

Message# 202 - 8-14-2022 - Christians Believe that Jesus Fulfilled the Prophets - H2O Water Works of the Law Ended with the Old Covenant
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Good morning everyone. Thank you again for tuning into the message this morning.

At the conclusion of last week's message, as always, I get very positive emails from people that have listened to the message. I appreciate it. Keep them coming. As we all know, Michael has a unique gift for writing. I'm not saying that the rest of you do not - you do - you have great insight - your thoughts and comments are excellent. But I'll tell you right now - Michael is a far better writer than I'll ever be. He truly has a gift for writing. He sent me an email after last week's message and I asked him if I could put it on the Comments page of the website. It's there. I hope you will go and read it. It is really really good. While you are there, there's a whole lot more on that page as well.

<https://godsendusmen.com/comment.html>

I told Teresa this past week that I feel like we are getting ready to turn the corner in this series of messages. I believe we have shown without a doubt that physical H2O water - applied to the flesh in various ways - not just full body immersion into the water - but we've also seen sprinkling and we've seen pouring - in the Law God gave Moses. Which to me, is just so funny, as in ironic, when I look at all the different "church religions" and watch them all argue as to whether "baptism" - a word that shouldn't even be in our English Bibles - whether "baptism" should be full body immersion, sprinkling or pouring.

They argue about the mode of which way physical water is going to be applied to their flesh - when the reality is - just like every other thing related to "church" - they completely miss the mark - because in the New Covenant world - the application of physical water to the flesh - for any purpose other than simple washing or bathing - is forbidden. If you are of the opinion - no matter how sincere you are - that something called "baptism" in physical H2O water - whether it be full body immersion, sprinkling or pouring or all three - if you believe that act is required for the remission of sins in the New Covenant world - you are teaching, believing, what have you - that keeping the works of the Law God gave Moses are still required - even after Jesus the Christ and His followers in the first century - fulfilled the Law God gave Moses and finally - when the temple was destroyed - ended that whole system for reconciliation to God.

Anything that has to do with the application of physical ANYTHING - not just water, physical circumcision, physical sacrifices, physical offerings, anything that requires a physical act of a man, woman, boy or girl is a work of the Law God gave Moses and is not only forbidden in the New Covenant World - but someone who is trusting in that faith - in that system of belief - for their "salvation" - is not in Christ.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves:

There's nothing you can do.

it is the gift of God:

[9] Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Before we get into today's message, there's just a couple loose ends we need to pick up from last week's message. If you recall from last week's message, I wanted to tie up some loose ends from Romans chapter 4 from the previous week. But I also intended to tie up a few things from John chapter 3 - but I just ran out of time.

When I was discussing John chapter 3 two weeks ago - I guess I went too quickly - and as I often do - did not spend enough time in making my point. So, for just a minute (hopefully), I want to go back there again this morning. Before we do - please go back to I John chapter 5 - where we left off last week.

When I say we are turning a corner in this series - here is something I want you to think about and even challenge you as you study for yourselves.

We have seen physical H₂O water all through the Law God gave Moses. The "churches of christ, baptists, pentecostalists, methodists," etc., etc., can all say that this thing called "baptism" was something new that entered the scene with John in the beginnings of the first century - but we have shown - time and time again - hours and hours of studies - that the application of physical water to the flesh - was all over the Law God gave Moses. It's undeniable. Just a cursory study of the Law bears this out - it's everywhere - it's water and blood - not just water - not just blood - water and blood. And when it comes to water - it's wash the clothes, bathe the skin.

And why? Simple. Because the day they murdered Jesus, when the spear pierced His side - water and blood poured from His side. The water and blood requirements of the Law God gave Moses were symbols - they were types and shadows - that pointed to the

water and the blood that Jesus Christ shed to bring the final sacrifice that would end the sacrifices of the Old Covenant World - bringing a new and better sacrifice - a spiritual sacrifice that would end all sacrifices - ushering in a new and better way to the Father.

I have seen many times - particularly "church of christ" preachers - say, for instance:

"The Bible never identifies baptism as a work of man, but it does associate baptism with salvation, the forgiveness of sins, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, being born from above, being added to the body of Christ, putting on Christ, and the circumcision of Christ. The Bible does not contradict itself. Instead, it repudiates the man-made tradition that baptism is a work of man." End quote.

The plain truth is that if by "baptism" these people are meaning the application of physical water to the flesh as a means of dealing with sin - then it shows a clear lack of knowledge of the Bible to make such a statement - that the Bible never identifies the application of water as a work of man. The Law God gave Moses - in several instances - demands the application of water - physical water - for the remission of sins. That is undeniable.

