

Biblical History Of Baptism

⇒ Introduction:

- There is probably no Bible doctrine more abused than the doctrine of baptism.
 - Confusion concerning Bible doctrine comes from two sources:
 - 1) The traditions of man taking precedent over the authority of the Word of God.
 - 2) Failure to obey **2 Timothy 2:15** – “**Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.**”
 - Every translation of the Bible since 1880 has removed two very important words from this verse.
 - These two words are the keys to understanding the Word of God.
 - The words are : “**STUDY**” and “**DIVIDING.**”
 - If we are going to be approved of God, we must **STUDY** (“a workman”); and we must rightly **DIVIDE** “the word of truth.”
- The Bible has divisions in it.
 - We are to divide Scripture between that which is for the Jew, the Gentile, and the church of God.
 - **See I Cor. 10:32.**
 - There is more than one resurrection.
 - **See John 5:29 and 1 Cor. 15:20-24.**
 - There is more than one gospel.
 - **See Mark 1:14-15; Acts 20:24; Rev. 14:6.**
 - There is **more than one baptism.**
 - There are three different baptisms mentioned in one verse.
 - **See Mt. 3:11.**
 - Therefore, to understand baptism we must work to **STUDY**, and make right divisions between the different baptism.

⇒ I. BAPTISM #1 – ISRAEL BECOMES A NATION

- The first time someone is baptized in the Bible was when the nation of Israel crossed the Red Sea and “...were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;” **1 Cor. 10:2.**
 - We know it was a baptism because they were covered by water on all sides.
 - This is the only place in the Bible where babies were “baptized.”
- The nation Israel began with “**signs**” associated with healing; tongues; oicking up serpents; miracles and baptism
 - **See Exodus 4:1-12 & 14:21-28.**
- So the first thing we learn about baptism is it’s association with “signs” and Israel becoming a nation.
 - Israel’s baptism in the Red Sea was their salvation from Egypt (a type of the world).
 - When baptism is associated with Israel, it is definitely part of their salvation.

⇒ II. BAPTISM # 2 – JOHN’S BAPTISM

- The next time you find anyone being baptized in the Bible is when John the Baptist comes baptizing.

- Several things can be observed regarding the baptism of John.
 - The purpose behind John’s baptism was to manifest the Messiah to the nation Israel.
 - **See John 1:28-32; Acts 19:3-5.**
 - John’s baptism was connected with offering the Kingdom to Israel.
 - **See Mt. 3:1-6.**
 - Just as Moses baptism prepared the nation Israel (**1 Cor. 10:1-2**), John’s baptism prepared the nation Israel to receive the Kingdom.
 - John’s baptism was a “**baptism of repentance for the remission of sins**” (**Mark 1:4**).
 - Because this baptism was for Israel, it was essential for their salvation.
 - When a Jew was baptized by John, they had to confess their sins.
 - **Mark 1:5 – “And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.”**
 - John’s baptism was practiced throughout the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John).
 - Jesus preached and offered the Kingdom to Israel, just like John the Baptist did.
 - **See Mat.**
 - **Mt. 4:17 & Mark 1:14-15.**
 - The offer of the Kingdom was **exclusive** to Israel.
 - **See Mt. 15:24.**
 - The twelve Apostles also preached this “**gospel of the Kingdom**” to Israel.
 - **See Mt. 10:5-8.**
 - It was confirmed by “**signs**” of healing, tongues, picking up serpents and miracles.
 - Baptism for Israel was associated with signs and salvation just as it was with Moses.
 - **See Mark 16:16-18**
 - Instead of accepting the King’s offer of the Kingdom, Israel murdered their King saying, “**We will not have this man to reign over us.**”
 - However, because God is a God of grace, they will be given another chance to accept the Kingdom in the book of Acts.
 - “**The gospel of the Kingdom**” preached by John, Jesus, and the twelve apostles is not “**the gospel of the grace of God**” we preach today.
 - **See 1 Cor. 15:1-4.**
- ⇒ **III. BAPTISM # 3 – BAPTISM OF SUFFERING**
- Jesus referred to this baptism in **Matthew 20:22**.
 - “**But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.**”
 - Jesus was about to be baptized (immersed) in pain and suffering.
 - It is amazing how when some people see the word “**baptism**” they automatically think of **water**.
 - **Galatians 3:27** is not water baptism; it is **Spirit Baptism** which we will discuss later on in our study.

