot more sense. As I will now explain by way of this current series, I am also of the belief that the baptism which is mentioned in Mark 16:16 quoted above -- as well as in many other verses which we find in the New Testament -- is not referring to water baptism, but rather to the baptism of the Spirit. As I point out in articles such as the series "Roman Catholicism, Water Baptism and the Holy Trinity", to my knowledge, Jesus never once baptized Himself; only His chosen Disciples did. Consider these verses that are found in the Gospel of John:

"When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)"
John 4:1-2, KJV

If water baptism is really essential for Salvation as some Christians claim, doesn't it strike you as being a little odd that the Lord never performed this ritual? While some of my Christian brethren may argue that the Lord did not baptize because the Disciples did it for Him -- even though there is not a single verse in the Gospels which states this -- I hope that once you have read this series, and pondered the verses which I present in it, you will acquire a new perspective.

Similarly, would Jesus have promised the thief Salvation if one must be water baptized in order to be saved? While some people may argue that it was a unique situation, that there was no way for the thief to be baptized, and so God made an exception to His own rule, I don't accept it. If God is into

making exceptions whenever He deems it appropriate, doesn't that cloud the situation and make it rather ambiguous and confusing? To the contrary, the Bible teaches us that not only is God not the author of confusion, but He is also not a respecter of persons. In other words, what applies to one, applies to all. Consider the following verses:

"Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts."

2 Chronicles 19:7, KJV

"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:"

Acts 10:34, KJV

"For there is no respect of persons with God."

Romans 2:11, KJV

"And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him."

Ephesians 6:9, KJV

"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:"

1 Peter 1:17, KJV

"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."

1 Corinthians 14:33, KJV

As I explain in the aforementioned series, I believe that the reason why Jesus' Disciples performed water baptism was because they were still following the old mold. They still hadn't caught on to the new plan, and to the new meaning of baptism. In fact, they themselves hadn't even received the Holy Spirit yet. This wouldn't happen until some three years later after Jesus had ascended back to His Father. Prior to that time, it appears that John the Baptist was more in tune to the things of the Spirit than the Apostles were. After all, John was filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb, as we see by this verse:

"For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb."

Luke 1:15, KJV

John the Baptist fully understood that the baptism to which Jesus was actually referring was a SPIRITUAL BAPTISM. It was a baptism with the fire of the Holy Ghost. It is for this reason that John said the following in the Gospel of Luke:

"John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:"

Luke 3:16, KJV

So you see, just as the Apostle Paul explains in his Epistles that the Laws of Moses, and the Levitical priesthood and the Temple services and rituals were used by God as an example and a schoolmaster to bring the Jews to faith in Jesus Christ, so too, water baptism was archetypical, and a foreshadow of the real baptism by the Spirit, which was yet to come. Paul writes the following in his Epistle to the Galatian brethren:

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."

Galatians 3:24-25, KJV

As I said, John the Baptist understood what God was in the process of doing. John realized that his ministry of water baptism in the Jordan River Valley, and preparing the hearts of the people to accept Christ, would eventually come to an end, once the real deal -- meaning, of course, Jesus -- had arrived. John realized that the symbolism of water baptism would be replaced by the reality of spiritual baptism by fire -- that is, by the Holy Spirit -- and that his job of preparing the way for the true Messiah would be done. In other words, water baptism would become an obsolete ritual, once it had fulfilled its purpose; just like all of the other Temple services and rituals which were nullified by Christ's Death on the Cross. Thus John the Baptist likewise said the following in the Gospel of John:

"He must increase, but I must decrease."

John 3:30, KJV

Is it just a coincidence that fire is the exact opposite of water? As I explain in the aforementioned series, in John chapter three, when speaking with Nicodemus concerning the necessity of spiritual rebirth, Jesus Himself used water to symbolize our physical birth in which we are surrounded by amniotic fluid in our mother's womb. How fitting then that fire should be used to symbolize our spiritual birth. Taken in this light, Mark 16:16 now makes a lot more sense. It is clear to me that John would not tell us that the Lord never water baptized -- John 4:1-2 -- just to have Mark contradict John in his own Gospel by saying that Jesus was referring to water baptism in the following verse:

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Mark 16:16, KJV

To understand these verses -- John 4:1-2 and Mark 16:16 -- any other way, would be to indirectly state that the Bible contradicts itself, which I do not believe for a minute. As I explain in the article "Humility in Our Understanding of God's Word", if there is any contradiction, it is in our own minds, and is a result of our limited understanding of the things of God, and our failure to grasp the full meaning of His Word. For as the Lord says through the Prophet Isaiah:

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Isaiah 55:8-9, KJV

As I mentioned to you just a moment ago, the Mosaic Law, the Jewish priesthood and the Temple rituals and services served as archetypical examples, or foreshadows, of the spiritual realities which would ultimately be fulfilled by and through the ministry of Jesus Christ. Well, allow me to inform you that there are other events in the Old Testament which also served in this very same fashion, and which pointed to the coming reality of Salvation through Christ, and baptism by the fire of the Holy Spirit. Let us examine a few of them.

When God judged the ancient world due to its wickedness by

sending the great Flood, the Patriarch Noah and his family were spared due to God recognizing their righteousness. As a result of their faith and obedience in building the Ark, they rose above the Flood waters and were saved. In a sense, we might say that Noah and his family were symbolically baptized by the Flood. They passed through the water totally unharmed, and came out on the other side. It was a complete break with the old world, and the beginning of a wonderful, new world, untainted by the sins of men. Consider the following verses:

"And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation."

Genesis 7:1, KJV

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

Hebrews 11:7, KJV

"By which also he [Jesus] went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:"

1 Peter 3:19-21, KJV

"For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;"

2 Peter 2:4-5, KJV

We witness the very same kind of archetypical example in the wonderful miracle which occurred at the Red Sea. This time, however, instead of sailing on top of the water, Moses and the Israelites passed through the waters, as by dry land, as we see by these sample verses:

"And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD

caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided . . . But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left."

Exodus 14:21, 29, KJV

"For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the LORD brought again the waters of the sea upon them; but the children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea."

Exodus 15:19, KJV

"And thou didst divide the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land; and their persecutors thou threwest into the deeps, as a stone into the mighty waters."

Nehemiah 9:11, KJV

"He turned the sea into dry land: they went through the flood on foot: there did we rejoice in him."

Psalms 66:6, KJV

"By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned."

Hebrews 11:29, KJV

As had occurred with Noah and the Flood, the Red Sea likewise represented a barrier between the old way and slavery in the land of Egypt, and the new way, meaning God's way. Once they had crossed the Red Sea -- which again we can view as a form of baptism -- there was no going back. It was like spiritual rebirth, just as had occurred with Noah and his family.

In fact, the very same thing occurred some forty years later when Moses' successor, Joshua, led the Hebrew nation across the parted Jordan River, as by dry land. This event likewise represented a break with the old, and the beginning of the new; that is, the conquest of the Promised Land, which began with the crucial city of Jericho. It was there at the Jordan River that God wonderfully confirmed his spiritual anointing upon Joshua, and renewed the people's faith and vision for what lay ahead. Once again, these events can be viewed as a symbolic baptism by water, which ultimately resulted in their physical salvation from the harsh dry desert, and their entry

into the Promised Land. Consider these verses:

"And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. For the LORD your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over: That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the LORD your God for ever."

Joshua 4:21-24, KJV

These examples of God's prophetic future being hidden within the lines of Old Testament stories concerning water would not be complete without mentioning the Prophet Jonah. While Jonah likewise passed through the waters, as many of you will know, his predicament arose from the fact that he initially failed to obey the Lord by refusing to go and warn the Ninevites of their impending destruction. Thus, that poor fellow lay in the belly of the whale for three days and three nights. Let me share the key points of the story with you, after which I will make some very interesting and relevant observations:

"So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging. Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows. Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God. When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple. They that observe lying vanities

forsake their own mercy. But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD. And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land. And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey. And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." Jonah 1:15-3:4, KJV

Similar to Jonah, Jesus taught that following His trial and Crucifixion, He would lay dead in the tomb for a period of three days and three nights. This is made clear in both the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, as we see by these verses:

"But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here." Matthew 12:39-41, KJV

"A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed." Matthew 16:4, KJV

"And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of

Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here."

Luke 11:29-32, KJV

Similar to Jonah, not only did Jesus spend three days and three nights in the netherworld, but just as that Prophet of old became serious about his ministry to Nineveh after God made him pass through the waters, Jesus likewise began His public ministry after being baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. Here again we see a connection to Joshua and the Jordan River as well. Let me also mention that the English names "Joshua" and "Jesus" are derived from the very same Hebrew root. In both cases, it is "Yehowshuwa", which signifies "Jehovah is salvation".

But these are not the only similarities that we find between the ministries of the Prophet Jonah and Jesus. If you re-read the previous verses, you will notice a few other interesting points. For example, from the location where the great fish spat out Jonah, it was a three days journey to the city of Nineveh. Thus we see another mention of three days. Following are some additional verses regarding Jesus being raised from the dead on the third day:

"From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day."

Matthew 16:21, KJV

"And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry."

Matthew 17:22-23, KJV

"Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again."

Matthew 20:18-19, KJV

"Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he

was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch."

Matthew 27:62-66, KJV

"And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know it. For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day. But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him."

Mark 9:30-32, KJV

"And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him, Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles: And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again."

Mark 10:32-34, KJV

"And he straitly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing; Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day."

Luke 9:21-22, KJV

"The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee. And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected."

Luke 13:31-32, KJV

"Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are

written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again."

Luke 18:31-33, KJV

"He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again."

Luke 24:6-7, KJV

"Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

Luke 24:45-47, KJV

As you will recall, Jonah was told by the Lord to give the Ninevites a forty-day warning. After being baptized by John, Jesus spent a total of forty days in the wilderness area of the Jordan River Valley being tempted by Satan, after which He began His public ministry. Consider these verses:

"And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred."

Matthew 4:2, KJV

"And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him."

Mark 1:13, KJV

"Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered."

Luke 4:2, KJV

But that is not the only place where the number forty comes into play. The writer Luke also informs us that following His Resurrection from the Dead, Jesus appeared to His followers for a period of forty days before returning to His Father in

Heaven. Consider this verse:

"To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:"
Acts 1:3, KJV

As I explain in the article entitled "Famous Forties: One of God's Special Numbers?", the number forty plays an important role throughout Biblical history. I encourage you to read it.

At any rate, as you can see, there are some interesting links between the Prophet Jonah and Jesus Christ. In fact, the more that I study God's Word, the more I realize what an amazing prophetic tapestry is woven throughout the pages of the Bible from beginning to end. It is really quite mind-blowing when one begins to see the intricate pattern which God Himself has woven through Scriptural archetypes and foreshadows which are fully exposed to the Light of Truth in the New Testament, in the life, ministry and mission of Jesus Christ.

With the previous four examples, I hope that the profound connection which exists between the physical events of the Old Testament era, and the spiritual realities which were revealed and fulfilled in the New Testament, has become even more clear to you as well. Concerning the issue of passing through the water, we are not quite done yet. You see, as we discussed earlier, we too have passed through the water -- or been baptized -- by way of our physical birth. For nine months we each pass through the water in our mother's womb. As Jesus explained to Nicodemus, the act of physical birth is just a reflection of the spiritual reality of being born in the Spirit, and being baptized with the fire of the Holy Spirit. Yet, in truth, even this baptism with fire is simply a small glimpse of what is to come for those who believe. Please refer to articles such as "A Treasure in Earthen Vessels: God's Promise of the Spirit" for a more detailed explanation regarding this topic.

This picture of the relationship between water and fire, or the transition from water to fire, would not be complete without mentioning the final outcome of this great cycle of events. Just as the baptism by water in all of its different iterations throughout Biblical history eventually led to the baptism with fire of the Holy Ghost in the New Testament, so

too, just as the Earth was baptized by water during the days of the Flood, we are told that it is also baptized by fire in what appears to be a very literal sense in the following verses:

"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men . . . But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up . . . Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"

2 Peter 3:7, 10, 12, KJV

You will find these -- and related verses -- discussed in articles such as "Destruction of Planet Earth: The Wrath of God Revealed!". As alarming or frightening as the previous verses may sound, as I will be discussing later on in this series, this great destruction of the Earth is not the end of the road for all God-fearing, Bible-believing Christians; so let not your heart be troubled, and be at peace.

Please go to part two for the continuation of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<https://www.billkochman.com>

Are You Saved and Sealed and Healed and Filled? : Part 2

Copyright 1994 - 2018 Bill's Bible Basics

Published On : July 7, 1997

Last Updated : March 21, 2018

Times Of Tests And Afflictions Often Precede God's Blessings,
By The Obedience Of One We Are Blessed, In The Ages To Come,

God Discards The Old And Keeps The New, Evolving Towards Ever Greater Spiritual Truths, But I Say Unto You, No Longer Under A Schoolmaster, A Constant Pattern Of The New Replacing The Old, We Are God's Spiritual Temple, We Are New Creatures In Jesus Christ, Our Resurrected And Transformed Bodies, New Heavens And New Earth, Heavenly City New Jerusalem Descends, God's Long-Term Invariable Cycle Of Replacing The Old With The New, New Covenant Replaces God's Old Covenant, Abel's Righteous Sacrifice, Jesus' Sacrifice Was Better Than That Of Abel, Jesus' Blood: Basis Of The New Covenant, I Am Well Pleased, Abraham's Archetypical Sacrifice Of His Only Son

Upon pondering the various Scriptural examples and archetypes which I shared with you in previous paragraphs, I realized that each beginning and each blessing was preceded by a time of tests and afflictions. This can easily be demonstrated by the following table:

Water Event: Followed By:

The Genesis Flood	: Beginning of a new life and a new world
Red Sea Crossing	: Free from slavery, beginning of new life
Jordan Crossing	: Beginning of conquest of Promised Land
Jonah and whale	: Beginning of his Nineveh ministry
Jesus' baptism	: Beginning of His public ministry

In every single case, the participants who were involved in these various events had to demonstrate faith and obedience in order to fulfill their particular mission, and to receive God's blessings, which were ultimately received by us today as well.