This is why I say, well-intentioned men have completely failed in understanding the purpose of water in the first century - because they have never known the purpose of physical water from the time of Moses - up until the time of John the Washer - and until the end of the Old Covenant age. If you don't understand, for instance, this is the Law concerning leprosy - you cannot understand what John and the other Israelites were doing with their various washings in the first century.

The "church" has taught that whatever this thing they have promoted - that they needed to invent a brand new - never before heard of English word - was something new that arrived onto the scene with John - shortly before the life and ministry of Christ and this is patently untrue.

I'm telling you - as I have warned a thousand times before - if there is anything in your faith - your system of belief - that has been shaped, molded or formed by something called "church" - you better reexamine it. "Church" has not gotten a single thing correct. They may have a few facts. They may have some names and places correct. But head knowledge doesn't get it. Do the truths contained in the Bible change your life? Are you a citizen of the world - or are you a Citizen of the Government of God?

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

As we were looking at I John chapter 5 last week, something jumped off the pages and impacted me greatly. It is directly related to the Gospel of John, chapter 3. Read with me please, again, I John chapter 5, beginning with verse 1 then we'll get to what I'm talking about.

[1] Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God:

Now just think of John chapter 3 and think, "Have I seen this before?"

and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

Now stop right there for just a minute. Do we not see the similarity here with John chapter 3 - verse 16? Very nearly the same. Keep going.

[2] By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments.

[3] For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous.

[4] For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

[5] Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

Once again, the similarity here with this passage and the passage in John chapter 3 Verse 6 is going to show even more similarity with John chapter 3.

[6] 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.

Was there physical water and physical blood with Jesus Christ? Of course there was. In the Old World - there was physical water - a lot of it as we've seen. There was physical blood - a lot of it. But as we progress through to the end of the Old Covenant world - we see the physical fading more and more until it finally passes away - at the same time we see the physical fading away - we see the spiritual gaining momentum. And this

chapter is a classic example - in fact - the whole 3 books of I John, II John and III John are great examples.

Early on in the Gospel of John - we see physical water - of course we do - it was in the early final stages of the Old Covenant. The epistles of John are later - towards the end of the Old Covenant and closer to the establishment of the New. The emphasis now that we can clearly see in I John is on the spiritual and nothing is mentioned of the physical. By this time, the physical water and blood that Christ shed was to be applied spiritually. The physical was long gone.

I also find great significance in verse 6 that John emphasizes the phrase "not by water only." Then he says by water and by blood speaking spiritually. Think about that for just a minute. For those who have not understood the Old Covenant Law God gave Moses - which absolutely had a great deal to do with water - but for those who do not understand that - they think that the Law God gave Moses only had blood sacrifices in it for the remission of sins. Why didn't John tag the phrase - "not by blood only"? Why did he say not by water only?

What that does is once again show the lack of understanding - particularly "church of christ" preachers and I guess I shouldn't just single them out - they all pretty much teach the same things - who have failed to understand the importance of the application of physical water for the remission of sins - as a requirement under the Old Covenant. Clearly demonstrated by John in the Gospels.

I can't imagine any of those guys not arguing against blood sacrifices - and their argument would be - "That is a work of the Law." But when it comes to the application of water to the flesh - they never dreamed of that being a work of the Law.

When John arrived onto the scene - where do we find John leading the people into the sacrificing of animals for the remission of sins? How do we get from the teaching that the Law God gave Moses required the shedding of blood - to now John comes onto the scene - and basically changes the emphasis of the shedding of blood - to that application of water to the flesh for the remission of sins?

Why does John in - I John 5:6 specifically call out the fact that Christ came not by water only - but by water and blood? Now verse 7.

[7] For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the

Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

[8] And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

I cannot imagine anyone reading these verses - seeing as clearly as can be - the spirit - the water and the blood - knowing that all three of these are to be spiritually understood - yet walk away from this passage and demand that the application of the Spirit is spiritual - the application of the Blood is spiritual - but the application of the water is physical.

Now, go back to John chapter 3. John has been washing the people - bathing the people - according to the Law God gave Moses - in what certainly appears to be physical water.

But we are going to see Jesus dealing with Nicodemus - all the while physical water is surrounding the scene (John 1, 2, and 3) - but His explanation to Nicodemus is going to pointing to exactly what the epistle of John wants us to understand at the end of the Old Covenant World and the beginning of the New. John chapter 3, verse 1.

[1] There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

[2] The same came to Jesus by night,

In other words, he really didn't want anyone to know he was coming to see Jesus so he did it by cover of night.

and said unto Him, Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him.

