

May God bless you on His Sabbath day!

Most probably do not give baptism much thought, especially if it was decades ago. There also seems to be few who are called these days so the topic does not come up very often. But because baptism is such an important milestone in the life every Believer, it seems appropriate to reflect upon it once in awhile, particularly before Passover.

Baptism is simply full immersion in water, which is the actual meaning of the word. As simple as it is, however, why is the physical act of being briefly submerged in water so important? What is the purpose of it? How does someone prepare for it? For that matter, is it really necessary for salvation? Before answering those questions, notice what baptism portrays:

ROMANS 6:4 ... **we were buried with Him [Jesus Christ] through baptism into death** ...

PHILIPPIANS 3:10 that I [Paul] may know Him [Jesus Christ] and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, **being conformed to His death [through baptism]**.

Baptism symbolizes being joined into the death of Jesus Christ. Why His death significant? Because His sacrifice dealt with the problem of sin, which prevents anyone from entering into a covenant with God¹. What is sin? It is transgression of the Law of God². The bad news is that the penalty for even one sin requires the death of the sinner³ and the *really* bad news is that *everyone* has sinned⁴. God says life is in the blood⁵; so the only way to pay for sins is by the shedding of blood by the sinner; that is, the sinner must die. Obviously, if the sinner is dead, there can be no covenant with God even though their shed blood paid for those sins.

That is the dilemma God faced—creating a family of eternal children who are all under the death penalty. The solution was a blood sacrifice of One who was sinless. And that was the greatest act of love of God the Father and Jesus Christ⁶. The really good news is that Jesus Christ was that sacrifice. He was born of flesh and blood, lived a life without ever sinning, and willingly suffered an excruciating death—all to shed His blood for the remission of the sins⁷:

2 CORINTHIANS 5:21 For He [God the Father] made **Him [Jesus Christ] who knew no sin to be sin for us**, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

COLOSSIANS 1:19-20 For it pleased *the Father* that in Him [Jesus Christ] all the fullness should dwell, 20 and by Him [Jesus Christ] **to reconcile all things** to Himself [God the Father], by Him [Jesus Christ], whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace **through the blood of His cross**.

¹ Refer to the Sabbath Thought on 2025-11-01, "[Is the New Covenant Really New?](#)"

² 1 John 3:4.

³ Rom. 6:23.

⁴ Rom. 3:23.

⁵ Lev. 17:11, 14; Deut. 12:23.

⁶ John 3:16.

⁷ Matt. 26:28; Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:22.

The singular and unique sacrifice of Jesus Christ at the hands of God the Father⁸ produced the only truly innocent, pure, and cleansing blood that can cover the sins of mankind. Because Jesus Christ never sinned, His shed blood can substitute for the blood that would otherwise be required of the sinner. However, God does not universally cover the sins of every sinner. He only does so for those who zealously and truly repent and desire to CHANGE their lives. And that is the purpose of baptism. It is an outward sign of those who deeply regret living in rebellion against God and desire the blood of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to wash away their sins so they can live in humble obedience to Him:

ROMANS 6:3-5, 8 Or do you not know that as many of us as **were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death**? 4 Therefore **we were buried with Him through baptism into death**, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should **walk in newness of life**. 5 For if we have been **united together in the likeness of His death**, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness* of His resurrection, ... 8 Now **if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him**,

2 TIMOTHY 2:11 *This is a faithful saying:* For **if we died with Him [Jesus Christ], we shall also live with Him**.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:14-15 For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; 15 and **He [Jesus Christ] died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again**.

Prior to baptism, all lived contrary to the Law of God. Those who sincerely and deeply desire to put aside their life of sin and “walk in newness of life”⁹ in obedience to God the Father will need to be baptized. The simple act of being briefly immersed in water reflects a heart that is humble and contrite¹⁰. Being contrite is a state of feeling or expressing remorse for being found guilty of sin. Such a person is not only remorseful but sincerely desires to CHANGE their life. Baptism is the act by which a person symbolically dies for their sins, has their sins washed away, is raised from ‘death’ to live a new life in obedience to God, and is forgiven of their sins by God the Father:

1 JOHN 1:9 If we confess our sins [*repentance*], **He [God the Father] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us [through baptism]** from all unrighteousness.

This is why the command is “repent and [*then*] be baptized.”¹¹ Repentance of sin is required before baptism. Even so, some have had concerns about sins that came to mind after baptism. To that point, baptism cleanses ALL sins. Not just those that were explicitly mentioned in prayers of repentance, but ALL of them:

1 PETER 3:21 There is also an antitype [*of Noah who was “saved through water”—v20*] which now saves us—**baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God)**, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

COLOSSIANS 2:11-14 In Him [*Jesus Christ*] you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, **by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh**, by the circumcision of

⁸ Isa. 53:4-11.

⁹ 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10.

¹⁰ Isa. 57:15.

¹¹ Acts 2:38

Christ, 12 **buried with Him in baptism**, in which you also were raised with *Him* through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having **forgiven you all trespasses**, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of [decrees or ordinances] that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

ACTS 22:16 ‘And now why are you waiting? Arise and **be baptized, and wash away your sins**, calling on the name of the Lord.’