Noah and his family had to have the faith to believe that the rains would come, and obey God by building the Ark; even while the unbelieving world around them foolishly mocked their endeavors. Following those cataclysmic events which all but ended life on Earth, Noah and his family walked out into a brand new world. We are here today because of them.

After enduring four hundred years of cruel slavery in Egypt, Moses and the Israelites had to have the faith to cross the Red Sea, even though logically-speaking, it must have seemed like a crazy -- and perhaps even suicidal -- thing to do. If

you had been in their position, would you have had the faith to do so? As a result of their obedience, they escaped from the armies of Pharaoh, while the Egyptians were all drowned.

For forty years the Israelites wandered in the desert due to their lack of faith. It must have been heartbreaking to watch their loved ones fall one-by-one as the years slowly passed. However, the time of their afflictions eventually came to an end. Then, Joshua and the Hebrews had to have the faith to cross the Jordan River -- which miraculously stood up on one side for them while the priests stood in the dry riverbed -- and to believe that God would give them the Promised Land, due to their obedience.

As we saw earlier, the Prophet Jonah wasn't exactly a willing servant of the Lord. He needed to be more strongly convinced. As a result, Jonah ended up in the belly of a whale. Imagine being trapped in such a terrible, dark, foul-smelling place with seaweed wrapped around your head; and for three days no less. However, due to his eventual faith and obedience, the people of Nineveh were spared from the wrath of God.

Jesus' baptism by John also represented a break with the old, and the beginning of His public ministry. However, before that could occur, the Lord had to pass the test by wandering in the wilderness for forty days, where He suffered hunger, thirst, taunts from Satan, and other temptations. Jesus was no doubt at His physically weakest point, and the Devil took full advantage of that fact. Thus, he repeatedly tried to make the Lord doubt His Divinity with his famous "If thou be the Son of God" dares. Consider these verses:

"And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread . . . And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone."

Matthew 4:3, 6, KJV

Thankfully, Jesus never doubted who He was, and is. Because of His faith and obedience to His Father's will, billions of people have been blessed with Redemption and Salvation since that time two thousand years ago. As the Apostle Paul writes:

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

Romans 5:19, KJV

"That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

Ephesians 2:7, KJV

My friends, we are living "in the ages to come". We have all been blessed with God's Grace and Kindness through Christ.

Throughout the Bible, we see an amazing pattern weaving its majestic way through the Scriptures; one story after another, and one event after another, as it slowly leads us to the full revelation of the truth. God continually introduces us to something new in order to lead His children along the way, ever closer towards faith in Jesus Christ, and towards the reality of the Spirit. Then, when something has served its purpose -- such as a particular sacrifice, ceremony, ritual, tradition or law -- He discards it in order to introduce an even greater, more eternal truth. As I explain in some of my other articles, Jesus constantly used this method in the four Gospels. He would say "Moses wrote this, but I say this." In fact, in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus uses the phrase "But I say unto you" twelve times. Of course, this direct approach infuriated the Lord's legalistic enemies.

Each of these different physical representations that we find in the Old Testament -- which were still in effect during the early First Century -- was like a school lesson which was eventually replaced by a spiritual reality. As I said, they were meant to teach the Israelites about God's Kingdom, and, of course, about the Sacrifice which Christ would ultimately make for them -- and for us -- during the First Century. Thus, as we saw earlier, the Apostle Paul wrote "after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." Of course, Paul is referring to faith in Jesus Christ, and not in the Law, or in the doctrines and cold, dead traditions of men.

The truth is that the entire Bible is divided into this very same repetitive process of the new replacing the old. As I point out in a number of articles, the Old Testament -- or Old Covenant/Agreement -- was replaced by the New Testament; that is, a New Covenant or Agreement. The blood of lambs and

goats was replaced by the Blood of Jesus Christ. The high priest of the Temple period was also replaced by Christ, who is the final High Priest and Intercessor for us. Furthermore, the old physical Temple was transformed into a living thing which is made up of you and me. We are its living rocks and pillars, as is made abundantly clear in so many verses, such as the following ones:

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ . . . Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

1 Corinthians 3:11, 16-17, KJV

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, KJV

"And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

2 Corinthians 6:16-18, KJV

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Ephesians 2:19-22, KJV

"And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

Hebrews 3:5-6, KJV

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:"

1 Peter 2:5-9, KJV

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."

Revelation 3:12, KJV

"And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it."

Revelation 21:22, KJV

Furthermore, even in our own lives as born-again Christians, we see this very same pattern of the new replacing the old. We are born in the flesh, and are reborn as new creatures in the Spirit. We strive to die daily to our flesh, in order to live in the Spirit. We fight against the old man, so that the new man in us may thrive. The Apostle Paul had much to write regarding this subject. Consider the following verses:

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

Romans 6:6, KJV

"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;"

Ephesians 4:22, KJV

"Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;"

Colossians 3:9, KJV

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

2 Corinthians 5:17, KJV

"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

Ephesians 4:24, KJV

"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:"

Colossians 3:10, KJV

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Romans 12:2, KJV

As many of you already know, ultimately, one of these days we will actually die in our physical flesh, so that we can be resurrected and transformed, just as Jesus was three days after lying in a borrowed sepulchre. Allow me to share with you some of my favorite Scriptures regarding this particular topic:

"Therefore we are buried with him 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. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:"

Romans 6:4-5, KJV

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."

Romans 8:29, KJV

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle [our physical body] were dissolved, we have a building of

God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

2 Corinthians 5:1-4, KJV

"Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

Philippians 3:21, KJV

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

1 John 3:2, KJV

"There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

1 Corinthians 15:40-52, KJV

If that isn't already enough, God's Word informs us that the heavens and the Earth pass away, so that the new heavens and new Earth may appear. As a result, the old city of Jerusalem is no more, and the majestic New Jerusalem -- the City of God -- descends to the new Earth. Here again are some inspiring verses for your personal consideration:

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind."

Isaiah 65:17, KJV

"For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain."

Isaiah 66:22, KJV

"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

2 Peter 3:13, KJV

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them."

Revelation 20:11, KJV

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful . . . And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and

shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of

fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done . . . I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

Revelation 21:1-5, 9-27, 22:1-6, 13-14, KJV

Continuing our discussion, I have now spent a considerable amount of space explaining how over a period of thousands of years, God has set in motion a long-term cycle, or pattern, in which the new invariably replaces the old. As we each recognize this pattern, and the archetypes and foreshadows which He has incorporated in it, God has drawn us closer to a clearer understanding of the true nature of His Kingdom, and His plans for humanity, the central figure of which is Jesus Christ.

As my regular readers will probably already realize, I have shared all of the previous information with you for a very specific reason. In helping you to recognize this amazing recurring pattern which we find in the Scriptures, it is my hope that you will likewise come to understand why certain things were no longer necessary, and in fact became outdated and obsolete, once Jesus had died on the Cross, and sealed the New Covenant with His own Blood. In writing about this new and better Covenant between God and man, and how it has replaced the Old Covenant, the Apostle Paul offers these comments:

"In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."

Hebrews 8:13, KJV

"And for this cause he [Jesus] is the mediator of the new

testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."

Hebrews 9:15, KJV

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh."

Hebrews 11:4, KJV

"And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

Hebrews 12:24, KJV

We find additional mention of this New Testament, or New Covenant, which God established between Himself and man through the Sacrifice of His own dear Son in verses such as the following ones:

"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

Matthew 26:28, KJV

"And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many."

Mark 14:24, KJV

"Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."

Luke 22:20, KJV

"After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."

1 Corinthians 11:25, KJV

"Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

2 Corinthians 3:6, KJV

For those of you who may not fully understand the previous

verses where Abel's sacrifice is mentioned, Paul is saying that while Abel's sacrifice of sheep did in fact please the Lord, Jesus' willingness to become the human sacrificial Lamb of God made His Sacrifice even better, and more pleasing to His Father. In fact, as we have already discussed, Jesus' Sacrifice became the final Sacrifice for sin; and it is upon His Sacrifice that the New Covenant is based. To fill in one of the gaps, the following verses discuss Abel's righteous animal sacrifice in the Book of Genesis:

"And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:"
Genesis 4:1-4, KJV

Regarding how God the Father was well-pleased with Jesus, following are some additional verses which we find in the New Testament:

"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
Matthew 3:17, KJV

"Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles."
Matthew 12:18, KJV

"While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."
Matthew 17:5, KJV

"And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
Mark 1:11, KJV

"And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."

Luke 3:22, KJV

"For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

2 Peter 1:17, KJV

With the previous verses regarding Abel's animal sacrifice and Jesus offering up Himself on the Cross as the Lamb of God, we witness yet another example of how an Old Testament event was actually a physical archetype and foreshadow of a much greater spiritual truth and prophetic event which would occur during the first half of the First Century AD.

Of course, if we want to take this parallel all the way to its conclusion, then it is only fitting that I should also mention how the Patriarch Abraham was likewise willing to offer up his only begotten son -- that is, Isaac -- in order to please the Lord. To my knowledge, this event is in fact the closest parallel that we find between the Old and the New Testaments, insofar as Christ's Sacrifice is concerned. Following is a group of verses which connects the dots for you:

"And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of . . . And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me."

Genesis 22:1-2, 12, KJV

"By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure."

Hebrews 11:17-19, KJV

"Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?"

James 2:21, KJV

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

John 3:16, KJV

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him."

1 John 4:9, KJV

Please go to part three for the continuation of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<https://www.billkochman.com>

Are You Saved and Sealed and Healed and Filled? : Part 3

Copyright 1994 - 2018 Bill's Bible Basics

Published On : July 7, 1997

Last Updated : March 21, 2018

Water Baptism Is An Outdated Unnecessary Ceremonial Ritual, Minimal Benefits Of Water Baptism, Unnecessary For Salvation, Replaced By Baptism Of The Holy Spirit, Resistance From Harsh Inflexible Legalists, Doctrines And Traditions Of The Scribes Pharisees And Sadducees, Christian Social Clubs, Dictatorial Church Leaders, Denominationalism Divides And Destroys The Body Of Christ, Warnings Regarding False Brethren And False Doctrines, Opposing Views Regarding Water Baptism, Doctrinal Confusion In Many Modern Churches, Apostle Paul And Ananias, Water Baptism Does Not Wash Away Our Sins, Spiritual Growth And Maturation Of The Apostles, Salvation Was Initially Only Meant For The Israelites, Peter's Sheet Revelation, Abandon Misguided Beliefs And Outdated Practices, Water Baptism In The Early Church, Washed In The Blood Of The Lamb, Prophet Elisha And Naaman The Leper, Spiritual Baptism Without Water,

Beware Of Legalistic Yoke Of Bondage, Are Belief Salvation And Spiritual Baptism Synonymous?, The Earnest Of The Spirit

It is because of this undeniable, powerful connection which is so evident between the Old and the New Testaments, the symbolic images which God has repeatedly used throughout Biblical history to make His Divine Plan known to us, and the fact that God will discard something once it has served His purpose and replace it with something even better, that I embrace my current position regarding water baptism. In other words, just as the Old Testament priesthood and the Temple sacrifices, services, ceremonies and rituals became obsolete once Christ had died on the Cross, so too, I have become convinced that water baptism is a part of the old school of thought -- and an unnecessary ceremonial ritual -- for the very same reason.

While water baptism can serve some positive purposes, such as acting as a witness of our faith to others -- assuming, of course, that there are nonbelievers present to whom it will serve as a witness -- as well as inspiring the faith of the individual who is being baptized, nevertheless, I do not believe that being dunked in a tub of water saves us in any way, or makes us more spiritual. In short, I believe that one can derive minimal benefits from water baptism, and that it is a hangover from the past. More importantly, I embrace the view that water baptism has in fact been replaced by the powerful baptism of the Holy Spirit, and that one does not need to be baptized in water in order to be filled with and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Like so many other things that we find in the Scriptures, water baptism was simply one of many archetypes and foreshadows which God used to bring us to the realities of the Spirit, including baptism with fire.

While I am personally convinced of this particular point of view, as we have already seen, there are certain Christians who hold a different opinion; some of whom can act rather harshly towards those people who do not embrace their view. The more extreme ones are quite the legalists, and it can be very difficult to break through their wall of reasoning and reach them. While everyone is free to believe as they wish, I can't help but feel that such people are acting much like the Scribes and the Pharisees of old. As you may know,

Jesus quite often exposed them and rebuked them due to their legalistic hypocrisy. They were so bound by the rigidity and legalism of the laws, customs and traditions of the past, that they were incapable of exercising any flexibility, and they were not free. In fact, as Jesus told them on a number of occasions, they placed their own doctrines and traditions above the very Law and Word of God. Consider the following verses:

"In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."

Luke 12:1, KJV

"Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread. Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees."

Matthew 16:6-12, KJV

"Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition."

Matthew 15:1-6, KJV

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye."

Mark 7:6-13, KJV

In much the same way, I believe that certain denominational Christians have turned the issue of water baptism into such a complicated and confusing subject because they simply are not willing to let go of all of their preconceived ideas and misguided doctrines and traditions. If their church teaches a particular doctrine, they will stand by it and adamantly defend it tooth and nail; even if it is wrong, and does not adhere to the Scriptures. I have seen or heard about certain churches and denominations which act like smug social clubs where the pastor or minister rules supreme like a dictator. If a person dares to question what is being taught by that church leader, he risks being publicly reprimanded, or even worse, possibly being excommunicated from their fellowship, and ousted from that church. This is contrary to the Apostle Peter's warning regarding being lords over God's heritage, as we see here:

"Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."

1 Peter 5:3, KJV

Some of my online friends have shared such stories with me, so I know that it is true. Not only that, but more than three decades ago, I likewise had a few bad experiences of my own with such people. As I have mentioned before, it is

for this reason that I am against denominationalism. I am convinced that denominationalism is of the Devil, and that it divides and destroys the Body of Christ. It tore apart the First Century Church, and it continues to do so today as well. This becomes evident by a number of verses that can be found in the New Testament where the Apostles warn against false doctrines and false brethren infiltrating the Lord's flocks. Consider the following sample verses:

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:"
Ephesians 4:14-15, KJV

"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."
Hebrews 13:9, KJV

"As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do."
1 Timothy 1:3-4, KJV

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;"
1 Timothy 4:1-2, KJV

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;"
2 Timothy 4:3, KJV

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

Acts 20:28-30, KJV

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."

