



The Sinaitic Light

Baptism The Eternal Washing

Study Article No. I

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This article uses the English terms for Elohim (God), Yah (Father) Yahoshua (Christ).

Objective and Learning Outcome

Objective:

The objective of this article is to better understand the purpose of baptism from a biblical perspective, so that the reader may understand what is expected of them by the Father through both the pre and post baptismal process.

Learning Outcome:

Upon completion of this study, the reader will:

1. Understand the necessity to be baptized, as a commandment given by God;
2. Understand the purpose of baptism before deciding to become baptized;
3. Understand what preparations need to be made before deciding to be baptized;
4. Understand what condition or state their baptism places them in;
5. Understand the expectations the Father has for the baptized;
6. Be able to understand the necessity to evaluate one's strengths and weaknesses through the lenses of the Torah and;
7. Be able to see the necessity of living Torah as a baptized believer.

Introduction

Baptism is a necessary ceremonial process ordained by the Father Himself to permit entrance into His Holy covenant and His Holy kingdom. However, there is a process that one must undergo before they enter this ancient ritual. One must first cleanse themselves of moral impurities by washing themselves by the word of God, removing the various agents of iniquity that induce sin such as; pride, envy, covetousness, greed, hate, etc. These vices once acted upon introduce sin and sin engenders death (Rom. 6:23). The author of Hebrews writes, “See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled” (Heb. 12:15). The author is drawing inspiration from Deuteronomy 29:18 and suggests that these roots bring forth destruction that should be purged from the body, lest they cause destruction (self-destruction) to the host and harm others within the environment. Dr. George Howard Guthrie, Professor of Bible at Union University, understands the author’s warning against those who have not properly purged the desire to entertain other gods or religions after baptism, in doing so, they corrupt themselves and spread this message to others, thereby corrupting them. “The context of this Old Testament text is significant, since it deals with idolatry and apostasy from the covenant community” (Guthrie: 410).¹

Biblical Scholar and Theologian, John Gill offers a fuller analysis of Hebrews 12:15 that harmonizes with the rest of the New Testament. He writes: “and these either the corruption of nature in general, which is a root that lies hidden in a man's heart; and is a root or gall of bitterness; and is apt to spring up, and bring forth bitter fruit, and gives trouble both to a man's self and others; and is of a defiling nature, in particular sins; such as malice, strife, and contention, covetousness, lust, pride, oppression, idleness, which make bitter work, and occasion great trouble in churches, oftentimes: or errors and heresies, which sometimes, like roots, lie under ground, secret and undiscovered; and are bitter ones in their effects, bringing ruin and swift destruction on the souls of men; and these sometimes spring up in churches, while ministers and members are asleep, or not so diligent and watchful as they should be; and occasion great trouble, and are very infectious, and defiling” (Gill: Kindle).²

Gill’s position is supported by Paul’s letter to the Romans “For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live” (Rom. 8:13). The premise thus far is that one must cleanse themselves of innate vices that are sinful, self-destructive and destructive to others, as others tend to be adversely impacted by another’s sins or tend to learn them. To remove these vices, Paul says that one has to be washed by God’s word (Eph. 5:26). Not by the Holy Spirit or anything supernatural. But by taking responsibility for their spiritual growth, and purging iniquity (the uncleanness that dwells in mortal man), by God’s word that is able to save a person’s soul. James says to his readers “Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the

1. What must one do before receiving a baptism?
2. What is infectious and defiling that brings ruin and swift destruction?

implanted word, which is able to save your souls” (James 1:21). Paul echoes these sentiments and writes, “to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness” (Eph. 4:22-24). When a person has embraced and internalized God’s word that is able to restore a person’s soul (Ps. 19:7), thereby restoring one to an estate prior to sin, they have, in a sense, been reborn by God’s word. Peter confirms this position and says “since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God” (1 Pet. 1:23).³

