

# FOUNDATION MINISTRIES (UK)

## Apostolic Ministry to the Body of Christ

EXPOSITORY & INSPIRATIONAL TEACHING & SERMON NOTES

**Subject: - Great Christian Doctrines**

**Study: - 003. Water Baptism**

As we begin to study the teaching of Believers Water Baptism, we should firstly look at the commandment Jesus gave to His disciples. Just prior to being taken up into heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father, Jesus instructs His disciples, **Matthew 28:19** "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:" & **Mark 16:15-19** "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God."

To fully understand our subject of Water Baptism we need to go back beyond the call of John the Baptist to the nation of Israel to repent and be baptised, and go into the Old Testament. **Mark 1:4** "John did baptise in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."

### WATER BAPTISM UNDER THE OLD COVENANT

We find that Water Baptism was not solely associated with converts in the New Covenant or Testament, for it was practised under the Old Covenant for those embracing the Law. Paul mentions the act of baptism under the Old Covenant in his epistle to the Corinthian Church, **1 Corinthians 10:1-4** "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 baptised unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;** And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." The children of Israel were all baptised by the LORD unto Moses (The Law of God or the Word of God) in the Cloud. **Exodus 13:21** "And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night:"

Moses is the representation of the Law of God, God's Word. The two witnesses that stand before the God of the Whole Earth are the Word and the Holy Spirit. **Zechariah 4:14; Matthew 17:3; Revelation 11:3-6;**

- **The Word of God** was revealed within the ministry of Moses with the giving of the commandments **Exodus 19:3-8**. Also the authority of the Word of God (the Rod of God) being witnessed with the parting of the Red Sea, **Exodus 14:16;** and the striking of the rock to bring forth water, **Exodus 17:5-6**.
- **The Work of The Holy Spirit** was revealed within the ministry of Elijah with the Fire of God consuming the sacrifice laid on the Altar at Mount Carmel, **1 Kings 18:37-38**. Again demonstrated with the meal that was in the barrel and the oil that was in the cruse, of the widow of Zarephath, which never failed during the harsh famine, **1 Kings 17:16;** Further, with the parting of the river Jordan, **2 Kings 2:8**.

The Cloud represented a visible presence of the LORD amongst His people, **Exodus 19:9** "And the LORD said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the LORD." & **Leviticus 16:2** "And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat."

The children of Israel were therefore baptised unto Moses by God in the cloud in the midst of the Red Sea. Baptism identified the children of Israel with obedience to the Word of God and their desire to follow in God's ordained Will for their lives, by keeping His commandments and living in accordance with His precepts.

The children of Israel could have stayed on the other side of the Red Sea and chosen not to submit to Moses leadership, whom God had anointed as their leader and His representative. In submitting to God's Will and the leadership of His servant Moses, they passed through the Red Sea, leaving behind their old life in Egypt and the oppression they suffered under Pharaoh. Having passed to the other side they thereby showed they were being

prepared to embrace the promises of God under the leadership of His servant. They could have doubted the Word of God given to them through His servant, and stayed in Egypt. Yet, in faith they took a step onto the dry bed of the Red Sea, with the waters banked up on either side of them and crossed to the opposite bank embracing the Law and Promises of God. **Exodus 19:5-8** *"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD."*

Baptism was and is still practised when non-Jews convert to Judaism. Once a person has decided to convert, the proselyte must begin to learn Jewish religion, law and customs and begin to observe them. After the teaching is complete, the proselyte is brought before a rabbinical court, which examines the proselyte and determines whether he or she is ready to become a Jew. If the proselyte passes this oral examination, the rituals of conversion are performed. If the convert is male, he is circumcised (or, if he was already circumcised, a pinprick of blood is drawn for a symbolic circumcision). **Both male and female converts are immersed in the mikveh (a ritual bath used for spiritual purification).**

The convert is given a Jewish name and is then introduced into the Jewish community. In theory, once the conversion procedure is completed, the convert is as much a Jew as anyone who is born to the religion. **However, it is important to remember that Abraham himself was a convert, as were all of the matriarchs of Judaism, as was Ruth, an ancestor of King David.**

The mikveh can be any body of natural water, though the term usually refers to a specific pool that is built for the purposes of ritual purification. The equipment used varies according to the mikveh. The immersion ceremony usually starts with cleaning the body by a shower. The person is covered and the covering removed as the person enters the warm mikveh waters, which are usually about four feet deep. (When the ceremony is done in a public place such as a lake the candidate wears a loose-fitting garment). Blessings are recited and the person goes into the water.