[3] Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Now stop right here. Is Jesus talking spiritually or is He talking physically? It's a legitimate question to ask because we see that Nicodemus had the exact same question. Why wouldn't Nicodemus be seriously asking if Jesus was talking about physically being born again? Jesus had performed miracles. He thought Jesus was speaking physically - when the reality was Jesus was speaking spiritually. You can't climb back into your mother's womb. That is a physical impossibility. Verse 4.

[4] Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

This is a legitimate question. Jesus was a miracle performing individual. This was not out of the realm of possibility in Nicodemus' mind. But clearly, Jesus was not speaking physically to Nicodemus, He was speaking spiritually. Verse 5.

[5] Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Jesus is not speaking spiritually to Nicodemus telling him that He was not talking about physically going back into his mother's womb - and when He mentions born of water and of the Spirit - that the water was indeed physical - but the Spirit was spiritual. The whole thing is spiritual. Everything Jesus is saying is spiritual. He is saying exactly what the epistle of I John chapter 5 is saying. It's talking about the same thing. Jesus is giving a glimpse into what would someday be the full implementation of salvation in the New Covenant world. Verse 6.

[6] That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

[7] Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

[8] The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

[9] Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

Nicodemus, of course he doesn't understand. Jesus begins to explain further. Verse 10:

[10] Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

[11] Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

[12] If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

Nicodemus didn't understand from an earthly viewpoint and he didn't understand from a heavenly viewpoint. The record never tells us whether or not Nicodemus believed or not. He may never have understood what Christ meant. The reality is, the things Christ revealed to him - were meant for us. We understand - or we should understand - because we have the rest of the story. We have I John 5 to further help us understand. We have the whole book. We have the whole story written out for us so we can study

it, put the pieces together. The water, the spirit, the blood, those are all heavenly things that need to be understood and Jesus clearly distinguishes them from things earthly.

All that He said to Nicodemus is supposed to be understood and summed up with the following:

[13] And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

[14] And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

[15] That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

[16] 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.

This is exactly what is recorded in I John chapter 5. The crux of this whole thing - the sum of it all - if you will - is belief. It is faith. It is a system of belief that Jesus Christ was the One that Moses and the Law and the prophets did write. This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of Israel.

[17] For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

[18] He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name (in the Authority) of the only begotten Son of God.

This is Jesus giving a glimpse of the New Covenant here. There's no physical water. It's belief. It's belief, it's belief. Jesus just clearly explained that the water is spiritual. The rebirth, born again, is spiritual. And, it comes about by belief. Belief that Jesus was the One prophesied about going back to Moses. But that's not it, either. There's still more. This is what I needed to tie up from a couple weeks ago. Continue with verse 19:

[19] And this is the condemnation, that Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

[20] For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

[21] But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

[22] After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and

there He tarried with them, and washed [baptized].

"Baptized" is a transliterated word. It is an newly invented English word that has no place in an English Bible translation. Substituting the word baptizo for immersion is not good enough. By far, the best thing to do is go back to the origins - what were they doing? They were obeying the Law God gave Moses - which was wash the clothes, bathe the flesh. If they needed an English word to translate baptizo from - wash or bathe is far more accurate. What they were doing was not something new.

Jesus said, "I did not come to destroy the Law but to fulfill it". Jesus was fulfilling the Law God gave Moses. Whenever we see what looks like the application of physical water to the flesh - no matter where we see it in our Bibles - whether in Leviticus or in the Gospel of John or in the Book of Acts - whenever, wherever we see what looks like the application of physical water to the flesh - we are seeing men and women obeying the Law God gave Moses.

You might say, "Charlie, why do you keep saying this over and over?" It's because we have been so brain-dirtied into believing that whenever we hear the made-up word "baptism" our minds go directly to some "church ritual" that we may have seen or maybe even participated in and we have got to replace untruth and deception with the truth. And repetition is what got us in the wrong place - and repetition is what we need to get us to the correct place.

Not only should the word not be in our English Bibles - but we need to do all we can to eliminate that mental picture that comes into our minds - when we can't help but hear the spoken word "baptism" - because the word is everywhere. That's how deception works. Keep repeating it over and over again until finally it gets accepted. That's what happened with words such as "church" and "baptism." Neither word should be in our English Bibles - but the entire world thinks both of those things - the words and the supposed "church" meanings behind them - are Biblical and Godly. And nothing could be further from the truth. Ecclesia is the Government of God. Bapto, baptizo, baptisma, baptismos, baptizein do not always mean physical water.

So, please don't be bothered if I repeat it. I'm going to keep repeating it. It must be done until we can - if ever - wipe these bad memories from our minds and renew our minds in Christ. What it means to be fully engrossed, fully immersed into the Name of - the Authority of Jesus Christ.

