

BAPTISM

Most people say that they are immersed (baptized in water) because Jesus set an example to them. They do this without examining the scriptures. They quote *Mathew 3:15; Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness."* They forget that no man can fulfill all righteousness or do what is good, no one, *Romans 3:9-18,⁹ Well then, are we Jews in any better condition than the Gentiles? Not at all!^[a] I have already shown that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin.¹⁰ ^(A)As the Scriptures say:*

There is no one who is righteous,

*¹¹ no one who is wise
or who worships God.*

*¹² All have turned away from God;
they have all gone wrong;
no one does what is right, not even one.*

*¹³ ^(B)Their words are full of deadly deceit;
wicked lies roll off their tongues,
and dangerous threats, like snake's poison, from their lips;*

¹⁴ ^(C)their speech is filled with bitter curses.

¹⁵ ^(D) they are quick to hurt and kill;

¹⁶ they leave ruin and destruction wherever they go.

¹⁷ They have not known the path of peace,

¹⁸ ^(E) nor have they learned reverence for God.

Now, let us examine what Jesus meant by "fulfilling all righteousness", by saying this, Jesus was referring to Himself, His Father and the Holy Spirit. They are the one to fulfill the Righteousness, that is why Jesus used "US" and that is why when Jesus was being baptized in water, the Holy Spirit came upon him in form of a dove and a voice from Heaven (God the Father) declaring Jesus as His son. That's how the righteousness was fulfilled. Therefore, this means that whoever believes in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is born again and fully baptized, *Mathew 28:19, Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

Let us now also examine the reason why Jesus went to River Jordan to be baptized in water. We have to know that all the people who went to river Jordan to be baptized by John the Baptist had to confess their sins; this shows that it was another way of remission of sins contrary to system known Jewish system of sacrificing animals to take away people's sins. This water baptism was free to those people who went to John confessing their sins there, so there is no doubt that those who repented and were immersed in water they left their sins in River Jordan and went freely because during that time River Jordan was a dumping place for sins, so Jesus came to take away all the sins of men. Jesus had to go to Jordan in order to collect all people's sins which were dumped in the river by sinners so that he might take them all for crucifixion at the cross at Calvary.

Think of the pool at Siloam where people used to dump their diseases, John 9:7 *and told him, go and wash your face in the Pool of Siloam. (This name means Sent.) So the man went, washed his face, and came back seeing.*

Jesus had to pass there to collect their diseases which were being dumped their in order to set all the people free of their diseases who came to him. Think of someone now who goes to that pool so that he can be healed of his/her diseases, it's very impossible today because we are now healed by Jesus' name.

So, it is the same with river Jordan where Jesus went to collect all people's sins. This is the reason why John the Baptist said "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" when he saw Jesus coming toward him at river Jordan (which was the dumping place for people's sins). The first question here is 1. Why John the Baptist speaks such words at that place (river Jordan)? 2. Why John speaks of Jesus as the one who takes away sin of the world when he knew very well the people's sins were being taken away by river Jordan.

The answer to these questions is that this was the end of the power of river Jordan and the fact is that people had to stop going to the river for the forgiveness, this is why John was pointing to Jesus instead of the Jordan, so for the wise people who understood his speech, they left the river Jordan and followed Jesus Christ. *Matthew 3:5-6 says "People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River,"* then John the Baptist informed those people whom he was baptizing in river Jordan to look at Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins, *John 1:29 "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" It's so unfortunate to see people today putting their trust in physical water as their savior instead of Jesus Christ.*

More still, let us look back to the old covenant system of taking away people's sins which we very well know that it was a shadow of the new covenant system which is Jesus Christ.

In *Leviticus chapter 16:20:22*, we see how the system of forgiveness of sins was practiced where the goat took all people's sins to the desert and it died in the desert for people's sins. *"When Aaron has finished performing the ritual to purify the Most Holy Place, the rest of the Tent of the LORD's presence, and the altar, he shall present to the LORD the live goat chosen for Azazel. He shall put both of his hands on the goat's head and confess over it all the evils, sins, and rebellions of the people of Israel, and so transfer them to the goat's head. Then the goat is to be driven off into the desert by someone appointed to do it. ²² The goat will carry all their sins away with him into some uninhabited land".* This is the same way Jesus took peoples' sins into the desert. *Matthew 4:1 Then the Spirit led Jesus into the desert to be tempted by the Devil.*