According to traditional Jewish law, **three male witnesses must be present**, although this rule has been reinterpreted so that, in some movements, Jewish females can be witnesses. When there are male witnesses and the candidate is female, the witnesses wait outside the mikveh room and are told by a female attendant that the immersion has been completed and the blessings recited. **Deuteronomy 19:15** *"One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established."* & **Ruth 4:9-11** *"And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi. Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day. And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou worthily in Ephrathah, and be famous in Bethlehem:"* Water Baptism should not be a private or hidden ceremony but witnessed by fellow believers and unbelievers. **Matthew 18:16** *"But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."*

John in his first epistle states there are three bear witness on the earth, **1 John 5:8** *"And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one"*, and this witness is demonstrated by Christ's Church and clearly seen through;

- the work of the Holy Spirit in a believers life,
- the act of water baptism,
- with the celebration of the Lord's Supper where the blood of Jesus speaks of forgiveness and fellowship,

We can now see that water baptism is clearly associated with conversion. The children of Israel had been caught up in the occult teachings of Egypt during the four hundred years they dwelt there. **Exodus 12:40-41** "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt." God delivered the children of Israel out of the occult practises of the Egyptians, and as He led them through the Red Sea there they were baptised by the LORD unto Moses (The Law of God or the Word of God) in the Cloud. **Exodus 13:21** "And them the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night:" Sadly we can see traces of this occult practise still evident at the base of Mount Sinai. **Exodus 32:7-8**, "And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." This resulted in Moses breaking the tablets of stone upon which were written the commandments and waiting until the judgement of God had been enacted and Moses intercession accepted on behalf of the nation before he received the second set of tablets, **Exodus 32:35**. "And the LORD plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made." Moses was called by God again to come up into the mount to receive the commandments afresh on the two new tablets of stone. **Exodus 34:1-2**, "AND the LORD said unto Moses, Hew thee two tablets of stone like unto the first; and I will write upon these tablets the words that were in the first tablets, which thou didst break. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto the Mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in top of the mount."

## MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

John the Baptist was ordained and sent by God to call the backslidden nation of Israel to repentance, and make their hearts ready to receive the ministry of Jesus. They had forsaken the Laws of God and were no longer walking in accordance with the law of righteousness. **Mark 1:1-11** "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. 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. And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey; And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet 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. And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Jesus submitted to John's baptism, even though He was the Son of God and yet He became the Son of man. In obedience to the Word of God preached by John the Baptist for the nation of Israel to repent of their sins and be baptised, Jesus accordingly submitted to this ordinance of water baptism. Had Jesus not submitted to water baptism under John the Baptist, he would have been in breach of the ordinances and the laws of God, and would have been guilty of sin, but Jesus above all desired to do the will of God the Father? Those of the Old Covenant Priests being under the Law were not permitted to own their own property, as they were to be totally dependant upon the provision of God through His People Israel. Like wise Jesus not wanting to offend the law and statues did not own a house, being the Great High Priest of a better covenant. **Matthew 8:20**, "And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." John the Baptist was reluctant to baptise Jesus and said, **Matthew 3:13-15** "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan unto John, to be baptized by him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Permit it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him"

The Pharisees and Sadducees because of their own self-righteousness thought they were above the law and could not see the need to submit to John's baptism and repent of their sins. **Matthew 3:7** "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath

warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Luke 7:29-30 "And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. **But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him."**

When the chief priests and the elders challenged Jesus by what authority he did the things that he did, and who gave him that authority to do them Jesus replied to them, **Matthew 21:25-27** "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things." Many times Jesus found himself in conflict with the Pharisees who accuse Him and His disciples of not washing their hands when they ate, which was an oral tradition of the Elders and not contained in the written Law as given by Moses, therefore Jesus warns His disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which was unbelief, and He says to them, **Luke 12:8-9** "Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God." The act of water baptism is confessing Jesus before all men and we of a certainty can be sure that Jesus will confess us before His angels.

The mother of the apostles James and John came to Jesus and asked him that it might be granted for her two sons to sit one on His right hand and the other his left in His kingdom. Jesus replied to her, **Matthew 20:22-23** "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. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." As we see by the replies from both James and John that they considered themselves both able to drink the cup from which Jesus was to drink and to be baptised with Jesus baptism.

