

Message# 167 - 12-05-2021 - I John 4 - Who is a Christian?

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Good morning everyone. Thank you for taking the time to listen to the message this morning.

There are so many things to discuss this morning - things that are happening around us - things that we see the world struggle with because they refuse to acknowledge that Christ is King and that every knee is supposed to bow exclusively to His Kingship, His Kingdom, Government, and His Father's Laws.

But because they insist on staying in their rebellious state - *their rebellious states* - they flail around in darkness - most of them with complete physical eye-sight - while on our side - on the Kingdom side - on the believing side - we have completely totally physically blind people - that can see better than pretty much every single person on the side of rebellion. This includes what they think are the brightest of the bright. Their most knowledgeable, their most educated, their most enlightened, cannot hold a candle to even our little ones that have embraced the One and Only King and His Kingdom.

Is it okay to kill a baby that's inside her mother's womb. When is that okay? When the baby/fetus is 24 weeks old? Is it okay to slash the baby's throat or gouge a hole into his spinal cord as long as his entire body has not been born? Or maybe while the umbilical cord is yet attached, is it then okay to go ahead and kill the baby? How about 16 weeks? No, let's make it 15 weeks.

To those actually in the Kingdom of God, it's pretty simple. When does life begin? And even if we knew when life begins - is it okay to invade a woman's womb and surgically or pharmaceutically or even herbally - is it okay to invade a woman's womb for the purpose of ending a pregnancy?

Of course not. That's not okay. No matter what the time is. No matter what the date is. But what if it is determined that the thing inside the womb is not yet alive? No way - still. The Laws of Nature stop that entire line of thinking. Does the Bible gives us any clues as to when "life begins?"

Turn to Leviticus chapter 17. Even though, for the true follower of Christ - the true Christian - the invading of a woman's womb for the purpose of destroying what is in it is

not even a concept that we should entertain - the Scriptures - for all other purposes - do tell us when life begins - or at least when something has life. Begin in verse 10, Leviticus chapter 17. If the u.s. "supreme court" would look to the Scriptures, it would be interesting to see what conclusion they would have. Of course, they are not interested in the Scriptures.

[10] And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.

[11] For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

[12] Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood.

[13] And whatsoever man there be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten; he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust.

[14] For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off.

Two three, what, four times now between verses 10 and 14, God says that the life of the flesh is in the blood. Not that it makes one bit of difference to us - to true believers - to true Christians - the life of the flesh is in the blood. "Scientists" say that blood becomes present in the thing that is inside a woman's womb - blood first arrives at approximately 16 days after conception.

From a medical handbook:

Circulation patterns are clearly established by the fourth week of embryonic life. It is critical to the survival of the developing human that the circulatory system forms early to supply the growing tissue with nutrients and gases, and to remove waste products. Blood cells and vessel production in structures outside the embryo proper called the yolk sac, chorion, and connecting stalk begin about 15 to 16 days following fertilization.

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-ap2/chapter/development-of-blood-vessels-and-fetal-circulation/>

It's actually not all that easy to find information about the formation of blood in the baby after conception. I found this from the National Center for Biotechnology Information, [U.S. National Library of Medicine](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK544245), 8600 Rockville Pike, Bethesda MD, 20894 *Blood cell development begins as early as the seventh day of embryonic life. [1] Red blood cells are essential in delivering oxygen to tissues and the development of vascular channels during embryogenesis. The ontogeny and maturation of these blood cell lineages is a complex process that involves two critical developmental steps: the production of primitive erythroid cells (EryP) followed by an expanding population of definitive erythroid cells (EryD) that predominate subsequently. [2] Failure of primitive erythropoiesis in toto can prove fatal to the embryo.*

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK544245>

From <https://webpath.med.utah.edu/HISTHTML/NORMAL/NORMAL16.html>

Early in fetal life, hematopoiesis begins as red blood cell precursors appear in the yolk sac at 2 weeks gestation. In the first trimester, hematopoiesis can be found in the spleen, but in the late first trimester and throughout most of the second trimester and well into the third trimester, the major hematopoietic organ is the liver.

So, my point is, while the u.s. "supreme court" can try and figure out their "compromise" date of viability as to when it is legal to murder a baby - you see - one "state" says this date - another "state" says this - one "scientist" says this - another "scientist" says that - if there was One Lawbook - like there is supposed to be - if there were ever a question as to when life begins - the Lawbook that should be the same Lawbook for every single person living - at the same time - so that the Law is the same for everyone - the Lawbook says - the life of the flesh is in the blood.