So, just in case I forgot to say it this morning - whenever we see what looks like the application of physical water to the flesh - anywhere in our Bibles - we are seeing people obeying the Law God gave Moses. Which, at that time, under the Old Covenant - which did not pass away fully until the temple was destroyed - was a good thing. It was a good thing - while in Jerusalem - to wash before entering the temple - it was a good thing to wash if you had leprosy - it was a good thing to wash after having sexual relations with your wife - it was a good thing to wash after touching something that was dead - those things were good - and they were required under the good Law God gave Moses for life in the Old Covenant World.

People are horrified at the thought of sacrificing an animal after Jesus died on the cross. But those same people are horrified at the thought of not keeping the water requirements of the Law after Jesus died on the cross and poured out the water from His body. People just have not studied the Law God gave Moses to understand the significance of the water - and because of that - they do not understand what was going on with the water in the first century.

Friends, I don't mind telling you, I am horrified at the thought of people being told they must observe a work of the Law God gave Moses in order to be reconciled to God in the New Covenant World. After the ultimate sacrifice that Jesus Christ did in putting away the works of the Law - to lead men and women boys and girls into a way of thinking that there is some act that they must do - as if the finished work of Christ is not enough - that thought horrifies me. It's belief - it's faith and trust in Christ - and resting in the fact that He paid the price, He did the work, and now it's the grace of God that allows us to trust in the finished work of Christ that leads us to salvation - that's what it's all about.

Now, keep going with verse 23.

[23] And John also was washing [baptizing] in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were washed [according to the Law God gave Moses and commanded the people to obey] [baptized].

I obviously added that.

When it is clear from the text that John was washing according to the Law - it is shamefully inaccurate for us to invent words never before found in the English to describe what John was doing.

I'll be the first to admit that people like Wycliffe and Tyndale and Coverdale - those guys were way smarter than I am or ever will be. I may never understand why they thought they had the authority to create those new words. Wycliffe used the word baptize - or at least from the limited access to his translation that I have seems to indicate. But as I was reading Matthew chapter 3 this week from the Wycliffe translation - which as you know - was supposed to be the first translation into English - I found something that I want to share with you. Listen to Matthew chapter 3 from the Wycliffe Bible.

1 In those days John Baptist came, and preached in the desert of Judaea,
2 and said, Do ye penance, for the kingdom of heavens shall approach.
3 For this is he, of whom it is said by Esaias, the prophet, saying, A voice of a crier in desert, Make ye ready the ways of the Lord; make ye right the paths of him.
4 And this John had clothing of camel's hairs, and a girdle of skin about his loins; and his meat was honeysuckles, and honey of the wood.
5 Then Jerusalem went out to him, and all Judaea, and all the country about Jordan;

Now listen to this, verse 6:

6 and they were washed of him in Jordan, acknowledging their sins.

That's what it says. I didn't remove the word "baptism." The Greek is baptizo and he translated it as washed. Wycliffe sure seemed to understand that baptizo here in verse 6 meant washed - wash the clothes - bathe the skin. Now why he didn't translate baptizo as wash in the other 3 times the exact same Greek word was used - I don't know. But here in verse 6 - he translated baptizo as wash. Which is exactly what he should have done. Keep going.

7 But he saw many of the Pharisees and of Sadducees coming to his baptism, and said to them, Generation of adders, who showed to you to flee from the wrath that is to come?

Why did he not translate this as "coming to his washing?" The inconsistency is strange. John was washing in fulfillment of the Law God gave Moses. That's the sum of the Word of God - that's what he was doing. He wasn't inventing something new. Maybe Wycliffe thought that's what John was doing. I don't know. In some places, he accurately translates - in other places he transliterates. Verse 8:

8 Therefore do ye worthy fruits of penance,
9 and do not ye say within you, We have Abraham to our father; for I say to you,
that God is mighty to raise up of these stones the sons of Abraham.
10 And now the ax is put to the root of the tree; therefore every tree that maketh
not good fruit, shall be cut down, and shall be cast into the fire.

Now watch verse 11 from the Wycliffe Bible, Matthew 3:

11 I wash you in water, into penance;

Again, the Greek word here is baptizo. And Wycliffe translates the word baptizo into an English word - wash. Which is exactly what he should have done. Wash the clothes, bathe the skin. Wash is the correct English word. Why he doesn't stay consistent, I don't know. Maybe it was influence from the catholic "church." I don't know. But in Matthew chapter 3 - baptizo is found at least 6 times - and sometimes he chooses to transliterate - make up a word in the English that did not exist - and other times he translated the word as wash - which is exactly what he should have done. Verse 11 again:

11 I wash you in water, into penance; but he that shall come after me is stronger than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you [he shall baptize, or christen, you] in the Holy Ghost and [in] fire.