Romans 16:17, KJV

"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him . . . For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

2 Corinthians 11:3-4, 13-15, KJV

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

Galatians 1:6-9, KJV

"And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:"

Galatians 2:4, KJV

"Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision."

Philippians 3:2, KJV

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the

doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself."

1 Timothy 6:3-5, KJV

"But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself."

Titus 3:9-11, KJV

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."

2 Peter 2:1-2, KJV

"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

1 John 2:18-19, KJV

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

2 John 1:9-11, KJV

As I noted earlier, the validity of water baptism is one hot button issue which divides and confuses many Christians. If you doubt that this is so, simply look at how many different perspectives the churches hold to today. Some of them teach that we need to be water baptized, while others insist that

we do not. Some denominations teach that water baptism is absolutely essential for Salvation, while others say that it is a requirement, but that it does not affect our Salvation. Certain churches -- the Roman Catholic Church in particular -- require water baptism at birth -- or at least at a very young age -- while other churches teach that water baptism should only be performed on mature Christians who fully understand the significance of the ritual. So as I said, there is a lot of doctrinal confusion within the churches. Sadly, this leaves the poor sheep shaking their heads and wondering what they are supposed to believe.

Even the very meaning of baptism itself can be confusing if one is not familiar with the Scriptures. What complicates this issue even more is the fact that the words "baptism" and "baptized" are used in a variety of ways in the pages of the New Testament. In one sense, the words "believeth" and "baptized" -- as they are used in Mark 16:16 -- appear to be synonymous with each other. Do you know why? Quite simply, because to believe is to be baptized. Why do I state this? Let's take a closer look at Acts 22:16, which was shared by my friend on my BBS years ago, and then I will offer you a clear explanation. I am including the surrounding verses in order to put the verse in context:

"And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

Acts 22:11-16, KJV

In the previous verses, Paul is recounting his experience with a Disciple in Damascus named Ananias, who was sent to Paul in order to heal his eyes, and so that Paul might also be filled with the Holy Spirit. This occurs in Acts chapter nine, which we will be discussing in the next part of this series.

Exactly what does Paul mean by being baptized and washing away his sins? Is Paul saying that he believes that being immersed in water washes away our sins? Obviously not. We all know that water cannot wash away anything other than physical filth. While it's possible that Ananias -- who Paul is quoting here -- may have believed so, I am not convinced that this was Paul's understanding at the time that this was written. From verses which I will share with you later on in this series, I get the impression that at some point, all of the Apostles began to realize that real baptism has nothing to do with water. The Apostle Peter seems to confirm this same thought when he writes the following. Please notice the words I have placed in uppercase letters for emphasis:

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (NOT THE PUTTING AWAY OF THE FILTH OF THE FLESH, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:"

1 Peter 3:21, KJV

We need to recognize that during their time with Christ, and for many years afterwards, just as we Christians still do in this present day, the Apostles and Disciples were undergoing a constant growing process and spiritual maturation. They did not know everything, and their personal understanding of the Word and Will of God was constantly being expanded. A prime example of this is Salvation itself. Until Peter received his revelation in Acts chapter ten, the Apostles were convinced that Salvation was only meant for the Jews, and not for any of the Gentiles. After all, this is what Jesus had instructed them to do in the Gospels, as we see by the following verses:

"These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Matthew 10:5-6, KJV

"And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the

lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour."

Matthew 15:22-28, KJV

"Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews."

John 4:22, KJV

"Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only."

Acts 11:19, KJV

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

Romans 1:16, KJV

Yet once the sheet revelation was given in Acts chapter ten, and Peter shared his vision with the other Apostles, they all gained a new perspective and a new understanding regarding what God required of them. They had to forsake the old idea, and the old way of doing things, in order to embrace the new idea and the new way; meaning Salvation for everyone, and not just for the Jews. As I mention in the series entitled "Are You Just a Baby Huey?", we need to be willing to do the very same thing. This does not mean that we should compromise the core doctrines of our faith. However, it does mean that we need to be willing to abandon misguided ideas and beliefs which find no support in the Scriptures. Furthermore, we need to be willing to forsake outdated traditions and practices which are no longer necessary, and which are only hangovers from the past.

As we have already seen, and will see even more later on in this series, in the early days of the Church, the Apostles and Disciples embraced water baptism as a necessary ritual. Perhaps they were simply following the example of John the

Baptist, being as some of them had previously been John's disciples prior to following Jesus. However, as the previous verse from Peter's Epistle seems to indicate, there came a time when they began to realize that water baptism had very little real significance. It was simply a symbolic ritual which represented a spiritual truth -- that is, baptism by fire of the Holy Ghost -- and the latter is what is most important.

In my opinion, the end of Paul's statement in Acts 22:16 indicates exactly what is meant by "be baptized". What were his final words? He said "calling on the name of the Lord". In other words, it seems that being spiritually baptized is synonymous with calling upon the Name of the Lord and being saved; because when we call upon the Name of the Lord, that is what washes away our sins. It is only the symbolic act of being washed in the Blood of the Lamb -- and not in water -- which cleanses us, makes us spiritually whole, and saves us. This truth is very clear in the pages of the New Testament. Consider the following verses:

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."
1 John 1:7, KJV

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,"
Revelation 1:5, KJV

"And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."
Revelation 7:14, KJV

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."
1 Peter 1:2, KJV

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the

holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way,
which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is
to say, his flesh;"

Hebrews 10:19-20, KJV

"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people
with his own blood, suffered without the gate . . . Now the
God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord
Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood
of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good
work to do his will, working in you that which is
wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be
glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Hebrews 13:12, 20-21, KJV

"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours
only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

1 John 2:2, KJV

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved
us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

1 John 4:10, KJV

Let me mention here that this reminds me of another Old
Testament event which just so happens to also involve the
Jordan River, and which likewise serves as an archetype or
foreshadow of this New Testament spiritual reality in which
we are spiritually healed and made clean by being washed in
the Blood of the Lamb. I am referring to the story of the
Prophet Elisha and Naaman, the latter of which was a leper,
and also the captain of the Syrian army. As you may recall,
Elisha instructed Naaman to dip himself seven times in the
Jordan River in order to be healed. While Naaman initially
took offense at the thought of doing this, he eventually
did as the Prophet had instructed him to do, and he was
healed of his affliction. You will find the story in the
fifth chapter of the Second Book of the Kings.

To continue, when we call upon the Name of the Lord; when we
express our belief in Jesus' Sacrifice on the Cross -- which
means that we are symbolically washed in His Blood -- and
when we believe that He rose from the Dead, we are in effect
receiving a type of spiritual baptism. This acknowledgement
and decision is totally separate and divorced from, and most
certainly does not depend upon, the presence of water, and

being physically immersed and baptized in water. To insist otherwise is to embrace a misguided doctrine, in my opinion.

In fact, requiring water baptism in any way, and especially adamantly defending the erroneous belief that it is required for Salvation, is to place a heavy, legalistic yoke upon the necks of potential Believers everywhere; just as the Jewish legalists repeatedly endeavored to do with the young Church during the First Century. As you may know, they even tried to do it with Jesus in the Gospels, but He would not let them. He silenced them every time with His wise answers. I discuss these topics in more detail in articles such as "Free From the Fear of Death: Law and Works vs Grace", "Dead to the Law: God's Laws Written on Our Hearts" and "Welcome to Greater Israel, USA!". I am reminded of the following verses:

"Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they."

Acts 15:10-11, KJV

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

Galatians 5:1, KJV

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Matthew 11:28-30, KJV

Simply put, I believe that once Jesus accomplished His Death on the Cross, spiritual baptism became synonymous with being saved, and that there is no difference. I mean, if we believe in what the Spirit of Truth testifies to us, and if we accept Christ, is that not the same as being baptized and sealed by that same Spirit? As I believe I explain in the article "A Treasure in Earthen Vessels: God's Promise of the Spirit", perhaps we do not receive a full-blown indwelling of the Holy Spirit at the moment of our Salvation, but I do believe that we at least receive a small portion of it as a sort of down payment, or what the Apostle Paul refers to as "the earnest

of the Spirit". Let me emphasize again that this does not require immersion in water, as far as I can tell. Consider the following two verses:

"Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."

2 Corinthians 1:22, KJV

"Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit."

2 Corinthians 5:5, KJV

In my understanding, this may possibly be the very same thing that the Apostle Peter is saying. That is, that to believe is to be baptized, to be baptized is to be saved, and therefore "baptism doth also now save". It doesn't appear that Peter is talking about water baptism in that verse, because he clearly says "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh". That's why I conclude that he must be referring to spiritual baptism. Now, if what I am explaining here isn't exactly clear to you yet, please be patient, and perhaps you will grasp it better after I present a few more verses for your consideration.

Please go to part four for the continuation of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<https://www.billkochman.com>

Are You Saved and Sealed and Healed and Filled? : Part 4

Copyright 1994 - 2018 Bill's Bible Basics

Published On : July 7, 1997

Last Updated : March 21, 2018

Mark 16:16 And Matthew 28:19 May Possibly Be Spurious Text, Is The KJV Bible Truly Inerrant?, Reasons For Doubting The Authenticity Of Matthew 28:19, In My Name, Matthew 28:19 Is Only Verse Which Uses The Trinitarian Phrase Father Son And

Holy Ghost, Apostles Never Preached Baptized Or Performed Miracles Using The Trinitarian Phrase, In The Name Of Jesus, John The Baptist's Baptism With Fire Comments Offer An Answer, Old Models Are Obsolete And No Longer Necessary, That Which Is In Part Shall Be Done Away, Go On Unto Perfection, Open Your Mind And Heart To Scriptural Truth, Covered By The Holy Spirit, Our Sins Are Blotted Out By The Blood Of Christ, The Cloak Of Ignorance Was Stripped Away, Unbelieving Jews Made A Choice To Reject The Spirit Of Truth, Blasphemy Against The Holy Ghost, Spiritual Darkness Of The Unbelieving Jews, Spiritual Blindness And Ignorance, Jesus Takes Away The Vail

At this point in our discussion, let us take another look at one of the verses which I quoted for you at the beginning of this series. I am referring to Mark 16:16. Perhaps we can now view it with a new understanding:

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Mark 16:16, KJV

Let me ask you something. Why didn't Jesus say "but he that believeth not AND IS NOT BAPTIZED shall be damned"? Could it be because He was inferring that believing and being baptized are synonymous terms as I have proposed, and that they are not necessarily two separate acts or events? If one does not believe, then of course he cannot be baptized by the Spirit. Furthermore, if John recorded in his Gospel that Jesus never baptized anyone with water, then it does not make any sense that Jesus would turn around in the above verse, contradict Himself, and say that we must be water-baptized in order to be saved. Do you see my point?

In my view, there are only two possible solutions we should consider: Either Jesus was talking about spiritual baptism in Mark 16:16 -- that is, baptism by the fire of the Holy Ghost -- or else the Lord never even said anything regarding being baptized in that verse to begin with. What???!!!

While my next comment may alarm some of my readers, it may interest you to know that for centuries now, there has been an ongoing debate regarding the final verses that are found at the end of the Gospel of Mark. Some theologians have long

suspected and argued that the verses -- including Mark 16:16 -- are spurious text. In other words, those verses -- or at least part of those verses -- may have been added to Mark's Gospel at a later date by someone else, and may not really have been written by the original author. Why would anyone want to do this? One possibility is that they simply wanted to promote the doctrine of water baptism. Perhaps the phrase "and is baptized" was added later, and the verse should read as follows:

"He that believeth shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

While I personally remain undecided regarding this issue, let me mention that Mark 16:16 and its surrounding verses are not the only Scriptures which have come under suspicion. There are in fact other verses that are found in the New Testament, the authenticity of which has likewise come under question for centuries as well. In particular, one of them is Matthew 28:19, which also happens to speak about baptism, as well as the so-called Holy Trinity, as we see here:

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:"

Matthew 28:19, KJV

While certain KJV extremists argue that the King James Bible is the inspired and inerrant Word of God, as I explain in the series entitled "Is the KJV Bible the Inerrant Word of God?", while I believe that the KJV Bible is inspired, after reading and studying it for over forty-five years, I have arrived at the conclusion that it is not truly inerrant. In fact, it may interest you to know that nowhere in their "Epistle Dictatory" -- which is their dedication to King James I -- or in their lengthy and flowery "From the Translators to the Reader", do the 1611 translators make the claim that their translation is perfect and inerrant. As a growing body of theologians, Bible scholars and regular Bible students now acknowledge, there is ample evidence to suggest that the King James Version of the Bible has been manipulated by both political and religious forces since the time of its creation.

We should not ignore the fact that both of these verses where Jesus supposedly commanded His followers to baptize -- while

He Himself did not baptize -- have come under suspicion. While I will leave it up to you to conduct your own online research regarding the whys and wherefores concerning these two verses -- that is, if you have the time and the interest -- I would like to share with you three other obvious reasons regarding why I personally have doubts regarding the authenticity of Matthew 28:19.

First of all, throughout the four Gospels, Jesus advises His followers to both ask and do things in His Name. This becomes rather evident by the following set of verses. I have placed the phrase "in my name" in uppercase letters for the sake of emphasis:

"And whoso shall receive one such little child IN MY NAME receiveth me."
Matthew 18:5, KJV

"For where two or three are gathered together IN MY NAME, there am I in the midst of them."
Matthew 18:20, KJV

"But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle IN MY NAME, that can lightly speak evil of me."
Mark 9:39, KJV

"For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink IN MY NAME, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward."
Mark 9:41, KJV

"And these signs shall follow them that believe; IN MY NAME shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;"
Mark 16:17, KJV

"And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child IN MY NAME receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great."
Luke 9:48, KJV

"And whatsoever ye shall ask IN MY NAME, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask

any thing IN MY NAME, I will do it."

John 14:13-14, KJV

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send IN MY NAME, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

John 14:26, KJV

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father IN MY NAME, he may give it you."