Since it seems that what little is actually focused about blood cells in those little creatures that have inconveniently found themselves inside some women's bodies - since there seems to be some evidence that blood cells have begun forming somewhere about two weeks after conception - that should be the date beyond which any procedure that invades a woman's womb in order to remove the contents - should be unlawful. And, since it's probably about a 0% probability that a woman might know she is 2 weeks pregnant - that would seem to indicate that God is declaring all invasive procedures to destroy the contents of a woman's womb - would be sin.

Doesn't nature itself teach us? Unwanted pregnancy? Who has that? Children are an

heritage from the Lord. Who wouldn't want that?

I understand that we are trying to apply Biblical principles to the lives of people who couldn't care any less about what God says - so I am mainly providing this information for the true Christian - the true follower of Christ. This information will be rejected by those outside the Kingdom of God.

I read an article about a woman who posted on her TikTok channel - or whatever they call that - I've never seen TikTok - this was an article about her TikTok - and she had posted some rules for her marriage that her and her husband had agreed to. And she was getting raked over the coals because she said that she and her husband had agreed not to be alone with someone of the opposite sex. And she was getting berated for it. But she finally decided that it was okay for those people who were not - as she said - "christians" not to understand.

Well, yeah. Those who are not true Christians - will not understand the things of God. And this includes "churchians" - who are not Christians. This is something that I believe - we need to be doing a lot better with. And that is, calling people Christians when they are not. Churchians and those outside of true Christianity will not understand or accept the things of God. They can't and won't do it.

We're changing gears now. What I'm trying to do is get us to understand what Christians are. Christians are followers of Christ. Churchians follow church - they do not follow Christ.

Before we leave Leviticus 17, let's finish the chapter. Verse 15.

[15] And every soul that eateth that which died of itself, or that which was torn with beasts, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger,

This is what he is supposed to do.

he shall both wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even: then shall he be clean.

[16] But if he wash them not, nor bathe his flesh; then he shall bear his iniquity.

What is that? Look at it again, please.

[15] And every soul that eateth that which died of itself, or that which was torn with beasts, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger, he shall both wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even: then shall he be clean.

[16] But if he wash them not, nor bathe his flesh; then he shall bear his iniquity.

This is but one of many, many, many baptisms found in the Old Covenant way of having your sins washed away. This was H2O water baptism which was an act that washed away sin. This is baptizing clothes and baptizing the flesh after committing sin. If that act was not done -

then he shall bear his iniquity.

It would be easier for people to understand, if the text said:

he shall both *baptize* his clothes, and *baptize* himself in water, and be unclean until the even: then shall he be clean.

[16] But if he *baptize* them not, nor he shall both wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even: then shall he be clean.

[16] But if he *baptize* them not, nor *baptize* his flesh; then he shall bear his iniquity. his flesh; then he shall bear his iniquity.

If you will watch - be on the lookout for this type of language in the first 39 books - you will find it everywhere. This is baptism for the remission of sins before Christ came. This is what John the Baptist was doing. This is what was done in the Old World for the remission of sins. Please listen closely to this. This is taken from the Jewish Women's Archive. The link is on the Audio page. I'm going to read the whole thing - please stay with me.

<https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/mikveh>

The mikveh, or ritual bath, derived from ancient notions of purity and impurity. While the need for women to purify themselves after menstruation or childbirth was connected to ancient blood taboos, it remained a regular part of Jewish practice for centuries. In modern times, the practice of ritual immersion has been rejected by some as patriarchal and oppressive, but at the same time it has also been reinvented by diverse groups of Jews to be more inclusive and to meet contemporary religious needs

and desires.

The mikveh is a ritual bath designed for the Jewish rite of purification. The mikveh is not merely a pool of water; it must be composed of stationary, not flowing, waters and must contain a certain percentage of water derived from a natural source, such as a lake, an ocean, or rain. Ritual purification in a mikveh is used for a wide range of purposes, including conversion and burial ceremonies. Individuals might immerse themselves in the mikveh before weddings or before the holiday of Yom Kippur, and even pots and pans can be immersed to make them kosher.

Does that ring a bell from Mark 7?

Traditionally, men and women have used the mikveh for ritual purification, but it has always held special significance for Jewish women. Jewish law prescribes that women immerse themselves in the waters of the mikveh following their menstrual periods or after childbirth in order to become ritually pure and permitted to resume sexual activity. The observance of this ritual has declined in modern times, but it still remains a key element in Jewish ritual practice. In the United States, where most Jewish women have not observed the laws of menstrual purity, the mikveh continues to be an important institution of Jewish life.