- **Gal. 3:27** – “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”
 - These same people see the word “**water**” and they automatically think of baptism.
 - For example, **John 3:5** – “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.”
 - Where is “**baptism**” mentioned in this verse?
 - Being “**born of water**” is **NOT** baptism.
 - Baptism isn’t mentioned in the context.
 - **See John 3:4-6.**
 - The context of **John 3:4-6** explains being “**born of water**” refers to a person’s physical birth (“**born of the flesh**”) when they came out of their mother’s womb after her water broke!
- ⇒ **IV. BAPTISM # 4 – KINGDOM BAPTISM REVISITED**
- After Jesus was crucified, buried and risen, the question of the Apostles’ mind was “...**Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?**” (**Acts 1:6**)
 - Jesus answered that the time of the kingdom was up to the Father’s discretion.
 - They just needed to be witnesses of what He told them.
 - **See Acts 1:7-8.**
 - After that, Jesus ascended back to the Father to sit at His right hand.
 - In **Acts 2**, on the Jewish Feast of Pentecost, God sent the Holy Spirit upon them with the “**signs of tongues.**”
 - **1 Cor. 14:22** – “Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying *serveth* not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.”
 - The Apostle Peter preaches to Jews only.
 - **See Acts 2:5, 14, 22, 36.**
 - His message confronted the House of Israel with their murder of the Messiah and His resurrection.
 - **See Acts 2:22-24.**
 - Peter witnesses to the fact that Christ’s resurrection proves that He is the Messiah.
 - “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.” (**Acts 2:36**).
 - The Jews are convicted of their crime of rejecting the King and the Kingdom and want to know what they should do now.
 - “Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?” (**Acts. 2:37**).
 - The Apostle Peter answers – “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” (**Acts 2:38**).

- Like the baptism of John, this baptism of repentance was the formula for the **“remission of sins.”**
 - **Mark 1:4 – “John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.”**
- The only difference between **Acts 2:38** and John’s baptism was the inclusion of **“in the name of Jesus Christ.”**
 - The nation Israel was to (1) repent of murdering the Messiah; (2) be baptized in the name of the Messiah.
 - If they would do that, their sins would be remitted and they would receive the Holy Ghost.
 - As a result, many of them accepted Peter’s offer.
 - **Acts 2:41 – “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.”**
- But the **leadership** of the nation of Israel still doubted.
 - **See Acts 4:1-3.**
 - It was Israel’s **council** who plotted Jesus’ murder.
 - **See Mt. 12:14 & Mt. 26:59.**
 - Therefore, until the council repented and was baptized, the Kingdom would never come.
- God gave the council one last opportunity to repent under the preaching of Stephen.
 - **See Acts 6:18-7:53.**
 - Unfortunately, they never let him finish his sermon.
 - Instead they stoned him.
 - In his dying moments God allowed Stephen to see that Jesus was ready to come at the moment and set up the Kingdom.
 - **Acts 7:55-56 – “(55) But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, (56) And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.”**
- There are two important things about what Stephen saw.
 - **FIRST**, he saw Jesus **STANDING** on the right hand of God.
 - Immediately after Jesus ascended to heaven He **SAT DOWN** at God’s right hand.
 - **Mark 16:19 – “So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.”**
 - Jesus was to remain **seated** until the time of the Kingdom.
 - **See Acts 2:34-35.**
 - Today Jesus is **SEATED** at God’s right hand.
 - **Col. 3:1 – “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.”**
 - **Heb. 10:12 – “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;”**

- **Heb. 12:2 – “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”**
 - This means that Jesus has been seated from the time He ascended to the present except for **ONE TIME** when He stood up.
 - The only time He stood was when the council rejected God’s last offer of the Kingdom.
 - Jesus was **standing** ready to come, but the council murdered Stephen, just like they murdered Him.
 - With that, Jesus sat back down where He has been seated for about the last 1,980 years.
 - The **SECOND** thing you should notice about Stephen’s vision is the title Stephen ascribed to Jesus.
 - He called Him **“the SON OF MAN”** not the **“son of God.”**
 - Why?
 - Because **“son of man”** is His title to the throne of the Kingdom.
 - **See Dan. 7:13-14**
 - **See Mt. 16:28; 19:28; 25:31.**
 - This is the last reference of Jesus being called **“the Son of Man”** in the New Testament until the time the Kingdom will again be offered to Israel.
 - For now, God has set Israel aside and has turned to the Gentiles.
 - This is context of **Romans Chapter 11.**
- ⇒ **V. BAPTISM # 5 – BELIEVER’S BAPTISM**
- From the rejection of Stephen’s message, the Book of Acts reveals a **gradual** transition –
 - from Jews to Gentiles
 - from the nation of Israel to the Church;
 - from the ministry of the Apostle Peter to the Apostle Paul
 - from **“signs and wonders”** to no signs.
 - During this transition things begin to change.
 - The next time we see anyone baptized after the death of Stephen a remarkable change has occurred.
 - It takes place in **Acts 8:**
 - Someone other than Jews are being baptized.
 - **See Acts 8:5-39.**
 - The Samaritans were half-Jew; half Gentile.
 - The Ethiopian eunuch was a black Jewish proselyte.
 - Up to this point, everyone ever baptized was a Law abiding Jew.
 - Notice the shift from Jews only; to half-Jews; to a Gentile who was a Jewish proselyte.
 - Another element has been added to the formula Peter gave at Pentecost in **Acts 2:38.**
 - The Samaritans not only must –