John 15:16, KJV

"And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father IN MY NAME, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing IN MY NAME: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father. At that day ye shall ask IN MY NAME: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:"

John 16:23-26, KJV

As you can plainly see, over and over again Jesus says "in my name". However, then, in total contradiction to all of the previous verses, in Matthew 28:19 we see Jesus advising His followers to baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost". Doesn't this strike you as being a little strange and out of place? If not, then let me offer you my second reason regarding why I have doubts concerning the authenticity of Matthew 28:19. Please consider the fact that this is the only verse in the entire New Testament of the KJV Bible where this trinitarian phrase -- "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" -- is even used. You will not find it anywhere else.

Now we come to my third and final reason regarding why I have come to doubt the authenticity of Matthew 28:19, and suspect that it may be spurious text, as certain Bible scholars and theologians have suggested. If Jesus truly told His followers to baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" as this verse states, then why do we not find

one single instance in the Book of Acts where they did this? In every case where they preached, did miracles, or baptized, they did it only in the Name of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, in the Epistles we see the very same thing occurring. We do not find a single verse where the trinitarian phrase is used. Consider the following verses as evidence of this point. Once again I have placed certain phrases in uppercase letters for the sake of emphasis:

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
Acts 2:38, KJV

"Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST of Nazareth rise up and walk."
Acts 3:6, KJV

"And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach IN THE NAME OF JESUS."
Acts 4:18, KJV

"And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak IN THE NAME OF JESUS, and let them go."
Acts 5:40, KJV

"(For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS.)"
Acts 8:16, KJV

"But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus IN THE NAME OF JESUS . . . And he spake boldly IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him."
Acts 9:27, 29, KJV

"And he commanded them to be baptized IN THE NAME OF THE LORD. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days."
Acts 10:48, KJV

"And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned

and said to the spirit, I command thee IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST to come out of her. And he came out the same hour."

Acts 16:18, KJV

"When they heard this, they were baptized IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS."

Acts 19:5, KJV

"IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,"

1 Corinthians 5:4, KJV

"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS, and by the Spirit of our God."

1 Corinthians 6:11, KJV

"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST;"

Ephesians 5:20, KJV

"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

Colossians 3:17, KJV

"Now we command you, brethren, IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."

2 Thessalonians 3:6, KJV

"Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience . . . Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil IN THE NAME OF THE LORD:"

James 5:10, 14, KJV

If Jesus truly told His followers to ask for things, to do things, and to baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost", then why didn't they do it? The Apostle Paul even plainly states "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." It certainly does not seem like any of them promoted or used

the trinitarian phrase even one single time. It simply does not make any sense that they would disobey the Lord; unless He never really used the trinitarian phrase, and the verse has been partially manipulated, or is bogus in its entirety.

To reiterate, the main point to consider here is that we have two verses in which Jesus supposedly commanded His followers to baptize -- which certain Christians have interpreted as referring to water baptism -- and yet both verses have fallen under suspicion for literally centuries. Here is the icing on the cake. Both of these doctrines -- that is, the absolute necessity of water baptism, and praying using the trinitarian phrase -- began being strongly promoted and heavily enforced during the early Fourth Century, when Church bishops began to compromise with the powers of Rome. In fact, those bishops were the progenitors of what would become the powerful -- as well as government-enforced state religion of the empire -- Roman Catholic Church by the end of that same century. To be a part of that church, one was required to accept both of these doctrines. Please refer to articles such as "Pontifex Maximus: Pagan High Priest to Roman Catholic Pope".

As I stated earlier, there are other reasons regarding why some theologians doubt the authenticity of these two verses, and consider them to be spurious text. However, being as the argument on both sides of the fence is quite extensive, and involves comparison with some of the earliest known Bible manuscripts, you will have to invest some time in conducting your own online research, and arrive at your own conclusions.

Even if we ignore the evidence to the contrary, and accept that Mark 16:16 and Matthew 28:19 are really Inspired Text, and that Jesus really did command His followers to baptize in those two verses, then as has always been my practice, I believe that the best way to answer this question regarding what He meant by baptize, is by letting the Holy Scriptures interpret themselves, and speak for themselves. Having said that, as I pointed out in part one, I believe that John the Baptist offers us a very clear answer in the following two verses:

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:"

Matthew 3:11, KJV

"John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:"

Luke 3:16, KJV

In my mind, it is a very simple equation. John the Baptist said that Jesus would baptize "with the Holy Ghost and with fire". In the Gospel of John we are told that Jesus did not baptize anyone with water. In Mark 16:16 and Matthew 28:19, Jesus speaks about baptism. Therefore, I conclude that the verses are referring to spiritual baptism by the fire of the Holy Ghost, and not with water. This is in perfect agreement with everything I have been explaining to you regarding how God used physical archetypes and foreshadows, in order to slowly lead us to the spiritual realities which are revealed in the New Testament. They were models, examples and school lessons to lead us to the truth. Once Jesus brought us to the truth, the old ways and old models -- including water baptism -- became obsolete and were no longer necessary.

As we learned earlier, the Apostle Paul wrote that we are no longer under a schoolmaster. In fact, I was just reminded of something else that Paul wrote which seems relevant to this current discussion. Consider the following. Again, I have placed certain words and phrases in uppercase letters for the sake of emphasis:

"Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, THEY SHALL FAIL; whether there be tongues, THEY SHALL CEASE; whether there be knowledge, IT SHALL VANISH AWAY. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then THAT WHICH IS IN PART SHALL BE DONE AWAY. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I PUT AWAY CHILDISH THINGS. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."

1 Corinthians 13:8-12, KJV

"Therefore LEAVING the principles of the doctrine of Christ, LET US GO ON UNTO PERFECTION; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of

the DOCTRINE OF BAPTISMS, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit."

Hebrews 6:1-3, KJV

Do you understand what Paul is saying in those verses? All of those things were and are important; but now it is time for us to move on to the realities of the Spirit. All of those physical examples were necessary in order to lead us to Christ, and to the truth of the Spirit; but they cease, vanish away, and must be put away, so that we can "go on unto perfection", as Paul writes. Please notice that Paul includes the "doctrine of baptisms" amongst the principles that we must leave behind.

If you are one who has long been convinced of the necessity of water baptism, I can understand the challenge you face in comprehending what I am stating here. You are obviously free to believe as you wish. However, I ask you to please try to lay aside your current beliefs and preconceived ideas for a moment, and try to see what I am explaining to you. Simply open your mind and heart to what all of these Scriptures are saying. As long as you keep equating baptism with water, you are never going to be able to move on to the deeper meaning of what baptism really signifies.

To reiterate, true baptism has absolutely nothing to do with water. Based on the verses which I have uncovered during the course of my studies, to be baptized appears to mean to be covered by -- not water -- and immersed in, the very Spirit of God, and also the Blood of Jesus Christ. It is similar to an invisible cloak or veil which is cast over our sins, so that the Lord sees them no more. As we learned earlier, our sins are literally blotted out and washed away by the Blood of Jesus Christ, and we are spiritually healed. Consider the following verses:

"Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities."

Psalms 51:9, KJV

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Isaiah 1:18, KJV

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

Isaiah 53:5, KJV

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."

1 Peter 2:24, KJV

What I find really interesting regarding the previous verses is that because the unbelieving Jews of old resisted God's Spirit of Truth, resulting in their rejection of Jesus, they were not washed in the Blood of the Lamb. Therefore, their sins were still exposed to and plainly visible to God, and their sins were a testimony against them. Thus, because they resisted the testimony of the Spirit of Truth, Jesus said the following concerning them:

"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin."

John 15:22, KJV

You see how clear that verse becomes now? That cloak was their ignorance of the truth. However, the Lord completely ripped away that cloak of ignorance from them when He told them who He was, and why He had come into the world. Now they could no longer feign ignorance of the truth. They were faced with a choice. They could either fully embrace it, or else they could reject it. As we know, sadly, many of the Jews who were in positions of both political and religious authority during that time, chose to reject the truth which Jesus brought to them. As a result of that rejection, Jesus was given a mock trial, and then basically murdered. Sadly, today, two thousand years later, most of their descendants continue doing the very same thing. They have hardened their hearts and remain as stubborn as ever. What a tragedy.

In essence, what the unbelieving Jews did by rejecting the Spirit of Truth, was to blaspheme against the Holy Ghost. They called God the Father a liar; because the message which Jesus bore to them came from His Father, and the Holy Spirit which rested upon Jesus came from His Father. As I explain in

other articles, Jesus taught that blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is the one unforgivable sin. Why is this? It is because in blaspheming the Holy Ghost, in calling God the Father a liar, and in refusing to accept the Salvation which He offers us through His Son -- which is what the Holy Spirit testifies to -- a person is in essence condemning themselves. No one is doing it for them. Consider the following set of verses:

"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."

Matthew 12:31-32, KJV

"Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit."

Mark 3:28-30, KJV

"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. GOD IS A SPIRIT: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

John 4:23-24, KJV

"This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because THE SPIRIT IS TRUTH."

1 John 5:6, KJV

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the SPIRIT OF TRUTH; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you . . . But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

John 14:16-17, 26, KJV

"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the SPIRIT OF TRUTH, which PROCEEDETH FROM THE FATHER, he shall testify of me:"

John 15:26, KJV

"Howbeit when he, the SPIRIT OF TRUTH, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."

John 16:13, KJV

"We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."

1 John 4:6, KJV

As a result of their rejection of the Spirit of Truth -- or Holy Spirit -- which abode upon and dwelt in Jesus without measure, the unbelieving Jews were in spiritual darkness. We see a number of examples of this in the Gospels. Jesus would convey some spiritual truth to them, and they would remain absolutely clueless. In some cases, they would even try to interpret His words in a very literal, physical manner. For example, consider the following verses that we find in the Gospel of John, where the Jewish elders erroneously assumed that Jesus was speaking about raising up the physical Temple in three days:

"Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said."

John 2:18-22, KJV

So not only did the unbelieving Jews not recognize who Jesus was, but they failed to grasp the true meaning of many of the things which He said to them. The Scriptures plainly inform us that this ignorance and spiritual blindness results from

not having the Spirit of God, as we see by the following set of verses:

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

1 Corinthians 2:14, KJV

"And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, [killed Jesus] as did also your rulers."

Acts 3:17, KJV

"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

Acts 17:30-31, KJV

"(According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day . . . For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

Romans 11:8, 25, KJV

"But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart."

2 Corinthians 3:14-15, KJV

"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:"

Ephesians 4:18, KJV

Please notice that the Apostle Paul even writes "which vail is done away in Christ." But because so many of the Jews in fact rejected Jesus, the veil was not removed from their eyes, minds and hearts. Furthermore, as I mentioned earlier, many of their descendants remain spiritually blind to this

very day for the exact same reason, as do many other people as well.

Please go to part five for the continuation of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<https://www.billkochman.com>

Are You Saved and Sealed and Healed and Filled? : Part 5

Copyright 1994 - 2018 Bill's Bible Basics

Published On : July 7, 1997

Last Updated : March 21, 2018

More Scriptures Concerning Spiritual Blindness And Ignorance, Jewish Spiritual Leaders Refused To Abandon The Traditions Of The Past, Jewish Political And Religious Compromise With Rome, Harsh Legalism Of Jewish Religionists, Jesus Was A Threat To The Jewish-Roman Status Quo, Why Jewish Leadership Could Not Accept Jesus, New Wine Must Be Put In New Bottles, The Lying Spirit Of Antichrist, Condemned Through Unbelief, Cast Out Into Outer Darkness And Thrown On God's Scrap Pile, Wrath Of God, Temple Veil Was Ripped In Half, Incense Altar And Blood Atonement, Why God Ripped The Temple Veil In Half, We Are All One Through Faith In Jesus Christ, We All Have Equal Access To The Father Through The Veil Of Jesus' Flesh, Christ Is The Rock Foundation And Rejected Cornerstone Of God's Holy Temple

Before returning to our main discussion, allow me to share with you some additional verses regarding the subject of spiritual blindness and ignorance. As you will see, it was in fact prophesied by Isaiah -- who Jesus and the Apostles both quoted -- that spiritual blindness would befall the nation of Israel during the time of Christ:

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I

send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed."

Isaiah 6:8-10, KJV

"And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear."

Matthew 13:10-16, KJV

"Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."

Matthew 15:14, KJV

"Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! . . . Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel."

Matthew 23:16, 24, KJV

"And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin

remaineth."

John 9:39-41, KJV

"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him."

John 12:37-41, KJV

"And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

Acts 28:25-27, KJV

Let me remind you again that one of the reasons why so many of the Jewish leadership remained spiritually ignorant and blind to the truth concerning Jesus, is because they failed, and in fact refused, to give up the traditions of the past. I have spent a major portion of this series to show you how the old must give way to the new, and how God's Truth is a continuing revelation. In the centuries leading up to Jesus' arrival on Earth, from the time of the return from Babylon, up to the First Century, the Jewish political and religious leadership had set up a very comfortable -- albeit corrupt -- tight-knit system for themselves.

As the First Century dawned, Jewish politicians were already in bed with the Romans enjoying an uneasy but workable status quo. King Herod - who was an Edomite -- was in fact appointed by the emperor. On top of that, the most influential of the Jewish religionists -- the Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees -- appear to have been in complete control of the Temple and

Jewish religious life. Furthermore, the high priest himself was selected by the king. Thus, it was a cozy, corrupt inner circle to say the least, all under the eyes and control of watchful Rome. As long as the Jewish political and religious leaders did Rome's bidding and maintained the peace, they were allowed to remain in power. That ended in 70 AD.

But concerning the Jewish religious elders, the Lord clearly exposed them in Matthew 23, as well as in other places in the Gospels. As you may recall, those religionists maintained the common people under submission -- and enriched themselves at the same time -- through a harsh, legalistic implementation of the Mosaic Law. Anyone who dared to question their laws, traditions and doctrines was asking for trouble, and that is exactly what Jesus did. Jesus represented a clear threat to their oppressive system. He offered people the freedom of the Spirit, instead of the burden of the Law. He simplified the entire Mosaic legal system by telling His listeners to love, and to forgive. As we learned in part three, He offered to lift the heavy yoke of legalistic bondage from off men's shoulders, and to take it upon Himself. This He did when He bore our sins on the Cross.