Think of Aaron putting all the sins of the people of Israel on the head of an innocent goat and again think of John the Baptist putting all peoples' sins on the head of innocent Jesus, both the goat and Jesus went in to the desert, although the goat used to die from the desert, Jesus Christ did not die from the desert until he took the sins to the cross for crucifixion. Remember John the son of Zechariah

grandson of Aaron who were all Levities permitted by Moses' law to do the ritual of purification of people's sins, none of them was equal to John but Jesus is greater than him. *"Matthew 11:11 I assure you that John the Baptist is greater than anyone who has ever lived. But the one who is least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than John".* This is because John is the one who baptized Jesus, in doing so; he was putting all the sins of the world on Jesus. But where did He get the sins from? Because He was born with no sin yet he took sins to the cross. The answer is simple, He got the sins from River Jordan and these sins were put on him by the Levite Priest John the Baptist.

DO WE NEED WATER BAPTISM?

We no longer need water baptism in the Christian life. We need to enter into one baptism (SPIRITUAL BAPTISM) which is also received by women, because in the old Law of Moses, all women were excluded from the ministry of serving God that is why John's baptism never included women. But in Jesus' baptism, women are also baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. *Gal 3:28 "so there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles, between slaves and free people, between men and women; you are all one in union with Christ Jesus".*

In addition to the above, let us think of those people in prisons proven guilty waiting to be killed and those to be imprisoned for life, they need Jesus Christ but we very well know that the in charge of the prison can not allow anybody to be taken for immersion. More so, think about the patients in hospitals and those at home bed ridden ready to die, they also need Christ but it's impossible to take them to rivers and pools to be immersed, but remember Jesus said that the only way to the kingdom of God is by being born again by water and the Spirit. *John 3:5, "I am telling you the truth," replied Jesus, "that no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit".* This implies that the kind of baptism one has to receive to enter God's kingdom is not by immersion in water, but it is the confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord and that He is the one who died for our sins, *Romans 10:9-10 If you confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from death, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is by our faith that we are put right with God; it is by our confession that we are saved.*

We have an example of Paul who was baptized in the house, *Acts 9:17-18, "so Ananias went, entered the house where Saul was, and placed his hands on him. "Brother Saul," he said, "the Lord has sent me—Jesus himself, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here. He sent me so that you might see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ¹⁸At once something like fish scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he was able to see again. He stood up and was baptized;"*

WHY DO SOME PEOPLE IMMERSE IN WATER?

Let us look at what causes people to immerse others in water. When these people read the Scripture in John chapter 3:5, they think that JESUS was talking about the physical water, this is not true because John the Baptist stated it right that for him (John) was baptizing with water (physical) but Jesus was to baptize with the Holy Spirit. *John 1:32-33, "And John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come*

down like a dove from heaven and stay on him. ³³ I still did not know that he was the one, but God, who sent me to baptize with water, had said to me, 'You will see the Spirit come down and stay on a man; he is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' In addition to the above, Mathew3:11, again John said "I baptize you with water to show that you have repented, but the one who will come after me will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. He is much greater than I am; and I am not good enough even to carry his sandals." This means that there is a very big difference between John's baptism of physical water and the water which Jesus Christ is talking about.

WHICH TYPE OF WATER WAS JESUS CHRIST REFERING TO?

Let us now look at the type of water that Jesus Christ was talking about. It was spiritual water according to *John chapter 3:5* because in the same chapter in verse 6 he says "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Here Jesus was showing that human beings give birth to the flesh (the body) but God gives birth to the Spirit because God is Spirit (*John 4:24*). Therefore all those who are born by God, it's their spirits which have to be born again not their bodies, that is what they call the "Spiritual baptism" or being born again by water- which is the word of God and the Spirit which Jesus Christ was affirming.

We can also look back to God's holy prophets whom God showed this Spiritual water in those days, in the following verses:

Isaiah 43:19-21 See, I am doing a new thing!

Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

*I am making a way in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland.*

²⁰ *The wild animals honor me,
the jackals and the owls,
because I provide water in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland,*

to give drink to my people, my chosen,

²¹ *the people I formed for myself
that they may proclaim my praise (NIV)*

Isaiah 33:21 The LORD will show us his glory. We will live beside broad rivers and streams, but hostile ships will not sail on them (GNT VERSION)

Isaiah 8:5-8 The LORD spoke to me again. He said, ⁶ "These people have rejected the gently flowing water of Shiloah

and find joy in Rezin and Remaliah's son."

