

Baptism Study Notebook --- ©2008 Max Carl Kirk

What Is Baptism?

Today, water *baptism* is most readily identified with [Christianity](#), where it symbolizes the cleansing (remission) of sins, and the union of the believer with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection so that he becomes one of [Christ's Faithful](#).

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptism>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptism#Background_in_Jewish_ritual

The definition or common idea of baptism in Christianity and the definition of Immersion in Judaism are very different. Should this be the case, considering that the ordinance of baptism was entirely Jewish when it was given?

Defining Baptism

What Is God's Purpose For Baptism?

Water baptism is most commonly associated in Church thought with conversion to faith and with a personal confession of faith.

Biblically, however, it is not God's purpose that a primary witness should be given to Him only by individuals - through their separate experiences of conversion to faith in Him.

In the Bible it is God's purpose that whole divisions of humanity confess and give their testimony together to the truth of who He is.

Most importantly for the sake of the salvation of the world, it is God's purpose that Israel, as one voice, should give its testimony to who He is, and also that the nations should acknowledge Him through the giving of their amen to the confession of Israel.

Ultimately, it is God's purpose that all humanity as one, together with all creatures that He has created, should acknowledge Him with one voice and one confession. For this reason we read in the Gospel of

Luke:

Luke 3:21

Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

Yehoshua (Jesus) is seen as being baptized together with all the people.

Luke 3:22

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

As it is also written in the Gospel of Matthew:

Mat 3:13 Then came Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

Mat 3:14 But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of you, and yet you come to me?

Mat 3:15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Allow it to be so now: for it is in this way that we will fulfill all righteousness.

God desires Israel's corporate confession of sin and repentance before Him for a corporate witness to the righteousness which is by faith, and this could come only when Yehoshua (Jesus), together with all the people were baptized in water, even as it shall be in the Holy Spirit. Now, therefore, the baptism which God desires must be the baptism of a person which knows itself to be and can show itself to be baptism with Jesus and with all the people of the Jews.

Baptism is corporate

What Is Baptism With Jesus and All The People of The Jews? (Luke 3:21)

How can one be baptized with Jesus and all the people of the Jews when all the people of the Jews are not baptized with Jesus? Clearly, for their part, all the people of the Jews as a whole nation were not and are not baptized with Jesus. But for his part Jesus was and is baptized with all the people of the Jews as a whole nation. In Luke 3:21, therefore, we see the doctrine of the Good News of Israel's salvation clearly presented. We can look more deeply at this:

First, although the rulers of the people did not come to the prophet John to be baptized, great multitudes of the common people of the Jews did come to acknowledge through the prophecy of John's baptism that in order for Israel to fully inherit the land and all the promises of God, the nation would have to pass through the Jordan River again, figuratively, this time without sin.

For his part, Jesus counted this great remnant of the nation which came to John as representative of the whole and identified himself with the nation through them and through their confession in the waters of baptism. According to this prophecy of baptism all Israel will be saved.

Second, Jesus spoke of the true baptism or immersion that Israel's baptism in the Jordan portrayed.

Speaking to his disciples and to all who had ears to hear, Jesus said:

Luk 12:50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how distressed I am till it be accomplished!

In his death and in his resurrection Jesus gave a complete and perfect witness of faith in the God of Israel. He did not do so simply on his own behalf but on the behalf of God's people, Israel, in order that all the world might be saved. It is in this testimony that God can be known without sin. This is the witness of Israel for which God sanctified Israel from among all the nations, saying:

Isa 44:8

Fear not, neither be afraid: have not I told you from that time, and have declared it? You are my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? Indeed, there is no other God; I know not any.

Herein, therefore, is the witness of Israel fulfilled, in the baptism of all Israel in the Holy Spirit.

Israel joined to Messiah is the witness of God.

What Is Israel's Baptism In The Holy Spirit?

Paul says in 1st Corinthians 12:

1Co 12:13

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.

What is the meaning of the phrase, "baptized into one body," here? What is the meaning of the phrase, "made to drink into one Spirit?"

Israel was in a sense immersed into one body in the crossing of the Red Sea. There also there was a great mixed multitude of Gentiles joined to the natural born Israelites. Just as these converts were molded into the corporate identity of Israel in the redemption of the Passover and the exodus through the Red Sea, so the natural born Israelites were molded as a nation unto Moses for the making of a covenant between God and the redeemed nation.

The promise of the inheritance had from the beginning been theirs, each according to the biological origin of each individual, according to their families. There was, however, no possibility of complete fulfillment to the promise, (wherein the family of Abraham would become the vessel of blessing for all humanity and all of creation), when every house was divided to itself in accordance with its own right of inheritance in the promise. The tribes had to be completely unified in one through a new restatement of God's covenant with Adam. Only when the promise was given to the nation as one, a corporate whole, through the covenant of God at Mount Sinai, was the promise fully defined and the full realization of the promise made possible.

The covenant at Mount Sinai, then, being based on the Passover and the Exodus through the Red Sea

made the full realization of the promise possible. For the realization to actually come to pass God would have to remake this covenant with Israel in a way that could not be broken by Israel's transgressions. A final restatement of God's covenant with Israel would have to be made in and through Israel's Messiah.

It was to prepare the way for this Newer Statement of the Covenant that John came with his immersion of the repentant in Israel in the Jordan River. And it is the seal of this covenant that is made through the immersion of Jew and Gentile in the one body of redeemed Israel in the Holy Spirit.

To be continued...

Immersion in the Body of Messiah

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_the_Baptist

What was John's vision when he said that the one who came after him would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire?

<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=23041273>