Again, the inconsistency. In verse 11, the Greek word baptizo is found two times. The first time, Wycliffe translates it as wash - the second time - at least in the only version I have available to me - he translates the exact same Greek word - where he first translated it as wash - the second time - in the same verse - he transliterates it as baptize.

The thing that is interesting there in verse 11 is that he is trying (in my opinion) differentiate between what John was doing - washing with water - and what Christ would be doing - which was "baptizing" with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

At the very least, to make anything make any sense of why he would translate in one part of the verse - and transliterate in the second part of the verse - maybe he chose the transliteration - a new word - to show the difference between what John was doing and what Christ was going to do. They were both baptizo - but they were not the same thing.

From the context - we can see what John was doing and what Jesus was going to be doing - was not the same thing. These were two entirely different washings. John's was with water - and Jesus' washing was with fire and the Holy Ghost.

Friends, I've asked this before. If I have a choice between John's washing and Jesus' washing - and I do - I do have a choice - friends - I'll take Jesus' washing a thousand times out of a thousand.

One faith, one Lord, one washing - you better believe - I'll take Jesus over John anytime, any day, anywhere.

As I was studying Matthew chapter 3 again this week, after I looked at Wycliffe, as I often do, I take a look at a lot of the other Bible translations. I thought it might be interesting to see how the Orthodox Jewish Bible translates this chapter. I think I'll read this to you. The text alone will probably be sufficient to make my point - that being - whenever we see what looks like the application of physical water to the flesh - we are seeing people obeying the Law God gave Moses. Listen to this:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+3&version=OJB>

3 Now in those days Yochanan of the tevilah of teshuva appears, preaching, crying out as a maggid (preacher) [for the Moshiach] in the midbar (wilderness) of Yehudah,

<https://www.thetorah.com/article/on-the-origins-of-tevilah-ritual-immersion>

Let me just stop for one minute and remind you what tevilah is, briefly, from the theTorah.com, quote:

For over two millennia, Jews have been practicing tevilah, immersion of the entire body in water for the purpose of removing ritual impurity ([טוּמְאָה]). Although the Torah includes numerous injunctions to wash with water in order to remove various types of ritual impurity, invariably the verb used to prescribe such purificatory cleansings is the non-specific “rachatz” (רָחַץ, “wash”; e.g. Lev. 15:5–8, 10–11). But what did this term imply?

The Traditional-Rabbinic Understanding

The traditional rabbinic approach views immersion as a practice mandated by the Torah itself. One early rabbinic source (Sifra, Emor 4:7 [ed. Weiss, 96d]) exegetically derives

this interpretation from the adjacent phrases found in Lev. 22:6–7:

“Unless he has washed his body in water” (Lev. 22:6). Perhaps he should wash one limb at a time? Scripture teaches: “When the sun sets he shall be clean” (Lev. 22:7). Just as the setting of the sun occurs all at once, so too in water—all at once.[2]

Whether or not this derashah served as the actual basis for ascribing immersion back to the Torah itself, the Tannaitic and Amoraitic rabbis were completely consistent in assuming that whenever the Torah commands its listeners to “wash” (“rachatz”) in order to remove impurity, nothing but full-body immersion is intended. End quote.

Full body immersion in a mikveh, in a baptistry, in a swimming pool, in a river, in a pond, is a work of the Law. Deny all you want to - there is a mountain of evidence to the contrary. Verse 1 again, from the Orthodox Jewish Bible.

3 Now in those days Yochanan of the tevilah of teshuva appears, preaching, crying out as a maggid (preacher) [for the Moshiach] in the midbar (wilderness) of Yehudah,

2 saying, Make teshuva, for the Malchut HaShomayim has come near.

Teshuva - repent and return to the Laws of God.

3 For this [Yochanan] is the one spoken of through Yeshayah the Navi, saying, KOL KOREY BAMIDBAR (A voice of one shouting in the wilderness, Isa 40:3): Prepare the Derech Hashem (the way of the L-rd). Make his paths straight!

4 Now Yochanan himself had camel-hair clothing and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was arbe (locusts) and devash (wild honey).

5 Then all Yerushalayim and all Yehudah and the whole region of the Yarden were going out to him.

6 Making vidduy (confession of sin) [to Hashem] of their averos (sins), they were submitted to a tevilah (immersion) by him, using the Yarden River as a mikveh mayim (gathering of water).

7 But when he saw many of the Perushim and Tzedukim coming to where he was using the Yarden as a mikveh mayim, Yochanan said to them, You banim (sons) of nachashim

(snakes)! Who warned you to flee from the charon af [Hashem] habah (the coming burning wrath of Hashem)?