While the rabbis did explore sexes beyond the binary of male and female in the context of family purity and the mikveh, their laws primarily focused on men and women and their respective duties and obligations. The uses and interpretations of the mikveh have evolved and become more inclusive to Jews of all genders in many communities, changing along with the sensibilities of contemporary Jews. End quote.

Several months ago while preaching on the evils of something called “church” - if you recall - I made the statement that “church” is an attempt to keep the synagogues of the jews going. I said that were many things inside the “church” building that were carry-overs from jewish religion. I asked why the “churches” have altars? I mentioned several other things as well. The catholics have their holy water. The protestants have their baptistries. Please do your own research on mikveh. Research the jewish mikveh. Look for pictures of the jewish mikveh. It's not hard to find this at all. THEY ARE BAPTISTRIES in the “churches.” That is what the mikveh is and was. It's judaism in “church.” That's one of the many reasons why I have made the statement for the last 40 years - and will continue making it - “churches” are a form of judaism. From the jew denying that Jesus was the Christ - to the “church” saying that messiah the king is coming in the future.

The “church” is judaism. It has never believed that the Old Covenant has ended and it seeks to continue the Old Covenant with its rituals yet today because it denies that Jesus Christ came in the flesh. Do your own research. Mikvehs are protestant baptistries. Let's continue on from the Jewish Women's Archive.

History and Law

Before the destruction of the Temple, when ritual purity was intimately connected with the Land of Israel and Temple practices, the laws of purity and impurity (tumah and taharah) were much more far-reaching than in contemporary times. Ritual impurity might result from contact with the dead, loss of menstrual blood, loss of semen through nocturnal emission, or leprosy. Immersion in the waters of the mikveh provided a means of transforming an individual from a state of ritual impurity to a state of purity. After the Destruction of the Temple, the rabbis curtailed most of the laws of purity but elaborated those laws applying to women and menstruation. The laws of niddah, which determine the ritual status of a menstruating woman and the prescriptions for her sexual behavior, derive from biblical prohibitions regarding contact with a menstruant. The book of Leviticus declared that a woman would be ritually impure for seven days during her menstrual flow, during which time sexual contact was forbidden.

I'm sorry about the graphic language but I'm reading to you directly from the Jewish rabbis.

The rabbis increased the period of sexual separation to twelve days, prescribing five days minimum for the menstrual flow and seven “clean” days afterward. Following that twelve-day period, the niddah, the menstruating woman, would immerse herself in the mikveh and then be permitted to resume sexual activity. Within the corpus of Jewish law, the observance of niddah is one of the three key mitzvot (commandments) incumbent upon Jewish women.

Women’s state of impurity during their menstrual periods is not a matter of hygienic cleanliness but rather a legal definition of ritual purity. Nevertheless, the laws of niddah reflect primitive blood taboos and the sense of fear and danger surrounding menstruation. Moreover, the rabbis interpreted the laws of niddah within a broader framework known as taharat hamishpahah, the laws of family purity. As the term implies, Jewish law transformed women’s observance of niddah into a duty that affected the entire family. Safeguarding the purity of other family members as well as regulating sexual behavior thus became primarily the responsibility of Jewish women. Jewish literature is filled with threats of punishment for intercourse during niddah,

including assertions that children conceived during menstruation might be born with serious health impairments.

Listen very close to this. Again, this is coming directly from the Jews.

These laws were considered so critical that a Jewish community with limited resources was directed by the Talmud to prioritize the construction of a mikveh over that of a synagogue. The archeological excavations of Masada [link to new entry on Masada] demonstrate that even while under siege by the Romans in a place where water was scarce, the Jews built mikvehs. Two mikvehs were found, each to the exact specifications mandated by halakhah.

Modern Practices

In the modern period, Jews have reinterpreted and reassessed the laws of niddah. While some Reformers called for the abolition of such practices as backward and superstitious, modern Orthodox leaders, such as Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808–1888), extolled the virtues of periodic sexual abstinence as a means of moral and spiritual elevation. The personal and private nature of adherence to the laws of family purity makes it particularly difficult to determine accurately how many Jews continued to observe the practice. However, evidence suggests that Jewish women in the modern period gradually left behind the traditional regulations of niddah.

Jewish immigrants to the United States appeared to have largely abandoned the practice of niddah, but many communities in America continued to construct mikvehs. As early as 1759 in New York and 1784 in Philadelphia, small Jewish communities began building mikvehs, imploring local Jews not to neglect the laws of family purity. Throughout the nineteenth century, several congregations throughout America made the building of a mikveh a priority, indicating that communal leaders wanted to encourage the practice of niddah and at least some women continued to observe family purity.