However, as I mentioned a moment ago, the Jewish religionists did not want anything to change, and neither did King Herod. But to their alarm, change is precisely what Jesus was about. If they were to accept Him, and the things which He taught, it would result in two things. First, to recognize any king other than the one appointed by the emperor would put them on a head-on clash with Rome. Second, to recognize and embrace Jesus' teachings would likewise mean that they would have to relinquish the great power they had accumulated over the past three centuries or so. Obviously, those power-hungry men were not about to do either one. Thus, they rejected Jesus and His message. They didn't want the New Wine. They were happy with the old wine, and the status quo, which afforded them so much worldly power. As Jesus taught in the Gospels:

"No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved."

Matthew 9:16-17, KJV

"No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles."

Mark 2:21-22, KJV

"And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better."

Luke 5:36-39, KJV

So as we have already discussed, by rejecting Christ and the message which He preached, the unbelieving Jews were in fact rejecting the Spirit of Truth which proceeded from God the Father. They were blaspheming against the Holy Ghost. Those foolish people were accusing God the Father of being a liar when He said that He had sent His only-begotten Son into the world to die for their -- and our -- sins. What a grievous sin indeed! Consider the following verses. In the first one, Jesus is speaking directly to His Jewish enemies:

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

John 8:44, KJV

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."

1 John 2:22, KJV

"And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."

1 John 4:3, KJV

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."

2 John 1:7, KJV

"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

Numbers 23:19, KJV

"God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."

Romans 3:4, KJV

"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;"

Titus 1:2, KJV

As a result of their stubborn rejection of the truth, a veil was still upon their eyes, and they were spiritually blind. However, they could no longer claim ignorance as they had done before, because Jesus had plainly told them the truth that they needed to hear. Through their rejection of that truth, and their stiff refusal to be washed in the Blood of the Lamb of God, they condemned themselves. Consider these verses:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd."

John 3:16-20, KJV

Not only did the unbelieving Jews condemn themselves, but as

they would discover four decades later in 70 AD, by rejecting Christ, and plotting His murder, they in fact made themselves the object of God's Wrath. As a result, they wound up being cast out, cast upon God's scrap pile, and ground to powder, as we see by the following verses:

"Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

Matthew 21:43-44, KJV

"But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Matthew 8:12, KJV

"Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Matthew 22:13, KJV

"And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Matthew 25:30, KJV

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

John 3:36, KJV

". . . he that cometh after me . . . will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

Matthew 3:11b-12, KJV

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God . . . For our God is a consuming fire."

Hebrews 10:31, 12:29, KJV

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;"

Romans 1:18, KJV

"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."

Ephesians 5:6, KJV

"And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

Revelation 6:16-17, KJV

"The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb . . . And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God."

Revelation 14:10, 19, KJV

"And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God . . . And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever."

Revelation 15:1, 7, KJV

"And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth . . . And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath."

Revelation 16:1, 19, KJV

"And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."

Revelation 19:15, KJV

"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

Revelation 20:15, KJV

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."

Revelation 21:8, KJV

You will find the aforementioned events discussed in more detail in some of my other articles which deal with Bible prophecy. At any rate, we have learned that as a result of their rejection of Christ, a veil remained over the eyes of the unbelieving Jews. It is interesting to note that at the time of Christ's death on a Roman Cross, the Temple veil was ripped in half, as we see by the following three verses:

"And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;"

Matthew 27:51, KJV

"And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom."

Mark 15:38, KJV

"And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst."

Luke 23:45, KJV

I believe that it is significant that three of the writers of the Gospels included this event in their narratives. As you may already know, the veil separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the interior of the Temple, which was called the holy place. The veil's construction is described in Exodus chapter twenty-six. According to Jewish tradition, the veil was four fingers' breadth in thickness, although there have been some doubts concerning this belief. It was in the Holy of Holies where the Ark of the Covenant used to be located. It was also where the Lord descended upon the Mercy Seat in order to commune with the high priest. It was likewise on the horns of a square incense altar that was situated before this veil, that Aaron the high priest -- and future high priests -- had to offer a blood atonement to the Lord once a year for the sins of the people. Consider the following verses:

"And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim wood shalt thou make it. A cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; foursquare shall it be: and two cubits shall be the height thereof: the horns thereof shall be of the same. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof; and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about. And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make it; and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal. And thou shalt make the staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put it before the vail that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee. And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations. Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon. And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it is most holy unto the LORD."

Exodus 30:1-10, KJV

The question which arises is why God ripped the Temple veil in half. One obvious explanation is that God wanted to show the Jews that they could no longer hide behind their cloak of hypocrisy, and behind their dead religion of self-righteous works of keeping the Law and performing animal sacrifices. In other words, it seems rather evident that God used the veil incident to show them in a very graphic way that the time of the Old Covenant had come to an end, and the time of the New Covenant had just begun. Now they had no choice but to accept the Sacrifice of His own dear Son as the only valid Atonement for the remission of sins. Just as the veil had been ripped in half, Christ's flesh had likewise been torn on the Cross. Furthermore, through His death on the Cross, Jesus tore down the wall of division, or partition, so that Salvation is now freely available to anyone who believes, and we are all one in and through Him. This is made evident by verses such as the following:

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

John 10:16, KJV

"For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."

Romans 12:4-5, KJV

"For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread."

1 Corinthians 10:17, KJV

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit . . . But now are they many members, yet but one body."

1 Corinthians 12-13, 20, KJV

"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed . . . There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

Galatians 3:8, 28, KJV

"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath BROKEN DOWN THE MIDDLE WALL OF PARTITION BETWEEN US; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And

came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."

Ephesians 2:11-18, KJV

"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful."

Colossians 3:15, KJV

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, THROUGH THE VEIL, THAT IS TO SAY, HIS FLESH; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

Hebrews 10:19-22, KJV

"And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious."

Isaiah 11:10, KJV

"Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. AND IN HIS NAME SHALL THE GENTILES TRUST."

Matthew 12:18-21, KJV

"And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; IN HIM SHALL THE GENTILES TRUST."

Romans 15:12, KJV

As I explain in other articles, such as the series entitled "Is Jesus the Only Begotten Son of God?", the Epistle to the Hebrews explains in considerable detail, how Jesus became the final Sacrifice for sin, when He offered up Himself one time for the sins of all people everywhere, regardless of whether they are Jew or Gentile. By so doing, He likewise became our one and only High Priest, as well as the symbolic cornerstone of God's spiritual Temple, of which we are all living stones.

Furthermore, as the previous verses explain, because of what Christ did for us, we are all one in Spirit -- regardless of what we are in the flesh -- and we all have equal access to the Father as well. Let me share with you some additional verses regarding this topic. In this first set of verses, we see how Christ is the Rock, Foundation and Cornerstone who was rejected by the unbelieving Jews:

"And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."

1 Corinthians 10:4, KJV

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."

Isaiah 53:3, KJV

"The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes."

Psalms 118:22-23, KJV

"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?"

Matthew 21:42, KJV

"And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."

Mark 8:31, KJV

"And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner: This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?"

Mark 12:10-11, KJV

"Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day."

Luke 9:22, KJV

"But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation."

Luke 17:25, KJV

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

John 1:11, KJV

"This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner."

Acts 4:11, KJV

"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed [that is disapproved, rejected, repudiated] indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious . . . Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed."

1 Peter 2:4, 6-8, KJV

Please go to part six for the continuation of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<https://www.billkochman.com>

Are You Saved and Sealed and Healed and Filled? : Part 6

Copyright 1994 - 2018 Bill's Bible Basics

Published On : July 7, 1997

Last Updated : March 21, 2018

We Are All Living Stones In God's Spiritual House Or Temple, Sealed And Bonded By The Mortar Of The Holy Spirit, Example Of Fruit Preserves, Preserved From God's Wrath Through Faith

In Christ, Peace With God Through Christ, God's Wrath On The First Century Jews, Destruction Of King Herod's Temple and the 144,000, Firstfruits Of The Resurrection, Sealed For A Purpose, His Father's Will, A Sign Of Ownership, We Are All Bought With A Price, Jesus' Example In Garden Of Gethsemane, God's Will And Not Our Own, God The Father Protected Jesus Until His Hour Had Come, The Power Of Darkness, Sealed With The Holy Spirit, The Earnest Of The Spirit, Saved And Sealed And Healed And Filled, We Are Either Sealed By God Or We Are Damned Through Unbelief, Satan's Seal: The Mark of the Beast

As we concluded in part five, the Scriptures make it clear that Jesus is the one true Rock, Foundation, and Cornerstone of God's holy Temple who was rejected by the unbelieving Jews. Furthermore, as we learned in part two, as Believers, we are also living stones and pillars in that very same Temple or spiritual house. This brings us right back to our main discussion regarding the Holy Spirit. You see, if we are all living stones in the Lord's spiritual Temple, then in a sense, the Holy Spirit is similar to a sealant, mortar or bonding agent which binds us all together as one. In fact, you may recall from part two that the Apostle Paul describes us as a building that is "fitly framed together". Furthermore, in these next two verses, Paul discusses being "perfectly joined together" and the "bond of peace":

"Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Ephesians 4:3, KJV

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

1 Corinthians 1:10, KJV

We can say then that we are not only covered or cloaked by God's Holy Spirit when we accept Christ's Sacrifice, but that we are actually sealed by it as well. We are all symbolically glued together by the Spirit. That is why Christians can live literally thousands of miles apart, and yet still feel that same kindred spirit between us. Isn't it just amazing how God works?

What does the word "seal" actually mean? Well, it has several meanings. Let's consider one of them. If you're familiar with making fruit preserves, then you will know that after you add the sugar, the spices, the pectin, and whatever else you are going to put in there, you have to cook the fruit over the fire -- or on the stove -- in order to kill the germs. After you do that, you have to put it in sterilized mason jars and seal it with waxed lids. What is the purpose of doing this? It is to protect the fruit from germs so that it won't spoil too quickly. It is to preserve and save it for some future date, until you are ready to eat it.

In a spiritual sense, this is exactly what happens to us as well when we accept Jesus' Sacrifice on the Cross. In other words, Jesus already passed through the fire for us when He gave His life on the Cross. So by believing in His Sacrifice, we are purged from our sins -- or germs -- and then sealed and protected. We are saved for some future use, as is deemed appropriate by God. Exactly what are we sealed and protected from? The following verse offers us one very clear answer:

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

John 3:36, KJV

There is no need to try to interpret the previous verse. It is as plain as day. Once we accept Jesus, we are saved and sealed -- or baptized -- by the Holy Spirit, and protected from God's wrath. As I explain in other articles, through our acceptance of the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ as Atonement for our sins, we are in fact reconciled with God the Father, and we enter a peaceful relationship with Him. Consider the following verses which confirm this point:

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

John 14:27, KJV

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

John 16:33, KJV

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:"

Romans 5:1, KJV

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."

Ephesians 2:13-18, KJV

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:7, KJV

"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:"

Colossians 1:19-22, KJV

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."

Jeremiah 29:11, KJV

In contrast, and as I briefly mentioned earlier, because the vast majority of the ancient Jews did not accept Christ's Sacrifice, they were not only not saved, but neither were they protected or sealed from God's wrath. As the historical record bears witness, some forty years after Christ died on the Cross, during the seven-year First Jewish-Roman War, the Roman legions, under the leadership of General Titus -- who was the son of Emperor Vespasian, and also a future emperor

himself -- came in and utterly destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple compound. Several ancient sources state that as many as one million Jews lost their lives during that seven-year war. The Lord prophesied that very event, as we see by the following set of verses:

"Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

John 4:20-24, KJV

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

Matthew 23:37-24:2, KJV

"And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here! And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

Mark 13:1-2, KJV

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say,

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Luke 13:34-35, KJV

"And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down . . . And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh."

Luke 21:5-6, 20, KJV

I discuss related issues surrounding the tragic events of 70 AD in a number of other articles which you will find listed at the end of this current series.

Now, if you are still having a hard time accepting this idea regarding the baptism of the Holy Spirit being similar to being sealed like fruit preserves, then consider that Jesus Christ is referred to as the Firstfruits of the Resurrection in the Scriptures. Not only that, but due to their faith in Christ, and their belief in the Resurrection of the Dead as a result of their faith in Christ, the First Century Apostles and Disciples likewise viewed themselves as the Firstfruits of God's great harvest of souls, as we can determine by the following verses:

"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body . . . For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."

Romans 8:22-23, 29, KJV

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

1 Corinthians 15:19-23, KJV

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature . . . And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."

Colossians 1:12-15, 18, KJV

"To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,"

Hebrews 12:23, KJV

"Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."

James 1:18, KJV

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood . . . I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

Revelation 1:5, 18, KJV

"These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb."

Revelation 14:4, KJV

In a literal sense, the firstfruits refers to the initial yield of the yearly harvest, which makes sense, if we stop to consider that ancient Israel was a very agrarian-oriented society. Concerning how fruit-filled mason jars are sealed with wax in order to preserve their contents, in the Gospel of John we discover that Jesus was sealed by His Father, as we see here:

"Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."

John 6:27, KJV

But exactly what did Jesus mean in that verse when He stated that He had been sealed by His Father? As I said previously, in a sense, being baptized and being sealed are synonymous terms. However, the word "seal", as it is used in the Bible, has another meaning which can also be applied to what Jesus said in the previous verse. To understand this, let's look at a few more verses where Jesus expounds upon His mission on the Earth:

"But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able."

Matthew 20:22, KJV

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

John 4:34, KJV

"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true . . . But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me . . . "

John 5:30-32, 36-37, KJV

"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 6:38-40, KJV

As you can see, just as fruit is sealed and preserved in a mason jar for a specific purpose -- that is, to be eaten at

a later date -- Jesus was likewise saying that He had been sealed, or baptized with the Spirit, by His Father for a specific task. That task was to ultimately fulfill His Father's Will. You see, another meaning of the word "seal" is a symbol of ownership, just like in centuries past when kings would place the seal of their ring upon something to make it official or else to show that they owned it. Seals, or brands, are also used by livestock owners to show that certain animals belong to them. As we all know, God's Word repeatedly informs us that Jesus is our Great Shepherd, and we are His sheep. We belong to Him; He owns us; because He purchased us with His own Blood. He paid the ransom price in order to possess us. Following are some verses which demonstrate this point:

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."
Matthew 20:28, KJV

"For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."
Mark 10:45, KJV

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."
Acts 20:28, KJV

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."
1 Corinthians 6:19-20, KJV

"Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men."
1 Corinthians 7:23, KJV

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."
1 Timothy 2:5-6, KJV

Because of this fact; because Jesus was willing to pay the ransom price for us all; He can do with us whatsoever He

pleases. As I explain in articles such as "So You Really Think You Are So Humble?", our job as Christians and sheep of His fold is to yield ourselves in humble submission, and to obey God's Will for our lives, whatever it happens to be. This is exactly what Jesus did on that dark night in the Garden of Gethsemane two thousand years ago. Consider the following verses which clearly emphasize this point:

"And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."