8 Produce pri tov l'teshuva (fruit worthy of repentance)!

9 Do not presume to say to yourselves, We have the yichus (proud lineage), we have the zechut Avot (merit of the Fathers) of Avraham Avinu (our father Abraham). For I say to you that Hashem is able to raise up from these avanim (stones) banim (sons) of Avraham.

10 And already the ax is laid at the shoresh haetzim (the root of the trees); therefore, every etz not producing pri tov (good fruit) is cut down and thrown into the eish (fire).

11 I give you a tevilah (immersion) in a mikveh mayim for teshuva, but Hu Habah (He who Comes; T.N. i.e., the Moshiach) after me has more chozek (strength) than me. I am not worthy to remove his sandals. He will give you a tevilah (immersion) with the Ruach Hakodesh and eish (fire).

12 The winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear out his threshing floor, and he will gather his wheat into the storehouse; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable eish (fire).

13 Then Yehoshua comes from the Galil to the Yarden to Yochanan, to submit to Yochanan's tevilah.

14 But Yochanan would have deterred him, saying, I have need to submit to your tevilah [T.N. i.e., Moshiach's tevilah], and yet you come to me?

15 But answering him, Yehoshua said, Permit it now, for thus it is proper to fulfill all Tzidkat Hashem [Dan 9:24].

16 And having received the tevilah in the Yarden's mikveh mayim, Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach immediately came up. And, hinei! The Shomayim were opened to him, and he saw the Ruach Hakodesh of Hashem descending like a yonah (dove) and coming upon him.

That should speak all for itself. What John was doing was fulfilling the Law God gave Moses and I don't need the Orthodox Jewish Bible to prove it.

Now, back to John chapter 3. We left off in verse 24. What was the purpose of the water(s) plural - there were two waters in John 3 - one was spiritual - the other was physical. One was John's, one was Christ's. Verse 24:

[24] For John was not yet cast into prison.

[25] Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.

If you recall from a couple weeks ago, after we read this verse - we went to Numbers chapter 8 - where we also found the word purifying. Notice very clearly from verse 25 - there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews - about purifying.

This was a question concerning the Law God gave Moses regarding purifying. Numbers 8 speaks of the

Sprinkle water of purifying upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean.

Side note. Again. When these "churchmen" argue about full body immersion versus sprinkling versus pouring - they are missing it all. When it comes to physical water in the Old Covenant World - there were all three - full body dunking, sprinkling and pouring. These guys are arguing the wrong things. But that's what "church" does - that's the best "church" can do. "Church" does not have the ability to discern the pure truths of God's Word. In the Old Covenant, full body application of water has its place. Sprinkling of water has its place. Sprinkling of water mixed with blood has its place. Pouring has its place. All of this comes from the Law God gave Moses. Arguing whether or not to full body immerse, sprinkle or pour in the New Covenant misses the mark - and misses it by a mile.

This is why I tell people that those that are arguing against the things we are talking about in this series - we aren't even talking about the same things. Some have likened this series to a boxing match or something like that. In that fight - there's only one fighter in the ring. That fighter is shadow boxing. I'm not talking about the things the "church" talks about. We aren't even in the same arena - let alone the same boxing ring. I'm saying that "churches" that argue immersion versus sprinkling versus pouring - they are all wrong. Not a single one of them teaches what the application of physical water to the flesh as found in the Bible means.

When John chapter 3 transitions - and there's a clear transition there - you can't miss it - between the teachings of Christ - which end in verse 21 and then picks back up with John's physical Old Covenant washings - the question that arose between John's disciples and the Jews was in relation to the purifying commandments found in the Law God gave Moses. And it's talking about water.

It is ridiculously inaccurate - deceptively inaccurate on the part of some - for the record - I am NOT including Ted in that description - intentionally, deceptively inaccurate (I'm not talking about Ted) - simply inaccurate will suffice - it is inaccurate to use John 3 as a foundational basis to say that New Covenant washing in Christ is physical water. The question was in regards to purifying under the Law God gave Moses. But there was something specific about the question. And that is what the purpose of the discussion of water in John 3 was - and it had nothing whatsoever to do with physical water.

In Numbers 8, the Law concerning the sprinkling of the water of purification was a Law that was for the Levites. It was not for all the tribes of Israel. The answer to what was the question between John's disciples and the Jews is found in verse 26.

[26] And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same washeth [baptizeth], and all men come to him.

Do you see it? Oh I hope you do. It just gave me chills up and down my entire body.