Now I'm not talking about family purity here. I am talking about what they are talking about the ritual implications of the mikveh - the H₂O.

In the early twentieth century, New York's Lower East Side housed over thirty ritual baths, some sponsored by synagogues and others independently owned. Yet, despite the continuing existence of mikvehs in America, Jewish leaders consistently lamented women's indifference to the laws of ritual purity and seemed to be addressing a population in which most Jews had ceased to observe the practice.

While niddah remained one of the least observed Jewish rituals, Jewish leaders continued to publish prescriptive literature urging women to return to the traditional practice of ritual purity. In a modern American context, defenses of family purity shifted from an emphasis upon adherence to Jewish law to a new interest in the medical and hygienic benefits of niddah. Particularly during the first decades of the twentieth century, during the heyday of scientific positivism and eugenics, Jewish authors relied upon the findings of an emerging scientific literature, claiming that sexual abstinence during a woman's menstrual flow decreased rates of cancer and contributed to the overall health of the Jewish people.

The Laws of God in relation to this are still in effect today. You do not have relations with a woman while she is having her period. I'm not saying that is done away with. I'm saying the ritual implications of mikveh - the H2O - that is what is done away with.

Armed with medical evidence indicating lower rates of cancer among Jewish women and supporting the purportedly unique capabilities of the mikveh to dispel menstrual toxins, Jewish commentators argued that observance of niddah was a modern, scientifically sound practice. Leo Jung (1892–1987), a modern Orthodox rabbi who argued that traditional practices harmonized perfectly with progressive social ideals, authored a guide to “the Jewish way to married happiness,” in which he reformulated the laws of family purity as “proto-feminist” and capable of enhancing emotional and conjugal bonds. While such defenses never succeeded in convincing the majority of Jewish women to embrace traditional Jewish practice, they do reflect the ways that niddah and mikveh were reinterpreted in accordance with modern scientific culture. The supposed health benefits remain a part of contemporary Jewish discourse about niddah, but they generally receive much more limited attention, as a fringe benefit of family purity, not its primary intent or result.

Contemporary Reinterpretations

The emergence of Jewish feminism in the 1970s sparked new debates about and reinterpretations of the laws of family purity and the use of the mikveh. Some Jewish feminists urged women to cast off the restrictions imposed by Jewish law and its emphasis on women's biologic functions, but others reclaimed the practice of niddah as a feminist ritual, arguing that periods of sexual abstinence enhanced the companionate bond in marriage and that the practice of niddah celebrated the cycle of the female body. In the early 1970s, theologian [Rachel Adler](#), then a practicing Orthodox Jew, published an influential article claiming that purity and impurity applied to women and

men alike and insisting that women could practice immersion in the mikveh as part of a sacred cycle. In the late 1990s, after embracing Reform Judaism, Adler renounced her previous position, and instead maintained that the laws of niddah reflected a “slave theology” that furthered the oppression of women in Jewish culture. While some Jewish feminists continue to reject family purity laws, others have embraced niddah as a vehicle for spiritual renewal.

Reimagining the meaning of mikveh rituals has meant creating new prayers to accompany traditional immersion. It has also involved employing the mikveh to mark previously unrecognized major lifecycle events, both positive and negative, including birth, death, marriage, and divorce. The mikveh has become a source for physical and emotional healing, e.g., after a miscarriage or abortion, while undergoing fertility or cancer treatments, or to help in the recovery from rape or sexual abuse.

Contemporary reinventions of the mikveh have focused on making the experience of mikvah more inclusive and expansive. In 2001, journalist and writer [Anita Diamant](#) founded Mayyim Hayyim (Living Waters), which describes itself as “a resource for learning, spiritual discovery, and creativity.” Mayyim Hayyim is a pluralistic mikveh that welcomes people of all genders and abilities, provides spaces for the celebration of lifecycle events and conversions, and offers its services to survivors of trauma and those seeking to experience the ritual of mikveh in their own way. Located in Newton, Massachusetts, the institution opened its doors in 2004 and features educational and consulting programs as well as an art gallery. Another pluralistic and inclusive mikveh, ImmerseNYC, was first envisioned by Reform Rabbi Sara Luria in 2012 and operates out of the Jewish Community Center in Manhattan. More recently, artist Rebecca Erev and other radical, queer artists in Olympia, Washington, launched the Queer Mikveh Project, which is simultaneously a community, an art project, and a tool for advocacy. While the traditional mikveh prescribed purity rituals in binary gendered terms—for men and women—several 21st-century efforts focus on inclusivity and welcoming people of diverse genders, ethnicities, races, and practices. Pluralistic community mikvehs now exist in several cities, including Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, DC.

