Leviticus 16:4,24 (Arthur Copeland Brown) 95343

Helps on Difficult Subjects, Baptism (16:4,24)

Age-old differings surround the subject of Baptism. Christians do not all see alike although the scriptures remain unchanged and we ought to have the same mind as the Holy Spirit is not the teacher of confusion. Many have too readily agreed with what they have heard and read of that which is popularly believed, yet lacked patient and prayerful diligence in searching God's Word.

There are seven different Baptisms in the Word although it also says as to Christian baptism "there is one" Eph. 4:5.

1. "All baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" 1 Cor. 10:2. Regardless of age or sex all by the way of the Red Sea (type of the death of Christ) left Egypt (type of the world) having the cloud (type of God's presence) and shared in all the privileges as baptized unto Moses. Nevertheless many of them perished and never reached Canaan. How many baptized in our day go along with the Lord's people but will not reach the goal!

2. Jewish "divers baptisms" and "washings" Heb. 6:2; 9:10; Lev. 16:4, 24. These, of course were ceremonial.

3. "John's baptism" (in the river Jordan) "unto repentance" Matt. 3:11, "for the remission of sins" Luke 3:3, "that they should believe on... Jesus" Acts 19:4 as the Messiah, became effective to a small remnant with whom the Lord identified Himself by being baptized Matt. 8:16; Luke 3:21. Acts 19:3-5 shows that John's baptism was not Christian baptism. John was not a Christian but the last of the Old Testament prophets. He founded no church.

Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John unto Himself as the Messiah John 4:1.

4. The sufferings of Christ on the cross including the atonement, called "baptism" in Luke 12:50. "I have a baptism to be baptized with and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" John 12:27; Matt. 26:39. This was to accomplish the great purpose for which He came.

5. "Baptized with the Holy Ghost" Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16; 1 Cor. 12:13. This incorporating believers into one body occurred once for all on the day of Pentecost. That this is distinct from Christian water baptism is attested by Acts 10:47 "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost?"

6. "Baptize... with fire" Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16 only. This is not in Mark 1:8; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16; 1 Cor. 12:13 because it speaks of judgment on such as the Pharisees Matt. 3:7, 11, 12; Lev. 10:2; Num. 11:1;16:35; 2 Kings 1:12; 2 Thess. 1:8; Heb. 12:29, and has nothing to do with Acts 2:3 "like as of fire."

7. Christian baptism, "one baptism" Eph. 4:5. This verse gives us the second circle or sphere of profession on earth which is entered by the divinely appointed door of reception—baptism. There Jesus is owned as Lord and Christian privileges are afforded with solemn responsibility. (Verse four is the inner circle of the members of the body of Christ who are joined to the Lord by the Holy Spirit and wait for Him their blessed Hope.)

Baptism means "putting into" and supposes immersion. Christian baptism is a figure of burial, the end of a dead person—and then risen to a new life, as identified with the death, burial, resurrection and Lordship of Christ 1 Peter 3:21; Rom. 6:3, 4; Col. 2:12. Fruit commensurate will have to prove one's reality and appreciation in the day of reckoning. Then will be exposed the "tares," "foolish virgins," "evil servants" those without a "wedding garment," like Sardis had a name that they lived but were dead Rev. 3:1. Peter exposed baptized Simon Magus Acts 8. It is therefore a very solemn matter to be initiated by baptism to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, unto His death and to the light of the full Christian revelation, the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost Matt. 28:19. Baptism transports one into "the kingdom of heaven" on earth where God's special government has one standard—Christ. It is altogether distinct from being received at the Lord's table in the breaking of bread.

It is not a meritorious act of obedience contributive to soul salvation. Nor is it related to John 3:5 new birth. "Baptismal regeneration" is a fraud of the devil. See Ex. 40:12; Lev. 8:6; Ezek. 36:25-27; Zech. 13:1; John 13:10; 15:3; 1 Cor. 4:15; 6:11; Eph. 5:26; Heb. 10:22; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23.

The candidate may little understand its significance, yet submit, but the Lord's servant should know His mind as to administering it.

There was no one to baptize the twelve apostles into Christian baptism.

Paul was not sent to baptize 1 Cor. 1:17.

In itself baptism according to Scripture is not a public testimony (Acts 8:38) even though it often has that effect, especially with Jews or among heathen.

Acts 8:37 is spurious.

Everyone baptized has professedly (outwardly) adopted Christ, "For as many of you as have been baptized unto Christ have put on Christ" Gal. 3:27.

There is some similarity between O.T. circumcision and N.T. baptism inferred in Col. 2:11-13 where our spiritual circumcision is symbolized in baptism.

The importance of Christian baptism is seen in the place given to it in Acts 2 where Peter convicts the nation of Israel of their guilt in crucifying the One God has glorified. Escape was only by repentance and being baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for forgiveness and receiving the Holy Spirit.

In Matt. 28:19, 20 there is no repentance or remission, but discipling, baptizing and teaching them. This will yet be more fully accomplished by the Jewish remnant evangelizing Gentiles for the kingdom.

The theory that forgiveness of sins and salvation must precede baptism does not accord with Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21.

Although infant baptism is not taught in the scriptures "household" is (positionally) and children are not excluded, not on account of faith in every individual, but on account of the believing parent Gen. 7:1; 18:19; Ex. 12:3; Lev. 16:17; Acts 11:14; 16:15, 31. Verse 34 is literally in the singular as the alone act of the jailer rather than theirs. Then 1 Cor. 1:16 and 7:14 adds up to the same provision for all in the household positionally.

Even unsaved parents who have their children baptized have approved of the new privileged place.

Although sprinkling is an irregular method the same responsibility attaches to those thus baptized in His name. Being baptized twice accomplishes nothing.

In fact none of the irregularities as to views on baptism can confound God, or annul the responsibility of everyone baptized to the name of His Son, to render a life commensurable to the privileges into which they have been brought. It is a solemn thing to have to say to God, as they will one day have to do.

It is also a serious thing as to how we adopt views. Have we hastily been pursuaded by human use of favorite texts? And have our spirits become hard, intolerable, dogmatic? Or, have we earnestly and unbiasedly sought the Lord's mind in His presence?

Being "baptized for the dead" 1 Cor. 15:29 is for new recruits to replenish the depleted ranks.

"Washing of regeneration" Titus 3:5 is true of genuine Christians who have been "translated into the kingdom of His dear Son" Col. 1:13, as brought out of the old creation into the whole new order where all things are of God, 2 Cor. 5:17,18, of which baptism is merely a figure. 1 Peter 3:20, 21.

The word "regeneration" is often wrongly used as though it meant to be "born again." In Matt. 19:28 it refers to the future new millennial state and Titus 3:5 to the present new Christian position through grace.

"The washing of regeneration is typified by the flood... the old world is cleared away and a new one begun" J.N.D. Col. Writ. Vol. 13 pages 325-6. Letters Vol. 1 page 647.

"The washing of regeneration... is the putting of the believer into an entirely new place before God" W. K. Intr. Lectures to the Pent. page 207.

"A blessed position into which we are brought now by divine power in Christ... new creation" W. K. Intr. Lectures to the Minor Prophets (Zephaniah) pages 374-5.

See also Synopsis footnote to Acts 28 and Col. W. Vol. 28 page 555.

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