

Baptisms of the Bible

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The apostle to the Hebrews wrote, “Of the doctrine of baptisms...” (Hebrews 6:2). There are six baptisms mentioned in the word of God. Thus, we study.

Baptism of Moses. Paul reminded the Corinthians, “Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea” (1 Corinthians 10:1-2). This baptism took place in the Old Testament when the Israelites, fleeing from the Egyptians, “were under the cloud” and “passed through the sea”; “the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left” (Exodus 14:13-31).

Baptism of Suffering. Jesus asked the mother of Zebedee’s children, “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?” (Matthew 20:22). The Lord further revealed, “But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!” (Luke 12:50). The Lord would be completely overwhelmed, covered up and submerged in suffering, humiliation and ultimately death (Isaiah 53; Philippians 2:5-8; 1 Peter 2:21-25).

Baptism of John. John’s baptism was anticipatory and preparatory to the baptism which Christ would inaugurate in the Great Commis-

sion (Luke 1:17). The baptism of John derives its name from its administrator - John the Baptist. John is not called “the Baptist” because he belonged to the Baptist Church, for the Baptist Church did not come into existence until 1609 in Holland, but rather “Baptist” is the surname of John because he was a baptiser. John baptized “in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there” (John 3:23). The baptism of John was immersion as it required “much water” (John 3:23), and when Jesus was baptized of John, submersion is depicted (Matthew 3:16). John’s baptism was “the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins” (Mark 1:4). When folks refused to be baptized of John, they “rejected the counsel of God against themselves” (Luke 7:30). The baptism of John expired when Christ died (Acts 19:1-7).

Baptism of the Holy Spirit. John the baptiser declared, “There cometh one mightier than I after me, the lachet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost” (Mark 1:7-8). Holy Spirit baptism was administered by Christ (Matthew 3:11). It was promised by the Lord to the apostles (Acts 1:4-5), to guide them into all truth (John 14:26; 16:13). Baptism of the Holy Spirit was received by the apostles on “the day of Pentecost” as “they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit

gave them utterance” (Acts 2:1-4). Gentiles received “the like gift” in Acts 10-11 to convince the Jews, “Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life” (Acts 11:18). The baptism of the Holy Spirit has served its purpose and is no longer valid. One might as well expect to receive the baptism of Moses or be baptized of John as to expect to receive Holy Spirit baptism today.

Baptism of Fire. John said, “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me...shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire” (Matthew 3:11-12). The baptism of fire is yet future and refers to the overwhelming punishment at the end of time when men are cast into the lake of fire (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Revelation 20:10-15).

Baptism of the Great Commission. There are three accounts of Great Commission baptism: Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-47. From these accounts, we learn:

Great Commission baptism is for all nations: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them...” (Matthew 28:19).

Great Commission baptism is preceded by: Gospel teaching (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15),

faith (Mark 16:16), and repentance (Luke 24:47).

Great Commission baptism is by Heaven’s authority: “...in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 28:19).

Great Commission baptism is essential. It comes before “saved” (Mark 16:16) and “remission of sins” (Luke 24:47).

Great Commission baptism is followed by teaching. “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...” is for those baptized (Matthew 28:19-20).

Great Commission baptism began at Jerusalem: “And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke 24:49). This occurred in Acts 2 as “there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven” (Acts 2:5) and Peter preached, “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). Acts 2:41 reports, “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized...” (Acts 2:41).

While there are baptisms belonging to the past and one to the future, the baptism of the Great Commission is the “one baptism” of Ephesians 4:5 that will continue as long as the world stands and folks need to “be saved” (Mark 16:16).

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