Artists have increasingly focused on the mikveh experience in their work, some interpreting it as an oppressive and patriarchal element of traditional Judaism, others reframing it as a celebration of femininity and feminist principles. Mierele Laderman Ukeles installed a full-size ritual bath called “Mikveh: Place of Kissing Waters” for a 1986 show at the Jewish Museum; Na’amah Batya Lewin explored her ambivalence about the mikveh in her 1998 film “Cycle: The Mikveh,” and Helène Aylon created “My

Bridal Chamber” in 2001, part of her ongoing artistic exploration of the place of women in traditional text and ritual. Israeli filmmaker Anat Zuria’s documentary “Tehorah” (Purity) received the 2002 Mayor Award for Best Documentary Film at the Jerusalem International Film Festival. In 2001, photographer Janice Rubin and writer Leah Lax premiered the “The Mikvah Project,” an exhibition that portrays close-up but faceless photographs of women immersing in the mikveh in a variety of circumstances, ranging from a heterosexual woman’s monthly visit to a ritualistic declaration of lesbian identity. The photos are accompanied by quotations from the women, expressing the personal effects of integrating immersion into their spiritual lives. The published volume from the exhibition captures a diversity of emotions about the mikveh, ranging from anger to ambivalence to deep spiritual connection. In 2015, Josh Azouz’s play “The Mikvah Project” premiered in London, narrating the story of homosexual desire between two men who meet each Friday night at the traditional Jewish ritual bath.

Although the observance of niddah and regular attendance at the mikveh remain minority practices among contemporary Jews of all genders, the meaning of this centuries-old Jewish ritual continues to evolve and to be reimagined and reinvented to suit the needs of contemporary Jews.

Since that article came from the Womens Jewish Archive, most of what is there pertains to women. Let's look at another Jewish source for a broader understanding of mikveh. This is from My Jewish Learning.

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/why-immense-in-the-mikveh/>

The Mikveh’s Significance in Traditional Conversion

Immersion in the mikveh actualizes the transition between the convert's old identity and his or her new one as a Jew.

BY RABBI MAURICE LAMM

What physical act could a person perform in order to symbolize a radical change of heart, a total commitment? Is there a sign so dramatic, dynamic, and all-encompassing that it could represent the radical change undergone by the convert to Judaism?

Jewish tradition prescribes a profound symbol. It instructs the conversion candidate to place himself or herself in a radically different physical environment – in water rather than air. This leaves the person floating – momentarily suspended without breathing – substituting the usual forward moving nature and purposeful stride that characterize his or her waking movements with an aimlessness, a weightlessness, a detachment

from the former environment. Individuality, passion, ego – all are submerged in the metamorphosis from the larval state of the present to a new existence.

Ritual immersion is the total submersion of the body in a pool of water. This pool and its water are precisely prescribed by Jewish law. Immersion, tevillah, is the common core component of every [traditional] Jewish conversion process, for male and female, adult and child, ignoramus and scholar. It is sine qua non, and a conversion ceremony without immersion is unacceptable to the traditional religious community and simply not Jewish in character.

This requirement of immersion admits of no compromise, no matter where in the world one finds oneself. (While Conservative rabbis similarly require mikveh [sometimes pronounced mikvah] for conversion, Reform rabbis generally do not, although a tendency to more traditional symbols and a sense that a uniform conversion process is desirable are encouraging greater use of the immersion component even among the Reform.)

Religious Functions of the Mikveh

Several religious functions are served by this powerful symbol of submerging in water. In the days of the ancient Temple in Jerusalem, the mikveh was used by all Jews who wanted to enter the precincts of the Sanctuary. The law required every person inside the Temple grounds to be in a spiritually pure state appropriate to the pristine spirituality of the Sanctuary itself. End quote.

Brethren, I'm telling you this describes the Baptism of John the Baptist. John said, "I indeed baptize you with water - with H₂O - but the One coming after me - whose shoes I am not even worthy to unlatch - He will baptize you with fire and the Holy Ghost." John said - "All I'm doing is baptizing you with H₂O - water. There is a greater baptism coming." The article continues.

Throughout Jewish history, unmarried women have immersed in the mikveh prior to their wedding; married women immerse at the end of seven days of stainless purity from the end of each monthly menstrual cycle, in preparation for the resumption of family relations in their most fertile days.

A major function of immersion in the mikveh is for conversion to Judaism.

A major function of immersion in the mikveh is for conversion to Judaism.