After baptism, if sins come to mind, it is quite appropriate to ask God for peace that He has forgiven them. Remember the 3,000 people who were baptized on Pentecost at the preaching of Peter¹²? They did not spend days or weeks repenting of every sin. They were baptized because **they were convicted in their hearts to REPENT of living the WAY of sin**. They desired with all their being to turn from a life of rebellion and live according to the righteousness of God! The focus of repentance is **living a life of sin** against God. While specific sins are always part of repentance, no one can remember all their sins. Many are also likely sins of ignorance¹³.

Given what Jesus Christ endured so that His blood brings remission of sin, it is natural and appropriate that a person “call upon the name of Jesus.” Baptism reflects a deep desire of the heart of someone who is convicted of living in rebellion to God. Such a person is contrite and YEARNS to bury their life of sin in the grave of Jesus Christ and LONGS to be ‘resurrected’ unto a new life of love and obedience to God the Father and Jesus Christ! This is why baptism is required for salvation! In all regards, it is a physical act that demonstrates the need of the heart and mind of a person convicted of sin for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ! It is also a reminder of living as a New Creation and being perfected by God¹⁴:

2 CORINTHIANS 4:10 **always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus**, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

For some, baptism is something that happens soon after they were called¹⁵ and repented. Others need at least some framework for understanding the Gospel of the Kingdom as well as sin and the Law of God. When Paul first visited the Gentiles, they needed to be taught the basics¹⁶. Aside from that, someone is ready for baptism when they repent of living a life of sin and desire to be cleansed of sin so they can enter into a covenant of eternal life.

As mentioned in the beginning, baptism has links to Passover. After the Passover in Egypt when the ancient Israelites fled from Pharaoh and his armies, they passed through the Red Sea and were “baptized into Moses,”¹⁷ who was their mediator with God. Their baptism brought physical “salvation of the LORD”¹⁸ from the Egyptians. But a glaring omission in their baptism was a lack of repentance on the part of the people.

Aside from *mikveh* (ritual washings for priests and Gentile converts), repentance does not seem to be explicitly associated with baptism until John the Baptizer came upon the scene. He

¹² Acts 2:14, 37-38, 40-41. Also Acts 8:35-38.

¹³ Lev. 4; 1 Tim. 1:12-13.

¹⁴ Eph. 2:10; 1 John 4:12.

¹⁵ John 6:44.

¹⁶ Acts 18:8-11.

¹⁷ 1 Cor. 10:1-2.

¹⁸ Exod. 14:13.

was the prophesied “Elijah to come”¹⁹ who prepared a people for Jesus Christ. What did he do to prepare them? He called for the people to repent and be baptized:

MATTHEW 3:11 “I [*John the Baptizer*] indeed **baptize you with water unto repentance**, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. **He [*Jesus Christ*] will baptize you with the Holy Spirit** and fire.

Until then, repentance was associated mainly with animal sacrifices²⁰. Not only did John the Baptizer teach that repentance was through baptism, he emphasized that baptism would soon take on a much greater meaning and purpose *after* the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Although the baptism of John was “from heaven,”²¹ it lacked two very important components, as did the baptism of Moses. The first is that the Passover sacrifice of Jesus Christ made the eternal covenant possible because His blood not only provides for remission (cancellation) of sin but it is “forever.”²² This is why baptism explicitly symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (and why it is performed in His name²³). The second is the Holy Spirit that was sent by Jesus²⁴ after He was resurrected to eternal spirit. All baptisms are done in the name of Jesus Christ because His blood brings remission of sin and followed by receiving the Holy Spirit. Baptism was completely changed by the Passover because the solution to sin now has an eternal blood sacrifice. After the Passover, repentance is through baptism into the death, grave, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Moreover, a person is SEALED with the Holy Spirit²⁵ so they are always under GRACE, not condemnation of the Law²⁶! In simple terms, the Passover sacrifice of Jesus Christ changed the meaning and purpose of baptism!

Baptism fulfills a calling of God to repent of a life of sin, washing and cleansing of sins, putting to death the “old man,”²⁷ and being raised to a new life of becoming agape love in obedience to God. For those who were baptized years or decades ago, baptism is a special memory that will never be forgotten. It is an unforgettable symbol of that “first love”²⁸ for God the Father and Jesus Christ and the beginning of a new life. However, baptism is a serious matter because it means enduring trials and sufferings²⁹ and the cost must be considered³⁰. For those who are considering baptism, it is the beginning of a becoming a New Creation that will be manifested at the return of the One whose name is salvation—Jesus The Christ!

May God’s grace and peace be upon you!

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¹⁹ Matt. 11:14; 17:10-12.

²⁰ Lev. 4.

²¹ Matt. 21:25.

²² Heb. 10:12.

²³ Refer to the booklet, “[Baptism in the Name of Jesus](#)” for more information.

²⁴ John 15:26; 16:7.

²⁵ Also 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30.

²⁶ Rom. 6:1-22.

²⁷ Col. 3:9-10.

²⁸ Rev. 2:4.

²⁹ 2 Tim. 2:12; 3:12; 1 Pet. 1:3-7; 2:21.

³⁰ Luke 14:26-28.