Christ confirms this process and adds baptism to complete the process. John writes “Jesus answered him, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ Nicodemus said to him, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?’ Jesus answered, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God’” (John 3:3-5). Christ has affirmed the first step in the process of one’s rebirth which allows God’s word to change one’s nature. The second step illustrates this rebirth through a ritual washing called baptism. In Hebrew, it is referred to as *mikvah* (collection of water). Peter expresses the importance of this act. “And that water is a picture of baptism, which now saves you, not by removing dirt from your body, but as a response to God from a clean conscience. It is effective because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 3:21, NLT). Baptism in the name of Christ (Yahoshua) does not address the removal of dirt from the body. It symbolizes the removal of dirt from the heart, the purging of a wicked conscience to express a good conscience towards God after one’s conscience has been cleansed by the word of God.^{4,5}

Baptism was the process God required from the Israelites three months after He redeemed them from Egypt. If the Israelites were to embrace His word to become a special people to Him all they had to do was accept His covenant (Ex. 19:1-8), baptize (wash) themselves (Ex. 19:10-15) and solidify their relationship with God by agreeing to keep the rest of the terms of God’s covenant that would be relayed to them after baptism (Ex. 24:1-8). This baptismal process was adopted by all Jewish sects in Israel, and became a rite of passage for pagan Jews and Gentiles to enter into God’s covenant and their particular sect. John the Baptist led one of these Jewish sects, baptizing people to remove the filth of sins from a person’s life by repentance of sin (Matt. 3:1-6; Mark 1:4; Acts 13:24; 19:1-5). Christ would initiate a baptismal rite as well for the purposes of inducting worshipers into his sect, which is to say theologically, into his body (church). Christ’s baptism washes away *all* past sins, introduces an advocate (intercessor) for present, and future sins (Rom. 3:25; 1 John 2:1-2) and makes one holy before

3. True or False. We remove the desire to sin *by embracing and applying God’s word*, and use it to purge the vices that separates us from God.

4. What act demonstrates a good conscience towards God?

5. What does *mikvah* mean?

God because those who have been baptized in Christ have put on the mantle of Christ's righteousness (Gal. 3:27).^{6,7,8}

This baptism was different from John's baptisms, the Pharisees baptisms, the Essenes baptisms, and any other Jewish sect baptisms. Paul says in Acts "Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him everyone who believes is freed from *everything* from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses. (Acts 13:38-39) [emphasis added]. The Old Covenant atoned for sins induced through ignorance, and the frailty of the flesh without malignity. However, the baptisms under the Old Covenant would not atone for defiant, malicious, intentional and willful sins (one hoped to have these sins atoned for by God on Day of Atonement *cf.* Lev. 16:34) *see* Numbers 15:29-31; Hebrews 10:26-31. Christ's baptism, an attribute of the New Covenant, represented the acceptance of a greater sacrifice, a more profound washing, *remission from all past sins*, and reconciliation and restoration of one's relationship with God.⁹ It placed an eternal seal upon the believer, thereby signaling Yah's wrath to "pass-over over them" (Rom. 5:9; 1 Cor. 5:7) and allowed the believer to become God's son.

The Eternal Seal

Baptism in the name of Christ places a seal upon each worshiper, demonstrating to the Father that the worshiper has enjoined himself to Him through the process He has ordained which is through Christ. Hebrews says "Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (Heb. 10:19-25). The process that leads to baptism illustrated in Hebrews is approaching God through the flesh of Christ with (1) a sincere heart (2) trusting in God's process of deliverance, "faith" (3) a conscience washed from sin (4) then baptism or the body washed with pure water. Then one is to attend the holy gatherings and encourage one another.¹⁰

The worshiper now becomes a part of Christ's church and metaphorically the bride of Christ who has washed herself in God's word to display righteousness in Christ (Rev. 19:7-9; Eph. 5:23-32). Baptism is an important rite within the New Covenant. Its origins are not in the

6. True or False. Baptism (*mikvah*) was initiated by God.

7. True or False. Baptism (*mikvah*) was the process to introduce both Jew and Gentile into God's Holy Covenant.

8. What did various Jewish sects do to Jews and Gentiles to make them a part of their sect?

9. What were the two major differences between the Old Covenant remission for sin, and the New Covenant remission for sin?