The sages declare that a gentile who wishes to become a Jew must undergo the identical process by which Jewish ancestors converted. As Jews performed immersion at Mt. Sinai to complete the conversion process they had begun with circumcision as they left Egypt, so converts in every age must immerse in a mikveh.

Water Symbolizes Birth as a Jew

Submerging in a pool of water for the purpose not of using the water's physical cleansing properties but expressly to symbolize a change-of-soul is a statement at once deeply spiritual and immensely compelling. No other symbolic act can so totally embrace a person as being submerged in water, which must touch and cover every lesion, every strand of hair, every birthmark. No other religious act is so freighted with meaning as this one which touches every aspect of life and proclaims a total commitment to a new idea and a new way of life as it swallows up the old and gives birth to the new.

The water of the mikveh is designed to ritually cleanse a person from deeds of the past. The convert is considered by Jewish law to be like a newborn child. By spiritually cleansing the convert, the mikveh water prepares him or her to confront God, life, and people with a fresh spirit and new eyes – it washes away the past, leaving only the future. Of course, this does not deny that there were good and beautiful aspects of the past. But, in the strictest religious sense, that past was only prologue to a future life as a Jew.

There is a second layer of meaning to mikveh. It marks the beginning of the ascent to an elevated religious state. This function of mikveh goes beyond the basic purpose of purification. Anthropologists refer to this threshold of higher social status as "liminality." The person at this moment of transition is a "liminal" or "threshold" person. The liminal state is common to virtually all persons and societies, ancient and modern, and it marks a move to an altered status or to a life transition. Entering adulthood from adolescence, for example, requires a tunnel of time, a rite of passage, a liminal state that acknowledges by symbolic acts the stark changes taking place in one's self-identity, behavior, and attitude.

In a sense, it is nothing short of the spiritual drama of death and rebirth cast onto the canvas of the convert's soul. Submerging into waters over her head, she enters into an

environment in which she cannot breathe and cannot live for more than moments. It is the death of all that has gone before. As she emerges from the gagging waters into the clear air, she begins to breathe anew and live anew – as a baby struggling to be born.

If we take this graphic metaphor a step further, we can sense that the mikveh is a spiritual womb. The human fetus is surrounded by water. It does not yet live. The water breaks in a split second and the child emerges into a new world. “As soon as the convert immerses and emerges, he is a Jew in every respect” (Yevamot 47b).

What is a Mikveh, According to Jewish Law?

The mikveh must comply with a number of precise halachic [Jewish legal] qualifications. The mikveh must be built into the ground or the structure of the building. It must hold a minimum of 24 cubic feet of water – 200 gallons. The depth must be such as to enable an average adult to stand upright and have the water reach at least 11 inches above the waist, so that immersion can be performed without backbreaking contortions.

The water must originally have been transported to the mikveh in a manner resembling the natural flow of waters. The general practice is to build cement channels at the sides of the mikveh roof, which will enable rainwater to flow directly into the mikveh. Done right the first time, with the required initial amount of water, other piped waters may be added later in whatever quantities and at any time, and the mikveh will still retain its religious validity.

The waters must be stationary and not flow (not even the flow caused by a filter) while the mikveh is in use. The water, by all means, should be chlorinated to assure its meeting the highest standards of hygienic cleanliness. (While the chlorinated water may be somewhat discolored, it does have to retain natural water color.)

Water deriving from a natural spring is considered a valid mikveh if it complies with halakhic conditions. Also quite proper is immersing in the ocean, where there is no mikveh available, given the satisfaction of certain halakhic conditions. End quote.

While the Jewish rabbi is going into great detail concerning the type of water used in the mikveh - listen to another source describe the water. See if something doesn't jump off the page and smack you in the nose - just like it did me when I first read it. Listen to this:

Mikveh purification was required of all Jews before they could enter the Temple or participate in major festivals.

This is why John the Baptist was baptizing!

Hundreds of thousands of pilgrims converged on Jerusalem for Passover and other major feasts. One hundred mikvehs, attesting to the need for water purification before entering into Temple rites, have been found by Hebrew University's Benjamin Mazar around the wall adjacent to Herod's Temple. Mikvehs, resembling large bathtubs or small garden ponds, have been found in Jericho and elsewhere in Israel.

Here it comes. Listen to this.

The ancient Jews tried to make sure their family's mikveh was connected to a source of "living water" like a spring or well, but that was not always possible.

Oh my,

The ancient Jews tried to make sure their family's mikveh was connected to a source of "living water" like a spring or well, but that was not always possible.