Luke 22:41-42, KJV

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

Matthew 7:21, KJV

"For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother."

Mark 3:35, KJV

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, THE LORD KNOWETH THEM THAT ARE HIS. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

2 Timothy 2:19, KJV

"But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand."

Isaiah 64:8, KJV

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Romans 12:1-2, KJV

"Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;"

Ephesians 6:6, KJV

"Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God."

Colossians 4:12, KJV

"And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

1 John 2:17, KJV

"For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."

Hebrews 10:36, KJV

"That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God."

1 Peter 4:2, KJV

As I explained earlier, the reason that we seal the fruit preserves in mason jars with waxed lids is to protect them from harm, so germs can't spoil them. In a symbolic sense, we can likewise say that when God the Father baptized and sealed Jesus with the Holy Spirit, He did so to make sure that the unbelieving Jews could do no more harm to Him than what was allowed until Jesus had fulfilled His Mission, and His hour had come. I am reminded of the following verses:

"Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm."

Psalms 105:15, KJV

"The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."

Psalms 34:7, KJV

"For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."

Psalms 91:11, KJV

"Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come."

John 2:4, KJV

"Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready . . . Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet

come."

John 7:6, 30, KJV

"These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come."

John 8:20, KJV

However, when Jesus' hour finally did arrive, and God the Father lifted His cloak of protection from Jesus so that His Divine Will could be accomplished through the persecution, suffering, Crucifixion and Resurrection of His own dear Son by the unbelieving Jews, what did Jesus say at that time? Consider the following group of verses:

"When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness."

Luke 22:53, KJV

"Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."

John 19:11, KJV

"Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?"

Matthew 26:53-54, KJV

So then, just as Jesus -- who was the Firstfruits of the Resurrection -- was baptized and sealed by God to show that He not only belonged to God, but that He was sent to perform a specific task, we are likewise sealed and protected by the Spirit as well, once we believe in Jesus. As such, as long as we are pleasing in His sight, and fulfilling His Will for our lives, He will continue to protect us from the power of darkness of this present world. Consider what the Apostle Paul wrote:

"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:"

Colossians 1:13, KJV

Notice that the Apostle Paul uses the same exact phrase in the previous verse; that is, "power of darkness". Earlier, while discussing how the Lord knows those people who belong to Him, the Apostle Paul used the phrase "having this seal". Just as the Christians of the First Century A.D. were sealed by God's Holy Spirit, and thus became the Firstfruits of the Resurrection, it is my belief, that in accordance with the following verses, we modern Christians are likewise sealed by the very same Spirit:

"Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."

2 Corinthians 1:22, KJV

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

Ephesians 1:13-14, KJV

"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

Ephesians 4:30, KJV

"He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true."

John 3:33, KJV

Please notice the Apostle Paul's reference to "the earnest of the Spirit". I discuss this topic in considerable detail in the article entitled "A Treasure in Earthen Vessels: God's Promise of the Spirit". Thus it seems that from the time that we are saved, we are likewise sealed and filled. Furthermore, one of these days we will eventually be totally healed of all of our bodily afflictions, when we are given new resurrected bodies, and translated into the Kingdom of God's Son. So we are saved and sealed and healed and filled. I like that! Don't you?

Continuing our discussion, in light of the evidence I have presented here, I hope that it has become, or is becoming, clear to you that true baptism has very little to do with being immersed in water. As we have seen, baptism signifies

being saved and sealed by the Holy Spirit through our faith in the atoning Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who is the Lamb of God, and the only true Savior of the world. Let's look at that verse in the Gospel of Mark once again, and substitute the word "baptized" with the word "sealed". By so doing, we see that it really does make a lot of sense:

"He that believeth and is baptized [sealed] shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Mark 16:16, KJV

Why will an individual be damned if they believe not? Quite simply, because they won't be baptized with or sealed by the Spirit of God. As we learned earlier, this means that they will not be recognized as belonging to God. They will not be members of His Kingdom or a part of His Royal Household. To the contrary, such people belong to and are sealed by Satan himself. They receive the Devil's mark instead of God's holy Seal. Tragically, this is precisely what we see happening to unbelievers in the Book of Revelation. Consider this group of verses:

"And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:"

Revelation 13:16, KJV

"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

Revelation 19:19-21, KJV

Regardless of what theological perspective one adheres to concerning the previous verses, the point remains that we cannot belong to God and Satan at the same time. It is one or the other. We must all choose our path at some point in our life. We are either sealed by God, or sealed by Satan.

Please go to part seven for the continuation of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<https://www.billkochman.com>

Are You Saved and Sealed and Healed and Filled? : Part 7

Copyright 1994 - 2018 Bill's Bible Basics

Published On : July 7, 1997

Last Updated : March 21, 2018

Apostle Paul's Simultaneous Healing Salvation And Baptism, Was Saul Of Tarsus Water Baptized?, God Ordered Ananias To Lay Hands On Paul And Nothing More, God Humbles Saul And Breaks His Pride, Submission To God's Will Brings Down The Holy Spirit, Partial And Full Indwelling Of The Holy Ghost, Does God Ever Remove His Holy Spirit From Us?, King David Sins, Sealed Or Permanently Filled?, Holy Spirit Baptism As A Secondary Experience After Salvation, Holy Ghost Baptism Through The Laying On Of Hands Alone, Multiple Baptisms Or "Re-baptism", Apostle Paul's Experience In Ephesus, Washed Regenerated Transformed And Renewed By The Holy Ghost, We Are New Creatures In Christ, Old Testament Blood Rituals, Sprinkled With The Blood Of Jesus Christ Our High Priest

With all of this additional information, we should now be able to go back and look at the baptism of Paul in a new light. His salvation and baptism of the Holy Spirit was a simultaneous experience. It was not two separate events as in other cases where we see someone accepting the Lord, and then sometime later receiving the Holy Spirit. Looking at Acts chapter nine, we read the following:

"And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be

filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus."

Acts 9:17-19, KJV

Notice what it is really saying here. In obedience to the Lord's command, Ananias forsook his own fears of Saul the Christian persecutor, and went directly to the house where Saul was staying and laid his hands on him. He did this for two reasons: to restore Saul's sight, and so that he might be filled with the Holy Ghost. It would seem that this may have been the actual moment of Saul's salvation. The scales falling from Saul's eyes was a physical manifestation of his receiving spiritual sight as well. Perhaps it was also at that moment that the old man Saul became the new man Paul.

Regardless of when the exact moment occurred, this former Christian persecutor was baptized -- or sealed by the Holy Spirit -- in order to perform a very specific task for the Lord as the Apostle to the Gentiles. In a sense, Paul got a "triple-whammy". In other words, he was healed, filled and sealed. All of this appears to have happened just through the laying on of hands by Ananias. That is what Ananias went there to do, and that is exactly what he did, as per God's command to him.

It is important to note that based solely on what is written in the previous verses, the Lord never instructed Ananias to baptize Paul in water. He simply told Ananias to go lay hands on Paul in order to restore his sight, and so that Paul could also be filled with the Holy Spirit. If you doubt that this is so, consider the following verses. There is no mention of water baptism in them:

"And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he

hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost."

Acts 9:10-17, KJV

If this is indeed the case -- as I believe it to be -- then what does the verse mean when it says that Paul arose and was baptized? Does that mean that after Ananias prayed over Paul, that he went over and was immersed in water? It is possible that it does mean that, but let me ask you something. Do you think everyone had a big tub of water sitting in their house two thousand years ago? This was not even Ananias' house. He didn't know what to expect to find there. All he knew is that the Lord sent him to lay hands on Saul. Right after rising up and being baptized, it says Saul sat down to eat. We are told that Saul had been so shaken up by his encounter with the Lord on the road to Damascus, not to mention the fact that he was suddenly afflicted with blindness, that he hadn't eaten during those three days, as we see here:

"And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink."

Acts 9:9, KJV

But let's consider for a minute. What if rising up and being baptized is not a reference to Ananias water-baptizing Saul, as some Christians believe? What if it actually means that right after Ananias had laid his hands on Saul, Saul's sight was restored, and in the act of rising up, he was filled or baptized with the Holy Ghost? I think we can agree that Saul, now Paul, was saved through an act of personal faith when he allowed Ananias to lay hands on him and pray over him. Let's not forget that Paul had hated the Christians with a passion, and that Ananias was afraid of him initially. So this was a great act of faith on both of their parts. Paul could have resisted Ananias, but he didn't. This once-proud pharisee of pharisees humbly submitted himself before God's anointed. His

proud spirit had finally been broken.

It wasn't the actual prayer or the laying on of hands that saved Saul. That couldn't save him any more than water could, even if we assume that Saul was water-baptized by Ananias. It was at the moment that he stopped resisting the testimony of the Holy Ghost; and accepted the necessity of Jesus' death on the Cross; and believed in his heart that he needed the Lord; that Saul was saved and sealed by God. Perhaps that is why the Lord had to leave Saul blind for three days. Maybe He had to soften up Saul a bit first so that he really saw his need to be saved. Whether it was on the road to Damascus, or when Ananias prayed over him, we really can't be too sure. But one thing we do know is that it was at the moment in which Saul really believed, that God's Spirit cloaked over his sins as I explained previously.

While we all know that Jesus was water baptized by John, was it the act of physically being immersed in water that brought down the Holy Spirit upon Him? Of course not. A close look at the following verse will show otherwise. As with Paul, I am convinced that it was the act of Jesus' opening Himself up to His Father's will which brought down the Holy Ghost. Just as Paul submitted himself to Ananias for the laying on of hands, Jesus likewise humbly submitted Himself to John and then rose up out of the water, just as Paul rose up after being prayed over by Ananias, as we see here:

"And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:"

Mark 1:10, KJV

It is this rising up part which intrigues me. Could this rising up to meet the Spirit after humble submission to God be the mechanism which triggered the outpouring of the Holy Ghost in both of these cases? In Acts chapter eight we see a clear example where receiving the Holy Ghost had nothing to do with water baptism. It was all a matter of faith and prayer and a laying on of hands:

"Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he

was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,"

Acts 8:14-18, KJV

Can you see that? It was prayer and the laying on of hands alone which resulted in those Disciples receiving the Holy Ghost. There is no mention of water baptism whatsoever. The previous verses also suggest that there may be a difference between being sealed by the Holy Ghost at the moment of our Salvation, and actually being indwelled by the Holy Ghost. Maybe the latter is a secondary experience. In other words, perhaps we are all sealed by the Holy Spirit -- signifying that we now belong to Christ -- but only certain people who have been called to a specific ministry and certain task for the Lord are actually filled -- or indwelled -- with the Holy Spirit on a more permanent basis.

In direct contrast to the above, is it possible that the Holy Spirit can actually be removed from our lives once we have received it? While such a question may shock some of my readers, there is in fact Scriptural evidence to suggest that under the right conditions, this can happen. A case in point is King David. As many of you will already know, David committed both adultery and premeditated murder when he took Bathsheba -- his general Uriah's wife -- to bed, and then in an attempt to cover his sin, he intentionally had Uriah sent to the hottest part of the battle, so that the general would be slain, which in fact happened. However, there was one big problem with King David's wicked plan, as we see here:

"The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."

Proverbs 15:3, KJV

God knew exactly what King David had done, and so He sent the Prophet Nathan to expose and rebuke David. It was during his act of repentance, that David wrote the beautiful Psalm of repentance, Psalm 51. In that Psalm, the repentant king writes the following heartfelt lines:

"Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation;

and uphold me with thy free spirit."

Psalms 51:11-12, KJV

As you can see, King David was very concerned that the Lord might just totally cast him out, and remove His Spirit from him, due to his grievous sins. Thus, from these verses, it certainly appears that the Holy Spirit can fall upon us, and then be lifted again just as easily, if we foolishly resist it, or displease the Lord in a serious way. But even after reading the previous two verses, I still had a little bit of doubt. I was still wondering if the "holy spirit" in those verses is the same as THE Holy Spirit. Maybe it just meant David's anointing as king. So, I looked up the two original Hebrew words which are used in that verse, and sure enough, it is the phrase "qodesh ruwach", or the Holy Spirit.

As I thought about King David's situation, I was reminded of some other verses which likewise speak of God's Spirit rising and descending. For example, consider what John the Baptist had to say in the Gospel of John:

"And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost."

John 1:33, KJV

Do you see the implication there? It appears that John may be suggesting that God's Holy Spirit does not always descend and necessarily remain upon a person. In other words, it can be drawn back if God so desires. So, in my view, this appears to be a confirmation that King David was in fact talking about the very Holy Spirit being withdrawn from his life due to his sins. As I thought further on this issue, one more verse came to mind which I will now quote. Consider what Jesus said to Nathanael:

"And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

John 1:51, KJV

While this may seem like a bit of a stretch to some of you, if Angels could ascend and descend upon Jesus -- and let's not forget that they are Spiritual Beings too -- is it not

possible that God's Holy Spirit can do the same thing as needed or required?

In summation, based on what I have shared here, it seems that there may be a difference between being sealed by the Holy Spirit for Salvation -- thus making us a purchased possession -- and actually being permanently filled with it, as occurred in the cases of John the Baptist, Jesus, The Twelve, Paul and others. It also seems that in some cases the actual permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit may be a secondary event after one is initially saved and sealed by the Spirit. The latter actually fills our very beings, to give us that extra power for witnessing through the particular ministry which the Lord has given to each of us. While these thoughts are my personal speculation, the previous verses do seem to present a strong case for it, in my view.

One thing which the previous Scriptures from the Book of Acts do make certain, is that those people had been baptized in the Name of the Lord -- meaning that they were already saved -- but they had not yet received the full anointing of the Holy Spirit. Of course, I realize that people who support water baptism will probably say that this means they had been water-baptized in Jesus' Name. This may indeed be true; for as I have also said, I believe it took the first Disciples a while to grasp the idea that it was no longer necessary.