[26] And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold,

Remember the word behold from our past studies? Behold, this is amazing, this is astounding - a virgin is going to conceive - this is amazing. Behold is not just a filler word. It is a symbol of something truly significant.

the same washeth [baptizeth], and all men come to him.

They were telling John's disciples that this Jesus was doing way more washing than what John was doing. This Jesus, the One that you bare witness of - the same washeth all men that come to Him. He's not just washing Levites, He's not just washing Nazarites, He's not just washing lepers, He's not just washing the blind and other infirmities of the flesh - He's washing everyone.

Friends, this is so significant. While some people have thought the most important thing about John 3 is that John was washing - or as they say erroneously - "baptizing" near Aenon because there was much water there - they've missed it.

The most important thing in John 3 by far - not even close - is that the water that Christ spoke to Nicodemus about was spiritual water - Him - He was the Water - and that it was available for

...whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

[16] 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.

[17] For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

[18] 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 - in the Authority of - the only begotten Son of God...

John 3 and I John 5 are talking about the exact same things. While the Gospel of John - written in the beginning of the final stages of the end of the Old Covenant world - has much to say about physical water - of course it does - it was written to people fully entrenched in the Old Covenant World - Jesus hadn't even been murdered yet - those people were fully in the Old Covenant World - but right after Jesus turned the purification waters of the Jews into wine in John 2 - signifying His Own blood which would be shed for the sins of many - right after He did that - He explains to Nicodemus the spiritual Water of life - and how that spiritual Water of life would be available on a whosoever will basis.

So, again, my purpose in going back to John 3 this morning was because several people that I talked to after the message a couple weeks ago - their conversation with me made me realize I had not fully made my point. That being the significance of

Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.

[26] And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same washeth [baptizeth], and all men come to him.

The discussion of John's water and what he was doing - and then the Jews comparing

what John was doing with what Jesus was doing - was that - at least in that instance - John was washing Levites - while Jesus was washing everyone that came to Him. Of course, Jesus had just told Nicodemus - it was a whosoever believeth situation with Him.

Now, it looks like I am going to get to the turning of the corner I talked about to begin this message. Got to hurry though...

I was reading Eckhard Schnauble's work again this week. Not because I agree with Schnauble, not because I recommend Schnauble and not because I think Schnauble is even a follower of Christ. That's not for me to judge. I don't even know the man.

But I will say this, the man has probably forgotten more of the Greek language than I will ever know. No, that's not entirely accurate - there is no doubt he has forgotten more than I'll ever know. I am thankful that understanding the Will of God, the purpose of Creation, why we are here, what we are supposed to be doing with our lives, I am glad that a knowledge of the Greek is not what determines our destiny.

What I mean by all that is that I do not have to depend - we don't have to depend - on the fluent understanding or the fluent speaking of the Greek in order to understand the Word of God and what I need to know in order to be a follower of Jesus Christ.

I don't know if any of you read the entire work of Schnauble or not in relation to "baptism" but I did. And after finishing it, I admit to you - I had a headache. Maybe not in a bad way - it's just that - there is so much information there - not so much Bible - but simply Greek - there's so much there it just makes your head hurt trying to absorb it all.

You know me, I'm simple. I'm not a complex man, I don't claim to have all this wisdom and knowledge, I just read the Scripture - from a different perspective than most - and I have insights as a result - that are pretty much different from everyone else. No big deal. That's just the way it is.

I've made the statement many times before in this series. Whenever you hear the word "baptism" it is totally wrong - absolutely - totally wrong - for your mind to instantly take you to a vision of a "church water ritual". That's not what the word means. Bapto - the root word for baptizo, baptismas, baptizein, baptismos - can mean water - but it rarely means water. Hardly ever does it mean exclusively water. But, thanks to the "church"

and the "churchmen" pretty much for the entire world - when they hear that word - they instantly think of a "church water ritual" and that is wrong.

Schnauble takes this to a level that is so far beyond my simple mind that I almost can't describe it. I have no idea whether what he says can be verified or not because I don't have access to the stuff he says he has. When he begins to explain what I said - that we should not EVER - instantly have our minds envision a "church water ritual" or a Jewish water ritual (they are the same thing, by the way) whenever we hear that word - for his proof - he starts quoting from Aristotle and Homer and Greek writings from hundreds and hundreds of years ago and he quotes their books in Greek then translates them into English. He shows page after page of how the Greeks used the words bapto, baptismos, baptizein, etc., and they had absolutely nothing to do with water.

Sometimes they did, sure. But many times they did not. Many times, in these old Greek manuscripts - he found the words bapto - and they were not used to talk about water - and they definitely were not used to define a "church water ritual."