Friends, the source for living water is not in the H₂O of the mikveh. Jesus said that He was the living water. Whosoever drinketh of the water that He gives shall never thirst again. His water was not H₂O. Turn to John chapter 4 and let's read beginning in verse 1.

- [1] When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,
- [2] (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)
- [3] He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee.
- [4] And he must needs go through Samaria.
- [5] Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.
- [6] Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.
- [7] There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.
- [8] (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

[9] Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

Maybe I should just leave that as “jews” - the “jews” had nothing to do with the Samaritans.

[10] Jesus answered and said unto her, 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**.

[11] The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that **living water**?

[12] Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

[13] Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

[14] 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.

[15] The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

Baptism - true Christian baptism requires full immersion into water. But that water - explained so clearly here in Matthew chapter 4 - is not H2O. It's not the H2O of the mikveh. It's not the H2O of the jews. It is being immersed into Jesus Christ the King - taking of the water that He offers.

Our world is filled with people who have been 100% totally immersed into H2O - but friends - they have never been immersed into the living water that is Jesus Christ the King.

Back to rabbis.

Parameters of the Mikveh Experience

The ceremony must take place on a weekday [and not on Shabbat, the Sabbath] and during daylight, as do all other Jewish court procedures. In cases when a full circumcision has to be performed (unlike the touch of blood for previously circumcised

males), enough time will have to elapse to be certain that the wound has healed completely.

The only assurance that the immersion will accord with halakhic requirements for a male convert is the presence of the rabbi at the mikveh; a female is to be accompanied by a person familiar with the practice, such as a rabbi's wife, the mikveh escort, or a very knowledgeable friend who herself uses the mikveh.

The body must be thoroughly cleansed immediately before the immersion. The convert should be careful that there are no adhesions such as bandages, Band-Aids, or ointment; that the hair is thoroughly brushed; the nails of the hands and feet are pared; and that no traces of cosmetics or nail polish remain. The whole body must be immersed at one time, not sequentially, and the submerging must be total, without even a single hair remaining above the water.

The Conversion Blessings and When They Are Recited

The blessing in the mikveh is as follows:

Barukh atah Ado-nai Elo-henu melekh ha'olam asher kideshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al ha'tevillah.

Blessed are You, O Lord, our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us regarding the immersion.

Blessings over the performance of mitzvot [commandments] in Jewish life always take place before the action of the mitzvah . The reason for this is that it focuses the soul, raising the consciousness for the action to be undertaken, establishing the purpose of the mitzvah, and demonstrating that its origins are in God's command. Also, the blessing enhances the mitzvah by providing the reason for undertaking the symbolic action. Ritva [a medieval Talmud commentator] notes that, since the blessing is a statement of the soul, it should precede the statement made by the physical action of the body.

There is one exception to this general practice of placing the blessing before the mitzvah—the immersion of a convert. The convert needs to recite the blessing after the immersion, not before. The reason is simple: One cannot declare “God commanded us” if one is not commanded by God because he or she is not Jewish. The convert becomes a

Jew only after the immersion is completed.

After the blessing, the convert immerses twice more and then leaves the mikveh.

A second blessing is required by most, but not all, authorities. It is called she'hecheyanu, and with it a person thanks God that He has enabled him to live to experience the greatness of this moment.

I have made the statement before, I'll make it again - now - to include judaism. Up until this time, I've publicly made the statement concerning millions and millions of so-called "protestants and catholics who have been fully immersed in H2O, or they've been sprinkled, or they've had H2O water poured over them. They can be as wet as anything ever was - but they are no more Christians than the man in the moon."

The Baptism of Christ occurs when a man or a woman, boy or a girl, believes that Jesus Christ came in the flesh as the fulfillment of the Promised Messiah and the King to come to once again rule over God's Creation - exclusively. There is none else besides Him. He is the Only Potentate and King. When a man, woman boy or girl embraces that understanding and makes a public confession to live a life that conforms to the King and His Kingdom - when their mind has been changed to no longer live as life that conforms to the world - they make a conscious decision to change citizenships - to Come out from among and be separate so that God will be their God and we will be His people - that's when a man woman boy or girl becomes fully immersed into Christ.

There are countless numbers of people of all faiths - catholic, protestant, jew and atheist - who have been H2O water baptized in one form or another - but have never been fully immersed into Christ. They have placed their trust - just like the jew - in their H2O form of water baptism - but they are lost. They have not been fully immersed into Christ and they are lost. Some of them remain jews while others convert to a false religion called churchianity.

We ended last week's message with Christ saying,

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.

[22] Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many

wonderful works?