- **The Cup** represents ones lot in this life which has been chosen by God and by us drinking from the cup we acknowledge our willingness to receive and do God chosen will for our lives.
- **The Baptism** represents our total submission and thereby our willingness to be totally immersed into God's chosen will for our lives, thereby to be separated from our own desires, ambitions (our own fleshly desires). At baptism there has to be the death of the carnal nature and desires, death of our old ways, **Romans 6:4** "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." James was to die by the sword and John suffered imprisonment on the Isle of Patmos, for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

There were some who experienced John's baptism and yet had not moved forward into the full blessing in Christ Jesus, and one such person being Apollos, **Acts 18:24-25**, "And a certain Jew, named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John." Aquilla and Priscilla took time to show Apollos the way of God more perfectly. The result was that Apollos preached that Jesus was the Christ, and won a great many Jews to Christ.

Paul finds some of John's disciples at Ephesus and baptises them in the name of the Lord Jesus, **Acts 19:3-5**, "And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." These disciples being Jews accepted Paul's counsel and believed in the finished work of Christ on the cross for the remission of sins, and Paul immersed them into the perfect and complete will of God for their lives in Christ Jesus.

## **JESUS COMMAND US TO BAPTISE ALL THOSE WHO BELIEVE**

Jesus command his disciples to go and teach, and then baptise all those that believed, **Matthew 28:19-20** "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

**John 4:1-2** "When therefore the LORD knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)"

Jesus did not baptise any person in water, for He alone baptises the believer in the Holy Spirit, **Luke 3:16** "John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:" & **John 1:33** "And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost".

Firstly there had to be the teaching that brings the conviction of sin in the hearts of men and women bringing forth the fruits of repentance unto conversion, and only then follows the baptism in water. Baptism in water does not bring about the conversion of the heart. Some Religious Cults preach that baptism alone is sufficient to bring about conversion and acceptance into God's Kingdom and Eternal Life. They are sadly misled and mistaken for there can be no faith created in the heart of man without the preaching of the gospel of Christ, thereby bringing about repentance. Jesus said to his disciples to go and teach and then baptise, **Matthew 28:19** "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit"

Paul tells the Roman Christians, **Romans 10:8-10** "But what if? (the scriptures) The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 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. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation"

The Ethiopian eunuch who had come to Jerusalem to worship was reading the scriptures on his return journey in the desert of Gaza, when the Lord directed Philip to his side to help him understand the scriptures, **Acts 8:28-30** "Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Isaiah, the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to the chariot. And Philip ran there to him, and heard him read the prophet, Isaiah, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?" **35-39** Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, See here is water. What doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptised him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing".

When we look at these verses we see;

- Firstly the word was preached unto the Ethiopian eunuch.
- Secondly he believed in his heart and confessed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God.
- Thirdly he was then was baptised in water (totally immersed) at his own request.
- Fourthly those who drove the chariot witnessed his baptism.

Peter when preaching at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost said to the great crowd, **Acts 2:5**. "And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven") that they must repent and be baptised. **Acts 2:38** "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 2:41 "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls"

Philip went into the cities of Samaria preaching Christ and baptising all those that believed. **Acts 8:12-13** "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done."

Paul, whilst preaching at Corinth baptises the chief ruler of the synagogue, **Acts 18:8** "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." Paul seeks to put baptism into its right context to the Church at Corinth. In that it is not a mystical rite that has any special powers or the person conducting the baptism is not able to pass on any greater blessing than any other minister. The blessing that comes in baptism is the result of the person who chooses to submit to God's will and publicly acknowledge that they have fully dedicated and surrendered their life to Christ, being dead to walking in their old paths of self fulfilment and self desire, but now to follow in His footsteps. **1 Corinthians 1: 13-17**, Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. 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." & **Romans 6:3-4**, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." & **Galatians 3:27** "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

There is one Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ, and not one of us are privileged to have a different faith or a different baptism, **Ephesians 4:5** "One Lord, one faith, one baptism," **1 Corinthians 12:13**, "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."

Paul (Saul of Tarsus) mighty as he was in God's service had no special baptism, but that which is common to all believers. **Acts 9:18** "And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized."

The Lord's words to Paul through his servant Ananias were, **Acts 22:16** "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

- **Peter baptises Cornelius, Acts 10:47-48**, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days."
- **Paul baptises Lydia and her household Acts 16:14-15** "And a certain woman, named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, who worshipped God, heard us; whose heart the LORD opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken by Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us."
- **Jailer at Philippi and his household are converted and baptised. Acts 16:33** "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway."

Water baptism follows conversion and it is not infant baptism with the sprinkling of water by a priest. The scriptures speak of children being dedicated unto the LORD just after their birth when the parents want to return thanks to God for the safe delivery of the mother and the precious gift of the child. This involves no more than the servant of God bringing them before the Lord with a prayer of thanksgiving and pronouncing a blessing, as was the case with the parents of Jesus, **Luke 2:21-35**, circumcision being an act required under the Law, but not under the gospel of grace.

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