As I pointed out in part three, this is why, in my view at least, when Peter had matured more in the Spirit, he made his previous remark regarding "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh" in his first Epistle. I believe that Peter came to the full realization of what baptism really means; and it is all about the Baptism with fire of the Holy Spirit. There is really nothing physical about it. As we learned in part four, the Apostle Paul likewise encouraged his readers to move on, to move forward spiritually into the much deeper things of the Spirit when he wrote the following:

"Therefore LEAVING the principles of the doctrine of Christ, LET US GO ON UNTO PERFECTION; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the DOCTRINE OF BAPTISMS, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit."

Hebrews 6:1-3, KJV

Regarding what happened in Acts chapter eight where receiving the Holy Spirit was a secondary experience for the Disciples, I am reminded of another example of what we can refer to as "re-baptism" if you will. In Acts 19:1-6, we have Paul coming to certain Disciples in the city of Ephesus. Here is the text of that encounter in its entirety:

"And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."

Acts 19:1-6, KJV

Now, for those people who may insist that these verses are saying that the Apostle Paul water-baptized these Disciples, these verses present a real challenge. After all, the verses very clearly say that these Disciples were baptized with the baptism of John. In other words, they were ALREADY baptized in water. Yet, like The Twelve, they had not yet received the Holy Spirit. It then goes on to say that Paul laid hands on them, and baptized them in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and they received the Holy Ghost. So, at the very least, we have a water baptism by John, and also a spiritual baptism by Paul through the laying on of hands to receive the Holy Ghost.

However, if we read these verses a different way, that is, as a person who still believes in the necessity of water baptism, then we can understand these verses to be showing THREE separate baptisms: a water baptism by John, a second water baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ by Paul, and then Paul laying hands on them for the third baptism of the Holy Ghost. At the very least, we are saying that we all have to be baptized TWICE -- if you look at the laying on of hands and being baptized in the name of the Lord as the same

event -- if not THREE times -- if you view the last two actions as separate events.

It is possible that double baptisms, or "re-baptism", may have been happening in the Gospels and throughout the Book of Acts. It is evident that some, if not all, of Jesus' own Disciples, were water-baptized by John. In the Book of Acts we also find people, such as in the above example, who were likewise baptized by John. But similar to The Twelve, they required a second SPIRITUAL BAPTISM to receive Salvation through the Name of Jesus and to be sealed by the Holy Ghost. In fact, if we consider that Christianity was just getting off the ground in those days, it was necessary for followers to not just be sealed by the Holy Ghost, but also filled by the same, because every single one of them was needed for the initial growth of the Christian Church.

But you see, as a result of their own confusion and lack of spiritual clarity at the time -- or perhaps merely out of a sense of tradition -- initially, Jesus' own Disciples were re-baptizing John's disciples after they came to know Jesus. I believe that this may be why we read that Jesus' Disciples baptized, while Jesus Himself did not. Here again are those verses from part one to refresh your memory:

"When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)"
John 4:1-2, KJV

So as I have already stated a few times now, it is my belief that it was not until sometime later that the Apostles Peter and Paul and the rest of the Disciples began to realize that the laying on of hands accomplished the same purpose, without any need for water whatsoever. It must have blown their minds when they understood that the baptism with fire totally did away with the physical need for baptism with water. However, it really shouldn't have surprised them. After all, John the Baptist had prophesied that this would happen years before.

Now, please consider the fact that by the time we reach Acts chapter nineteen in the previous set of verses, the Apostle Paul has already been in the ministry for quite a few years. He is no longer a fresh recruit of the Lord. By this time he is very well aware of the fact that John's water baptism was

just a foreshadow of things to come. He knows that once the Holy Spirit had been given following Jesus' Ascension into Heaven, John's water baptism had become obsolete, and was to be done away with.

Now, because I believe that Paul possessed this knowledge by Acts chapter nineteen, I am not convinced that he baptized those Disciples a second time in water. His concern for them is clearly expressed in his first question to them: "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" They plainly told him that they knew John's baptism already. Even if Paul still embraced water baptism, I still do not believe that he would have water baptized them a second time. In short, I remain convinced that Paul simply laid his hands on them, prayed over them in Jesus' Name, and they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. No water required.

At this point in our discussion, consider the following sets of verses and their spiritual significance, as written by the Apostle Paul, and explained through the words of Jesus and other of His followers. As you read this section, please bear in mind that the Bible is self-interpreting in many places. I have said this many times before. Don't rely upon your carnal wisdom. Just connect the dots, and join the verses to get the complete picture of what is actually being said:

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;"
Titus 3:5, KJV

In this first verse, notice Paul's reference to "washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost". What is this "washing" he is referring to? Is Paul talking about water baptism, or is the phrase "washing of regeneration" really synonymous with the last part of his statement "renewing of the Holy Ghost"? Before answering my question, consider what Paul said in a few other places in his Epistles:

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."
2 Corinthians 5:17, KJV

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God,

that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Romans 12:1-2, KJV

It now seems rather evident -- at least to me -- that this "washing of regeneration" really is synonymous with "renewing of the Holy Ghost". In other words, Paul is not talking about water baptism. The Apostle is talking about being spiritually washed, regenerated, transformed and renewed in our minds and spirits. This doesn't happen by being dunked in water because it is a spiritual process. It occurs when God zaps us with the fire of the Holy Spirit.

As I point out in articles such as "Are You Crucified With Christ?", and as we already discussed in part two of this series, when we accept Jesus as our Savior, we in essence become new creatures by the Spirit. We are reborn. God begins to re-wire our circuits so-to-speak so that we begin to see things with our eyes of the Spirit instead of with our carnal minds of human understanding. We crucify the old man of the flesh, in order that the new man of the Spirit may live and thrive in us.

As I have mentioned to you a few times now, the Old Testament is literally filled with foreshadows and archetypes in the form of Levitical rituals which would ultimately be fulfilled in a much more permanent and everlasting way in the life and ministry of Christ. For example, you will recall that in part one of this series, we discussed different forms of water baptism, including the Genesis Flood, the crossing of the Red Sea, the parting of the Jordan River, etc.

However, in similar fashion, the Old Testament also contains ample examples of a kind of baptism by blood. If you conduct a deep study of the Books of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, you will discover that God required Aaron and his sons -- and the later priests as well -- to sprinkle animal blood on the Altar, on the Mercy Seat, on Aaron and his sons and their priestly garments, before the vail of the sanctuary, on the Books of the Law, on the tabernacle, on the ministry vessels, on the congregation, and even on people who were struck with the plague of leprosy.

Of course, we all know that the most well-known example of the sprinkling of blood in the Old Testament occurred when the Israelites were commanded by the Lord to sprinkle their door posts with the blood of the Passover lamb, in order that the Angel of Death would recognize them and spare them. Again, all of these ancient rituals pointed like a string of beacons to what Jesus would eventually do when He died on the Cross for the sins of the world. Consider the following group of verses which connect the Old Testament with the New Testament:

"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and WITHOUT SHEDDING OF BLOOD IS NO REMISSION."

Hebrews 9:11-22, KJV

"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

Hebrews 10:22, KJV

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them."

Hebrews 11:24-28, KJV

"But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

Hebrews 12:22-24, KJV

"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

1 Peter 1:1-2, KJV

Please go to part eight for the continuation of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<https://www.billkochman.com>

Are You Saved and Sealed and Healed and Filled? : Part 8

Copyright 1994 - 2018 Bill's Bible Basics

Published On : July 7, 1997

Last Updated : March 21, 2018

"Our Hearts Sprinkled" And "Bodies Washed With Pure Water", Ordination Of Old Testament Levitical Priesthood, Jesus Is Ordained God's Final High Priest, God's Kings And Priests, Blood And Water Sign, Judiciously Compare Verse With Verse, Spiritual Cleansing By The Water Of God's Word, Holy Spirit Is God's Living Water Which Heals And Gives Spiritual Life, Samaritan Woman At The Well, Distraction Of Temple Worship At Jerusalem, Pentecost: Disciples Filled With Holy Ghost, Rivers Of Living Water Into All The World, God Abolishes The Old To Make Room For The New, Maturation And Spiritual Growth Of The Early Church, Modern Christianity And Its Stagnant Rituals, Church Bondage Tactics, How Many Baptisms?

Continuing our discussion from part seven, you may have noticed that in Hebrews chapter ten, Paul wrote "and our bodies washed with pure water". Here again we see a direct reference to water. First he writes "our hearts sprinkled", and then we see that not only are our hearts sprinkled, but our entire "bodies washed with pure water". Now, I am sure that upon reading that verse, some people will probably say, "Aha! See! So how can you say that the Apostle Paul did not believe in and practice water baptism?".

My friends, again, it is obvious to me that the Apostle Paul is not talking about water baptism in the verse. In fact, he offers a clue of this with the phrase "our hearts sprinkled". There is obviously no physical way to sprinkle one's heart with water, so he must mean something else. If you take the time to read the entire chapter, as well as the surrounding chapters, you will come to realize that Paul is writing very much on a spiritual level. He is showing his readers the clear contrast between Old Testament Levitical rituals, and what Christ accomplished on the Cross. He is demonstrating how everything moved from a physical plane to a spiritual plane, once Christ died on the Cross.

In fact, while some of you may not be aware of it -- after all, we are all learning new things as time goes on -- that is precisely what Paul is doing in the aforementioned verse

as well. He is actually pointing to the ordination of the Levitical priesthood in the Old Testament, as we see here:

"And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them. And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: SPRINKLE WATER OF PURIFYING UPON THEM, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean. Then let them take a young bullock with his meat offering, even fine flour mingled with oil, and another young bullock shalt thou take for a sin offering. And thou shalt bring the Levites before the tabernacle of the congregation: and thou shalt gather the whole assembly of the children of Israel together: And thou shalt bring the Levites before the LORD: and the children of Israel shall put their hands upon the Levites: And Aaron shall offer the Levites before the LORD for an offering of the children of Israel, that they may execute the service of the LORD. And the Levites shall lay their hands upon the heads of the bullocks: and thou shalt offer the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, unto the LORD, to make an atonement for the Levites. And thou shalt set the Levites before Aaron, and before his sons, and offer them for an offering unto the LORD. Thus shalt thou separate the Levites from among the children of Israel: and the Levites shall be mine."

Numbers 8:5-14, KJV

So you see, once again it is a clear example of a physical Old Testament ritual being transferred to, or transformed into, a spiritual reality through Christ. The Apostle Paul is actually contrasting the ordination of the Levitical priesthood, with Jesus Christ being ordained as the final High Priest of the New Testament era, and the New Covenant between God and man. This is easily confirmed by verses such as the following:

"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."

Hebrews 2:17, KJV

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our

profession, Christ Jesus;"

Hebrews 3:1, KJV

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

Hebrews 4:14-15, KJV

"Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

Hebrews 6:20, KJV

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;"

Hebrews 8:1, KJV

"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;"

Hebrews 9:11, KJV

"And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

Revelation 1:6, KJV

"And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."

Revelation 5:10, KJV

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

Revelation 20:6, KJV

You see, even Believers themselves are transformed into kings and priests in God's wonderful Kingdom, so it is all a very spiritual process, with nothing to do with the flesh or with water baptism. As I have clearly demonstrated once again, if instead of just cherry picking one or two verses in order to try to support our beliefs, we invest some serious time in judiciously comparing Scripture with Scripture, hopefully, we

will eventually arrive at the truth, if we are truly willing in our hearts, and are not blinded by the misguided doctrines of men.

So we have seen how a number of Old Testament rituals which were related to the sprinkling of blood or water were in fact transferred to Christ on the Cross. In fact, I am convinced that even as Jesus died on the Cross, He gave us another very physical sign to demonstrate how these Old Testament blood and water rituals were all fulfilled in Himself and were thus abolished, just like the necessity of the Passover lamb, the Levitical priesthood, etc. In the Gospel of John we find this one small verse, but I think it says a lot:

"But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water."

John 19:34, KJV

Now, technically speaking, we can say that this just resulted from the fact that Jesus died in large part from asphyxiation when His lungs filled with fluid, because He could no longer hold Himself upright. Crucifixion is a very terrible way to die. However, young Apostle John was standing right there at the foot of the Cross with Mary -- Jesus' mother -- and a few other people. It appears that John apparently understood the spiritual significance of what he saw that day when blood and water came forth from Jesus' wound. Thus, he later wrote in his first Epistle:

"Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one."

1 John 5:5-8, KJV

To reiterate, I am convinced that in the aforementioned verse -- Hebrews 10:22 -- the Apostle Paul is really talking about a spiritual cleansing, a spiritual baptism, and a spiritual change of mind, heart and attitude. In fact, the Bible even tell us precisely what this cleansing agent -- or spiritual

water -- actually is. Consider the following verses which leave no room for doubt:

"BETH. Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word."

Psalms 119:9, KJV

"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."

John 15:3, KJV

You see, it is God's Word -- and not water baptism -- which really reaches down into the depths of our minds, hearts and spirits and cleanses us. In the very same Epistle to the Hebrews, the Apostle Paul tells us this very thing, as we see by the following verse:

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Hebrews 4:12, KJV

Returning to King David for a moment, that is why after he had sinned before the Lord, and had been exposed and rebuked by the Prophet Nathan, David also pleaded with the Lord to be cleansed of his sins, and to be given a clean heart, when he prayed the following:

"Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

Psalms 51:2, 10, KJV

This goes hand in hand with what the Lord said through His Prophet Ezekiel, when He pleaded with the Jews who had been taken captive to Babylon, as a result of their sins:

"And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh:"

Ezekiel 11:19, KJV

"Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for

why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

Ezekiel 18:31, KJV

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."

Ezekiel 36:26, KJV

It is the sprinkling of God's Word in our hearts which both cleanses, saves and heals us. It is all a spiritual process of repentance, faith and belief which has absolutely nothing to do with the outdated practice of water baptism. It seems to me that the Scriptural evidence is just too overwhelming to deny, unless one just does not want to accept the Truth. If you happen to be one who is still hung up on the necessity of water baptism, this is your chance for liberation. Will you take it, or will you continue to be weighed down by the unnecessary traditions of the past?