[23] And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

This is a perfect description of judaism and churchianity - the evolutionized, convoluted, disavowed step-child of judaism.

The purpose of the studies from I John has been to try to help us reach our generation for Christ. Our generation *thinks* they are in Christ. Our generation has satisfied itself into believing that anyone who says the name Jesus or even says Jesus Christ or even says Jesus Christ is the Son of God - they falsely *think* - they are Christians.

They have placed their trust in a gospel that is not a saving Gospel. Their trust is in the jews religion which Christ condemned in John 8 when the jews of His day tried to claim lineage to Abraham. Christ's response was that if they were truly of Abraham, they would have embraced Him. But since they did not, they were of their father the devil.

The same is today.

The "churchians" and the jews claim to be of Abraham's seed.

*All hail the pow'r of Jesus' Name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all!
Ye chosen seed of Israel's race,
Ye ransomed from the fall,
Hail Him Who saves you by His grace,
And crown Him Lord of all!*

When? Crown Him when? Has He already been crowned Lord of all? Or is this something yet to occur? We all know the answer to that.

Please turn to I John chapter 4. And let's read beginning in verse 1.

[1] Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

[2] Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus

Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

[3] 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.

[4] Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than He that is in the world.

What is this overcoming? It is overcoming the Jewish religion. It is overcoming the rituals of the Old Covenant World. It's overcoming the Jewish religion that refuses to accept that Jesus Christ came in the flesh and is King and Messiah. It is understanding that Jesus Christ came in the flesh and put an end to the Old Covenant World and everything in it. It is overcoming the idea that men are allowed to have their own kings. It is overcoming the concept that mere men are allowed to have their own governments, that they are allowed to define or redefine good and evil then legislate accordingly. It is overcoming the idea that mere men can determine when life begins so that they can justify to themselves the legality of terminating life.

[5] They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

[6] 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.

Do you talk to people about Fulfilled Bible prophecy and the present day reality of the Kingdom of God? Do they listen, do they believe? If the answer is no - the Christian test has failed.

Do you talk to people about Jesus Christ being King now? Do they listen, do they believe? If the answer is no - the Christian test has failed.

We need to be much better about talking about this word Christian. We know that someone is of God because the test is the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

This is not saying that the test is physical, spiritual perfection. Those things can and must be striven for - that must be the goal - but in our flesh - as Paul said, in our flesh dwelleth no good thing. That's never to be an excuse not to be reaching for the goal.

But most in our world today - are not only not striving for the spirit of truth - they don't even know what it is.

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.

Do you talk to people about Fulfilled Bible Prophecy and the present day reality of the King and His Kingdom? Do they listen? Do they believe? If the answer is no - the Christian test has failed. Churchian - yes - Christian no.

Do you talk to people about Romans 13 - how that does not mean obeying men's little g governments? Do they listen? Do they believe? If the answer is no - the Christian test has failed. Churchian - probably - Christian no.

Do you talk to people about Jesus Christ being the Only King? Do they listen? Do they believe? If the answer is no - the Christian test has failed. Churchian - yes - Christian no.

A true Christian is one who believes that Jesus Christ - the Anointed King - came in the flesh - in the first century. Anything less - fails the test.

The Gospel is that Jesus Christ - the One and Only - the Last of the Kings for Israel - the Anointed One - besides Him there in no other. The King of the Nation of the Commonwealth of Israel. The King has come in the flesh in the first century. It is the responsibility of every living, breathing creature to conform to His Kingdom, His Government, His Citizenship - exclusive of all others - friends - that's what the Gospel is. And I'm telling you, that because many false prophets had gone - and are still going in the world - the overwhelming number of people have believed the false prophets - they have fallen for a coming king, a coming messiah - they have never heard the Gospel.

They go to something called "church." They've been baptized in H2O - immersed, sprinkled, poured - and for some people - all of the above - but they've never even heard the true Gospel. If they've never heard the true Gospel - it is impossible for them to be immersed into Christ.

That's the problem in our generation today. We've fallen for the idea that just because someone says Jesus or even Jesus Christ - they are christians. The U.S. is not a christian nation. No it isn't. It never has been. Not for one single day, one single hour, one single minute. If it were, it would have embraced Jesus Christ, the Son of God as its King. There would be one Lawbook. There would be no lawmakers and the judges would be making decisions based solely on the principles found in God's Word.

Anything other than that is not Christian and America has not seen that since the early 1600s.

We've made excuses long enough. We need to start boldly laying it on the table - plainly for all to see. Whosoever believeth that Jesus Christ the King came in the flesh is of God and whosoever believeth not that Jesus Christ the King came in the flesh, is not of God.