10. What does Baptism in the name of Christ place upon the believer?

New Covenant but builds upon the Old Covenant process of covenantal initiation and cleansing (Is. 1:16; Jer. 4:14; 13:27; James 4:8). Baptism begins with embracing God's word, that is to say, His instructions (laws, commandments, statutes, and ordinances), which, as stated previously, is able to restore one's soul. In Hebrew, we define it as learning to practice the Torah (instructions). Once one has received God's instructions, become convicted by them and thus, renewed the spirit of their mind, they are baptized in the name of Christ (Yahoshua) to demonstrate that they have accepted God, His gift of purity, and His gift of salvation (John 1:29; 1 John 4:10; Acts 2:37-38). Baptism acknowledges the New Covenant that Christ inaugurated in his blood (Matt. 26:27-28; Heb. 8:6; 9:15). They are acknowledging that Christ is the son of God and Messiah (Matt. 16:16-17), he is Lord and he has been given authority over men by God, to God's glory (Eph. 2:9-11; Rev. 19:16).^{11, 12, 13}

After baptism, the author of Hebrews reminds the reader that there are no more sacrifices that God will offer for defiant, rebellious, intentional and presumptuous sins. The baptism that God gave us removes these past sins (1 John 3:5-6; Rom. 3:25) and allows Christ to become the intercessor for present and future sins with the *hope* that God will forgive the transgressor(s) (Heb. 7:25). Those who continue to live a life of sin and iniquity after baptism, which is breaking the Torah, covenant or law (1 John 3:4), clearly demonstrate that they have taken the grace of God in vain, which means they have trodden under foot God's kindness, "His grace" (Heb. 6:4-8; 10:28-29). They have become the sons of Satan, and thus, the sons of condemnation who have now recalled God's wrath due to willful disobedience (1 John 3:7-8). What they can expect is a fiery judgment, the wrath of God (Heb. 10:26-27). Those who love God, live a righteous life and accept God's word as His eternal seed, implanted in their minds and hearts. This allows His seed to produce the fruits of the spirit, which according to Paul are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23). The fruits of the spirit emanate from the good tree (Ps. 1:1-3; Matt. 12:33; Luke 8:15) which emerges from the seed. The seed represents God's law and His spirit (Luke 8:11; John 6:63; Rom. 7:14; 8:6-7; Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12-13), those who have it, have God (1 John 2:14; 4:4) and have become the sons of God (1 John 3:9).^{14, 15, 16, 17}

Conclusion

Baptism in the name of Christ (Yahoshua or Yahshua the Messiah) is only effective if one confesses their sins before God, repents of their sins and learns righteousness by the word of

11. What does baptism begin with?

12. What did God give believers to restore their soul? What passage tells us?

13. What does one do to show they have accepted God, and have accepted Christ as Messiah, Son of God and Lord (Master)?

14. How can one trample upon God's grace?

15. What produces the fruits of the Spirit?

16. True or False. Those who have God's word have His Spirit, and if one is led by His word, they are led by His Spirit.

17. How does the Bible define sin? Cite the passage that defines what sin is?

God (observing His commandments). Those who meditate upon such things, put forth a daily effort to exemplify God's righteousness (Ps. 119:165) and purge the unclean vices from their heart, will receive eternal life in the kingdom of God. There is much more to deliberate on this subject. If you have not been baptized in the name of the Messiah and would like to learn more about this topic and the biblical process for baptism, we invite you to contact us for further discussion. If you have questions about this study and others, you can join us in fellowship, prayer, praise, and study every Saturday at 11:30 am. You can also call us for consultation pertaining to this subject, or any other you might find intriguing.

NCCI is a Messianic Judaic assembly teaching the doctrine of Messianic Sinaiticism, which means keeping God's Word in the faith of Christ (Rev. 12:17; 14:12-13) and proclaiming His gospel to the world to those who are seeking His truth without private interpretations or church traditions. May the blessings of Yah the Most High be with you and thank you for reading our study article.¹⁸

18. Baptism in the name of Christ (Yahoshua or Yahshua the Messiah) is only effective if one does what?

References

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