- (1) believe and (2) be baptized (**Acts 8:12**), but now must (3) have the laying on of the Apostle's hands before they receive the Holy Ghost (**Acts 8:14-17**).
 - Peter said nothing about the laying on of hands on the Day of Pentecost.
- In **Acts 9**, God saves Saul who later becomes known as Paul, the Apostle to the **GENTILES**.
 - **See Romans 11:13.**
 - From here on you see less and less of Peter and more and more of Paul.
 - This is because Peter was the Apostle to the circumcision.
 - **See Gal. 2:7-9.**
 - God was turning from the circumcision (i.e. Jews) to the Gentiles.
 - **See Acts 18:6; Acts 22:21; Acts 26:17; Acts 28:28.**
- In **Acts 10**, the transition is complete.
 - The first Gentile to be saved without baptism is Cornelius.
 - He was told to call for Peter who would come and show him what he must do.
 - Cornelius assembled all his household together when Peter and his entourage arrived.
 - Peter realizes now that God has included the Gentiles in His plan and preaches to everyone at Cornelius's house.
 - **Acts 10:43** – “To him (**Jesus**) give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.”
 - Whoa, Peter!
 - Didn't you forget something?
 - What about “**repent and be baptized**” for the remission of sins?
 - You are telling Cornelius something different than you told the Jews at Pentecost (**Acts 2:38**).
- Notice, God the Holy Ghost, cut Peter's sermon short before he could mention baptism.
 - **Acts 10:44** – “While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.”
 - These full-blooded Italian Gentiles received the Holy Ghost **WITHOUT BAPTISM** and without the laying on of the Apostles hands.
 - It even surprised Peter and his Jewish buddies.
 - **Acts 10:45** – “And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.”
 - **Acts 10:46**, Peter and the other Jews are given a sign that the Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost.
 - We must remember that the Word of God says the Jews require a sign.
 - **Acts 10:46** – “For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God....”
 - Gentiles speaking in tongues was for the benefit of Peter and Jews to show that the Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost and has nothing to do with the Gentiles' salvation.
 - All Peter could say was, baptism comes after a person is saved.
 - **See Acts 10:47-48.**

- **Baptism is no longer a requirement to receive the Holy Spirit!**
- Under the ministry of Paul, the Apostle to Gentiles, **baptism is never essential to a person's salvation.**

- This is apparent by what Paul told the Corinthians.
 - **1 Cor. 1:14-17** – “**(14)** I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; **(15)** Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. **(16)** And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. **(17)** For Christ sent me NOT to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.”

- If baptism was necessary for salvation during this dispensation, Paul would have tried to get as many people baptized as he could.

- But such is **not** the case.

- Believer's baptism is simply a **symbol of identification.**

- **See Acts 16:30-33; Acts 18:8; Rom. 6:1-4.**

- Baptism is only a “figure” of salvation.

- **See 1 Pet. 3:21.**

- It is like a wedding ring.

- The ring is not essential to marriage.

- Likewise, just because a man wears a ring doesn't necessarily mean he is married.

- Why do I wear a wedding ring right now?

- To identify me as a married man and show I'm not ashamed to be associated with my wife.

- Baptism is the same.

- I got baptized to show I want to be identified with Christ's church and I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.

⇒ VI. **BAPTISM # 6 – SPIRIT BAPTISM**

- John the Baptist prophesied of two future baptisms.

- **Mat. 3:11** – “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire:”

- Besides his own baptism with water unto repentance, he referred to a **(1)** Holy Ghost baptism and **(2)** a baptism of fire.

- Paul explained Spirit baptism in **1 Corinthians 12:12-13**,

- “**(12)** For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also *is* Christ. **(13)** For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”

- The Holy Ghost “**immerses**” every believer into the body of Christ when they get saved.

- We become bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh.

- **See Eph. 5:30-32.**

- Water has nothing to do with it.

- Every believer receives the baptism of the Holy Ghost when they get saved!

⇒ **VII. BAPTISM # 7 – FIRE BAPTISM**

- Finally, what does it mean to be baptized with **fire**?
 - **Mt. 3:11** – “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and ***with fire***.”
 - Obviously, this baptism has nothing to do with water either.
 - The fire is explained in the context of **Mt. 3:10-12**.
 - **See Mt. 3:10-12.**
 - Each of these verses ends with the “**fire**”.
 - Verse 10 refers to the place of fire where trash is burnt.
 - In verse 12 all waste is cast into “**unquenchable fire**.”
 - There is no doubt what this fire refers to –
 - God’s eternal garbage dump called “**the lake of fire**.”
 - **See Rev. 20:14-15.**
 - What would lead anyone to believe the fire mentioned in verse 11 would be any different than the fire mentioned in the verse preceding it or coming after it?
 - The baptism of fire is being “**immersed**” in “**the lake of fire**.”
 - **Notice, no baptism is mentioned.**

⇒ **CONCLUSION:**

- There is only one way to escape the baptism of fire.
 - Paul, the Apostle to the Gentile wrote to the Roman Gentiles –
 - **Romans 10:9-10** – “**(9)** That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. **(10)** For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”
 - My friend won’t you be saved today?
 - Then show you are not ashamed of being saved by following Him in believer’s baptism.
 - Be baptized because to are saved, **not** in order to get saved!