⁷ *That is why the Lord is going to bring against them
the raging and powerful floodwaters of the Euphrates River—
the king of Assyria with all his power.*

It will overflow all its channels and go over all its banks.

⁸ *It will sweep through Judah.*

It will overflow and pass through; it will be neck-high.

Its outspread wings will extend over your whole country, O Immanuel (GWT VERSION)

Isaiah 12:1-4, in that day you will say:

"I will praise you, LORD.

*Although you were angry with me,
your anger has turned away
and you have comforted me.*

² *Surely God is my salvation;*

I will trust and not be afraid.

*The LORD, the LORD himself, is my strength and my defense^[a];
he has become my salvation."*

³ *With joy you will draw water
from the wells of salvation.⁴*

*In that day you will say: "Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name;
make known among the nations what he has done,
and proclaim that his name is exalt*

Psalms 36:7-9, how priceless is your unfailing love, O God!

People take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

⁸ *They feast on the abundance of your house;
you give them drink from your river of delights.*

⁹ *For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light we see light.*

Psalms 23:1-2, the LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

² *He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,*

Ezekiel 47:1-12. Then he brought me back to the door of the temple; and there was water, flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east, for the front of the temple faced east; the water was flowing from under the right side of the temple, south of the altar.....

*Amos 8:11-12 "The days are coming," declares the Sovereign LORD,
"when I will send a famine through the land—
not a famine of food or a thirst for water,
but a famine of hearing the words of the LORD.*

All the above verses show that God's Prophets were prophesying about the spiritual water which was fulfilled by Jesus' words as we saw above in John's gospel.

So, when you read *Ezekiel Chapter 47:1-12* carefully, you can see that this water is the word of God which was to go all over the Nations producing large number of fish, meaning that the word of God was to gather a number of people, *Matthew 4:19, And He said unto them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."*

NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL WATER:

Our reference verse here is John Chapter 3:5 ⁵ "I am telling you the truth," replied Jesus, "that no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit.

This verse has the same meaning with the following:

John 7:37-39, "on the last and most important day of the festival Jesus stood up and said in a loud voice, "Whoever is thirsty should come to me, and ³⁸ whoever believes in me should drink. As the scripture says, 'Streams of life-giving water will pour out from his side.'"^[a] ³⁹ Jesus said this about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were going to receive. At that time the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not been raised to glory.

Ephesians 5:25-27, Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, to make her holy, cleansing^[a] her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

John 17:17, Sanctify them by your truth. Your word is truth.

1 John 5:6-8, Jesus Christ is the one who came with the water of his baptism and the blood of his death. He came not only with the water, but with both the water and the blood. And the Spirit himself testifies that this is true, because the Spirit is truth. ⁷ There are three witnesses: ⁸ the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and all three give the same testimony.

John 4:7-14⁷ A Samaritan woman came to draw some water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink of water." (⁸ His disciples had gone into town to buy food.)⁹ The woman answered, "You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan—so how can you ask me for a drink?" (Jews will not use the same cups and bowls that Samaritans use.)¹⁰ Jesus answered, "If you only knew what God gives and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you would ask him, and he would give you life-giving water."¹¹ "Sir," the woman said, "you don't have a bucket, and the well is deep. Where would you get that life-giving water?¹² It was our ancestor Jacob who gave us this well; he and his children and his flocks all drank from it. You don't claim to be greater than Jacob, do you?"¹³ Jesus answered, "Those who drink this water will get thirsty again, ¹⁴ but those who drink the water that I will give them will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give them will become in them a spring which will provide them with life-giving water and give them eternal life."

Revelation 22:1-3 The angel also showed me the river of the water of life, sparkling like crystal, and coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² and flowing down the middle of the city's street. On each side of the river was the tree of life, which bears fruit twelve times a year, once each month; and its leaves are for the healing of the nations. ³ Nothing that is under God's curse will be found in the city. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will worship him.

In all the above verses, we can conclude that the kind of water that Jesus Christ was taking about in *John 3:5* was Spiritual and everyone needed it and everyone still needs it in order to have his/her sins cleansed.

Therefore, I appeal to all my friends who are using the physical water (immersion) and are still having their sins to believe this spiritual water so that

their souls can be cleansed and purified, this will give you the confidence to stand before people and confess that you are holy. This is so because *Matthew Chapter 5:48* says "You must be perfect—just as your Father in heaven is perfect. You can not be perfect through immersion in the physical water, but you can be perfect through spiritual baptism after receiving the life giving water, that is the "word of God"

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