So there is no denying that God's Word is spiritual water. It is the true "water" of the Spirit. This is what it is all about. This is what renews us. This is what regenerates us. This is what transforms us. This is what cleanses us, and not water baptism, exactly as Peter was telling us earlier. Jesus Himself emphasized this same truth. He was and is the living Word of God, in whom the Spirit of the Father dwelt without measure. His words are spirit, and they give life, because they are Living Water which quench the soul, and not just the flesh. Furthermore, Jesus promised to give this same Living Water of the Spirit to His followers, as we see by the following verses:

"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)"

John 7:38-39, KJV

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

John 6:63, KJV

In studying the Gospels, we see how time and time again,

Jesus healed people of diseases and cast out evil spirits through His spoken Word. His spoken Word cleansed and renewed them. They not only received spiritual Salvation through belief in His words when He said that He was the Messiah, but they also received salvation and healing of their broken, diseased and possessed bodies as well. This concept is so big I can't begin to explain it in just a few words. The Word is Spirit. The Word -- or Spirit -- is what creates life, gives life, maintains life, and heals life. "In the beginning was the Word". "All things were made by Him". The Word is the Living Water of the Spirit. The Lord tried to explain this very same concept to the woman at the well in John chapter four. He said in part:

". . . If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water . . .
Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life . . . Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."
John 4:10, 13-14, 21-24, KJV

Similar to Jesus' own Disciples, and like many people today as well, this woman was trying to understand things with her carnal mind. She was so hung up on the physical, including physical worship in a physical Temple at Jerusalem. As you may recall, the Disciples were also hung up on and in awe of that very same Temple. It had become a distraction with its false, self-righteous religion, and oppression of the poor. That is why the Lord had to finally destroy it altogether in 70 A.D.

It wasn't until after Jesus' departure from this Earth that the Disciples really began to see and understand with their eyes of the Spirit. As we have seen, for a while they were also hung up on a physical thing called water baptism, just

like many churches today. However, as we all know, it was only about a week after Jesus' Ascension into Heaven that His Acts 1:8 prophecy was fulfilled to the letter, and they were all zapped with the amazing fire of the Holy Spirit, as we see by the following group of verses:

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth . . . And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost . . ."

Acts 1:8, 2:1-4, KJV

And what did Jesus say in John 7? "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." As we continue to read in Acts chapter two, we discover that this is exactly what happened. That Living Water began to flow like crazy, and some of the Apostles' detractors even thought that they were crazy, or at least really drunk:

". . . and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?"

Acts 2:4-12, KJV

Out of their bellies, out of their souls, out of the very

seat of their spirits, flowed the Words which give life; and thousands were saved because of it. Today that Living Water continues to flow all around the world. The words they spoke, just like the words we speak today, are Spirit, and they are life, because they give spiritual life to those who believe in them. When a person chooses to accept the Truth which the Spirit testifies to their hearts, they are in fact cleansed and renewed by the Water of the Spirit, by the very Word of God in which they have chosen to believe. At that point, they are baptized, or sealed, by the Spirit of redemption.

As I explained in the early part of this series, God has a clear record of discarding the old when it no longer serves His purposes. I have presented you with a number of examples in this series. Of course, the largest example of all is the fact that the old system of animal blood sacrifices -- that is, the Old Testament, or the Old Covenant -- was abolished and completely replaced by a New Testament, or New Covenant, when Jesus offered up Himself as God's final Passover Lamb.

Having said that, we New Testament Christians are not Jews. We are not the disciples of John the Baptist. We do not need or require to be spiritually prepared for the coming of Jesus through a water baptism of repentance. Jesus has already come and we know who He is. In those days, Jesus had not come yet; and even after He did arrive, it took a while for many people to discover who He was. They did not have mass transportation or mass communication as we do today. We have the advantage of time and history on our side whereas they did not back then. We have already received the full message of Salvation. All we have to do is either accept it or reject it. What was only known to them verbally back then has been in print for centuries. We know we are sinners. We know we need a Savior. We don't need a Prophet or a priest or a minister baptizing us with water in order to obtain our Salvation. Water never truly saved anyone anyway. It is the acts of faith, belief and verbal confession which save us.

Now, it is commendable that some churches endeavor to follow the Scriptures as closely as they can. It is also commendable that they endeavor to follow the pattern of the Early Church to the best of their understanding. However, I think some of them are neglecting to see that the Early Church did not just stand still. It continued to grow spiritually and accept new truth as the Lord revealed it to them. Peter obviously saw it

and eventually accepted it. The Apostle Paul likewise later came to understand the lack of necessity for water baptism as demonstrated by the previous verses.

I wonder if perhaps the reason why Peter and Paul continued for a while with water baptisms is simply because they knew that they were dealing with spiritual children. After all, as we read in the Gospels and in the Book of Acts, they both made quite a few serious mistakes of their own when they were young in the faith. Perhaps they realized that it would take time for others to come to accept this new truth, just as it had taken them time. I am reminded of some things which both Peter and Paul wrote in their Epistles which touch on this issue of spiritual growth and maturity, and leaving behind the rudimentary elements of the faith. I shared part of this with you earlier in this series:

"For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit."
Hebrews 5:12-6:3, KJV

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things."
1 Corinthians 13:11, KJV

"Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men."
1 Corinthians 14:20, KJV

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and

carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

Ephesians 4:13-15, KJV

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."

Colossians 2:6-7, KJV

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"

1 Peter 2:2, KJV

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

2 Peter 3:17-18, KJV

So, if the leadership of the Early Church was willing to move on to greater spiritual truths, why haven't the modern churches who continue to keep their congregations in bondage through the practice of water baptism and other established rituals? Are they afraid they might lose their members if they don't have something to keep them under their thumb? Weekly holy communion is the same kind of bondage trip, but perhaps I will get to that in another article one of these days. Let me just say that Jesus never said that communion was to become a weekly established ritual like so many other stagnant rituals practiced by modern Christianity. All He said was, "this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." In other words, "As often, or whenever you share the bread and wine -- it was wine, not grape juice -- think of what I have done for you."

This whole robotic regime of repetitive actions like weekly communions, weekly confessions, repeating the rosary, etc., really amounts to a works trip. It is simply trying to save ourselves through repeated good works which don't amount to anything. If we do all of these things and then go out and continue to live our same selfish lives, I don't think these

practices mean hoot to God. All these things do is make you dependent on your particular church for your Salvation. They tell you that if you don't belong to them and participate in these practices, you are not even saved, and you are a child of the devil. I know some of you reading this know exactly what I am talking about it, because you have been, and maybe you still are, under the same bondage.

Anyway, the main point to consider is this: Because of our current knowledge, it seems to me that perhaps being saved and sealed by the Spirit has become a one-step operation. In other words, we do not have to receive the water baptism of John; then be baptized a second time in the name of the Lord; and then have a laying on of hands to receive the Holy Ghost. Seriously. If some of these legalistic churches really want to get technical about it, and follow the letter of the law, then according to the Scriptures I have presented, it sounds like maybe they really need to perform two or three different baptisms, just to make certain that they are really saved and filled with the Holy Ghost. I know. It is very confusing. We need to remember what the Apostle Paul wrote concerning the simplicity that is in Christ. I shared these same verses with you in part three of this series:

"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him . . . For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."
2 Corinthians 11:3-4, 13-15, KJV

Please go to part nine for the conclusion of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<https://www.billkochman.com>

Are You Saved and Sealed and Healed and Filled? : Part 9

Copyright 1994 - 2018 Bill's Bible Basics

Published On : July 7, 1997

Last Updated : March 21, 2018

Bondage And Extremism In The Modern Churches, Our Liberty In Christ, It Is This Simple: Believe On The Lord And Be Saved, A Question Of Sealed Or Filled, Extra Power For The Hour, Jesus Was Given The Spirit Without Measure, Spiritual Strain Of Ministry, Dependence Upon The Holy Spirit, Dead Religion: Judaism And Modern Christianity, Move People By The Spirit, My Personal Experiences, Know That Your Salvation Is Sure, Jesus Will Never Forsake You, Closing Remarks, Reading List

Continuing our discussion, as some of you will already know, there are certain churches which take their level of bondage and extremism even further than that. They view themselves as being so very spiritual, that they erroneously claim that unless one speaks in tongues and prophecies, they don't even have the Spirit of God. Well, if there is one thing I know, it is that our God is not the author of confusion. He made everything simple so that everyone can understand. It is only modern religion with its modern churches who have complicated things so that they can maintain a firm grip on and control of their members. This is a religion of bondage. It is not the one of liberty to which we the Children of God have been called. Consider the following verses:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,"

Luke 4:18, KJV

"Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the

children of God."

Romans 8:21, KJV

"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

2 Corinthians 3:17, KJV

"And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:"

Galatians 2:4, KJV

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

Galatians 5:1, KJV

"While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage."

2 Peter 2:19, KJV

Personally, I do not need a religion of bondage; and this is what many modern churches are. They do exactly what the above verses say, just like the Scribes and Pharisees of old. They try to put their foot on your neck and bring you under their submission. Some of them claim that if one does not belong to their particular denomination, then he is not really saved. Others claim to be God's Endtime church. Still others claim that their leader -- whether pope, apostle, or prophet -- is God's final authoritative voice regarding matters of faith. As we have seen in this series, some claim that one must be water-baptized by them in order to be saved. Rules, rules, rules. Bondage, bondage, bondage. It certainly is not what Jesus preached or advocated; at least not in my Bible. My Bible simply states the following:

". . . Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."

Acts 16:31, KJV

Regarding this whole affair of being sealed by and filled with the Holy Spirit, there is only one concession I might be willing to make here. As I mentioned earlier, there is a possibility that being sealed by the Spirit and being filled

with the Spirit, might be two separate things. Perhaps we are sealed with the Spirit of redemption at the moment we accept Christ's Atonement for our sins. However, unless we have intentions of dedicating our lives to Christ, perhaps we don't need to actually be filled with the Spirit through a secondary experience. After all, the primary purpose for being filled with the Holy Spirit -- in other words, a full indwelling of the Spirit -- is to receive additional power and anointing above and beyond the norm. It is to give us power for the hour.

That is precisely why the Spirit was given to Jesus without measure, as we see by the following verses. Jesus needed the extra power in order to perform so many different kinds of miracles, to cast out demons, etc. A lot of "virtue" was constantly leaving His body, as we see here:

"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him."

John 3:34, KJV

"And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?"

Mark 5:30, KJV

"And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all."

Luke 6:19, KJV

"And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me."

Luke 8:46, KJV

When we minister to others in some way, we are expending a lot of spiritual energy. Those of you like myself who engage in these types of ministries will know exactly what I am talking about. It is both a spiritual and a physical drain to keep pouring out to others on a continual basis. Personally, I have become quite sick on a number of occasions. As some of you will know, last year I spent eleven days in the hospital due to complications arising from pushing myself to hard, and not taking proper care of myself. We cannot do it on our own. We need the power, strength, wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

But that is not all. There is another danger. Without that added spark of inspiration and the power of the Holy Spirit flowing through us like light through a prism, our words and our work will become cold and dead, and they will not move anyone. This is what happened to ancient Israel. Judaism became a cold, spiritually-dry religion which was marked by self-righteous works, and its leaders were blind on top of it all. Sadly, in some regards, this has happened with modern Christianity as well. Of course, there are certain churches and denominations which have gone to the opposite extreme, and which manifest spirits which are definitely not of the Lord, in my view. I discuss this subject in a few articles which are listed at the end of this series.

But the main point to consider here is that if what we say or do does not move anyone to accept the Lord, or to dedicate themselves to Him, or if it does not at least prick their conscience in some way, or shake them up and wake them up to some truth, then perhaps we are lacking the Holy Spirit and just working in our own strength and wisdom. It is definitely something worth praying about if you are not seeing any clear results in your chosen ministry.

In my particular case, many years ago, I did go through the process of the laying on of hands to receive the Holy Ghost as a secondary experience. This occurred several months after I had acknowledged the Lord through a Salvation prayer with some "Jesus People" in San Jose, California. That was in July of 1971. However, as occurred in the Book of Acts, there was no water baptism involved. As a young boy, I do recall being water-baptized in a Roman Catholic Church, but I seriously doubt that it had any real or lasting effect on me. It was just a dry ritual.

On a final note, in looking back to past experiences in my own life, I do recall instances where I prayed with persons who may have undergone water baptism in some church, but who were not absolutely sure if they had accepted the Lord, or if they had been filled with the Holy Spirit. In most instances, these were Catholics in Latin America who had been baptized as small children. We are told in the Scriptures that we are to make certain that we know that we are saved. Consider the following two verses:

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."

1 John 5:13, KJV

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast . . ."

Hebrews 6:19, KJV

We should all be sure of our Salvation. If you are not sure you are saved, well, pray again and rededicate yourself to the Lord, and make sure. Equally important, make sure that someone gives you a strong foundation in the Word so that you know that you are saved. After all, as the Apostle Paul writes:

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Romans 10:17, KJV

Once you open your heart and life to Jesus, you belong to Him forever. You have been sealed by the Holy Spirit, so you do not need to keep praying over and over again, fearing that you have lost your Salvation. As I explain in a number of other articles, Salvation is not a matter of good works. It is a matter of faith in what Jesus did for you. Once you believe in your heart, accept His Word as truth, receive Him, and confess Him before others, Jesus promises to never cast you out. You are saved, and you are His. Consider the following verses which confirm this point:

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

John 6:37, KJV

". . . for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Hebrews 13:5, KJV

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Romans 10:9-10, KJV

With these thoughts I will bring this series to a close. It is my hope that you have found it to be both informative and enlightening, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life as well. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Google+ or any other social network, I would appreciate if you would take the time to click on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this series, or which contain topics which are related to this series, and which are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics web server.

A Treasure in Earthen Vessels: God's Promise of the Spirit
Are the Gifts of the Spirit for Today?
Fifty Days Which Changed the World
God's Golden Teeth, Or Satan's Delusion?
Have You Been Slain in the Spirit?
OSAS: Are We Once Saved, Always Saved?
Roman Catholicism, Water Baptism and the Holy Trinity
The Blood Atonement: In Jesus' Own Words

Written by the WordWeaver

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<https://www.billkochman.com>