All of that is great. Even though it was really hard reading, I enjoyed every bit that I read from Schnauble. It certainly doesn't make me rise to the level of some mastermind scholar - but it definitely increased my learning and I am glad for that. I encourage you to read it all again some evening when you don't have anything else to do.

But friends, even without Schnauble, I'll say especially without Schnauble, we don't need to master the Greek language - oh - before I forget - this is crazy - but it's true - Schnauble makes a really good point. He basically says that Strong's Concordance - well - it's like a very basic, very beginner course in the Greek. You take that and deal with it however you want to - but I'll tell you this - when it comes to the Greek - dealing with the words bapto, baptismos, etc., Strong's is kindergarten compared to the rest of the work that is available to us if you just go find it.

Anyway, with all of that, all that is available to us if we have a hundred more years to spend studying the Greek - the most beautiful thing about this is - is that we can simply take our Bibles - and from the proper understanding - and an open heart for truth - we can get what we need solely and completely from the Scriptures.

When we see the word "baptism" - first off - knowing that it is a made-up English word that shouldn't even be in our Bibles - we can see from the Bible itself - that it does not always refer to water. That has to be our first understanding.

Now, I am not picking on Ted this morning. You know that I have rarely picked on Ted through this whole series - but this morning I need to let you know something because it is very important. It doesn't just include Ted - but I have researched a lot of other church of christ preacher's teachings and there is something that is conspicuously missing from their teachings.

Open your Bibles please to Mark chapter 10 this morning.

Funny thing about this Mark 10 passage. There are two verses in this chapter we are going to look at and the words "baptism" and "baptize" are found more in these two verses - than in any other two consecutive verses found in our Bibles - yet - when you read the writings of these "church of christ" preachers - they never teach on these verses. I guess I shouldn't say never - but at least from what I have found - I have not found them even reading these verses let alone teaching what they mean.

I went back again this week and read Ted's book on "baptism." It is nauseating to read how many times he uses the word "baptism" but I will absolutely give him credit for coming to the understanding that the word should be eliminated from our English Bibles. He has said that publicly. He obviously came to that understanding some time after he wrote his book on "baptism." I have read his book many times now - but just to be sure - I read it again this week.

He does cite Mark 10 - but only because he was copying and pasting something from Thayer's Lexicon - which just offers Mark 10 as a citation. There is no discussion in Ted's book concerning Mark 10. We are going to see those verses in just a minute. We are going to see two verses where the Greek baptisma and baptizo are found - more than any other two verses together in the whole Bible - yet not one word of explanation is offered from the "church of christ." Verse 28, Mark 10.

[28] Then Peter began to say unto Him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed Thee.

[29] And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,

[30] But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

[31] But many that are first shall be last; and the last first.

[32] 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,

Friends, this is so very important. On several levels this is important. I just can't stress to you enough how important this is. Verse 33.

[33] 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 [those unbelieving Jews]:

[34] 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.

We should read this over and over and over again so that it would sink in. Just imagine for a minute that you were sitting there as Jesus was saying this. I don't think any of us like funerals. While we all know we will some day close our eyes and take our last breaths - the thoughts aren't particularly enjoyable. Jesus is telling His disciples that very shortly - He would be condemned, beaten, and killed very soon.

[35] And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto Him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire.

[36] And He said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?

[37] They said unto Him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in Thy glory.

Now watch. Even though the words are not correct - I am going to read them as they are because we are trying to get people to see that when those Greek words baptisma, baptizo, are in the text - they do not always means water. In fact, they rarely mean water. In response to James and John - and in direct reference to the condemnation, beatings and murder that was imminently coming to Jesus, this is what He said.

[38] But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

Friends I'm telling you that if someone tries to say this is talking about some "church water ritual" they are saying one of the most blasphemous things that could ever be said. Jesus is talking about His death. And the English transliterators call it baptism and baptized. It is not talking about a "church water ritual" it is talking about His death. Three times in one verse - the Greek baptisma and baptizo.

[39] And they said unto Him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:

Three more times - six times in two verses - the Greek baptisma and baptizo - yet when you read the writings of those who demand H2O water application to the flesh today - and they use the made-up word baptize or baptism - they NEVER speak of this - THIS - the "baptism" the immersion of Christ into death.

Friends, this is what John was referring to when he talked about another "baptism" of Jesus Christ.

All I'm doing is washing you with water, but the One coming after me, whose shoe latchet I am not worthy to unloose - He will wash you - He will plunge you into - fire and the Holy Ghost.

This, Mark 10:38 and 39 - this is the washing by fire that John was talking about. This - is what it means when the Bible talks about "baptized into His death." It's not talking about a "church water ritual." It's not talking about fulfilling the Law God gave Moses. It's talking about spiritually identifying with the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.