

The WildBranch Ministry

...thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Romans 11:18

Baptism

Part 5

In the beginning YHVH cleansed the earth and all that is contained in it. God begins with a washed and cleansed world. He cleansed that which is natural first. This was a picture for all mankind to see so that man would be able to comprehend what God does to that part of us that is unseen, that which is eternal.

2Corinthians 4:18

*"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are **seen** are **temporal**; but the things which are **not seen** are **eternal**."*

The law of like kind producing like kind tells us that only that which is eternal and unseen can bear that which is eternal and unseen. Renegenerating our spirit can only be accomplished by spirit. The area of the mind and body is where we come in. Now that that which is eternal has been cleansed, that which is temporal can now respond to that change.

1Corinthians 2:11-12

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."

One of the things that makes man unique from animals and rocks is that man has a 'spirit'. According to Rav Sha'ul the 'spirit of man' is given so that man might know the things of man. Once again, like kind begets like kind. The spirit of man gives man the unique opportunity to be able to invent, to plan, to ponder, to design and put things in order, to purposely travel across town to rescue someone. The Spirit of God however, is given so that the man who

receives Him can know the things of God. This 'Spirit' becomes one with the spirit of man (1Corinthians 6:17). Only the Spirit of God can wash and cleanse the spirit of man so that man might know Him. This is a baptism only God can perform.

However, God's children are designed like the tabernacle in the wilderness. God begins with the ark in the Most Holy Place and then moves toward the court, or that part of the tabernacle which is SEEN. The court, or our bodies, are designed to reflect the essence of that which is unseen. Every time we wash ourselves, we are to be reminded of what our Savior has accomplished in our Holy of Holies. So, Brad, are you saying that water baptism is just for show. *Chalilah!* God forbid. Water baptism is a commandment from YHVH.

Vayikra 8:5-6

*"And Moses said unto the congregation, This is the thing which YHVH commanded to be done. And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and **washed them with water.***

Mattityahu 3:14-15

*"But Yochanan forbad him, saying, I have need to be **baptized** of thee, and comest thou to me? And Y'shua answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to **fulfil all righteousness.** Then he suffered him.*

What God has done in us, that only He could do, is present in the seed of the woman, which is what was planted in our hearts. That is why the Word of God has to begin in our hearts. It has never begun anywhere else. ALL things that come forth from a believer from that point on comes from the heart. The heart contains the seed and then we produce fruit. No or little fruit is a matter of obedience. Here are but a few examples of the fact that God has ALWAYS begun with the cleansing of the heart.

Sh'mot 25:2

*"Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his **heart** ye shall take my offering."*

Sh'mot 28:29

*"And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his **heart**, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before YHVH continually."*

D'varim 4:29

*"But if from thence thou shalt seek YHVH thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy **heart** and with all thy soul."*

D'varim 6:5-6

*"And thou shalt love YHVH thy God with all thine **heart**, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine **heart**:"*

According to the parable of the sower, which is the most important parable to understand according to Mark, the fruit you produce is the evidence of what has taken place in the heart first. The God of Abraham, through His omniscience, understood the importance of our immersion in water in the natural. God has designed the natural and spiritual laws and ordinances to play a symbiotic role in the kingdom. The spiritual cannot have completed purpose or expression without the natural and vice versa. So, in my mind the debate concerning whether water baptism is a requirement for salvation or not, is an attempt on both sides of the controversy, to skirt the whole purpose of this cleansing. Immersion in water is a commandment that is self-evident. When something is wrong on the inside, it manifest itself on the outside. God is simply showing us a picture of this. God shows us this in nature by designing an unseen tomatoe seed in the ground to produce tomatoes. The intrinsic difference between you and I, and a tomatoe plant, is that we get to choose whether we produce fruit or not.

One of my fundamental beliefs is that God is very smart, and we as humans are most fortunate that God has chosen to share some of His intelligence with us. I think that choosing the natural activity of washing ourselves to represent what He has done in the unseen is, well, pretty clever and insightful. I believe that God in His mercy chose a simple, almost everyday activity to show forth what He has done for us. Why would someone NOT want to be baptized? Is it too

much to handle? Is it just too bizarre? Our Father has painted a beautiful yet simple picture of His rescue of mankind. A picture that began in B'reshiyt chapter one and has remained constant throughout the scriptures. Immersion into the natural flowing waters is not a Christian thing. It is a God thing. I have attempted to lay some fundamental pillars down concerning this issue. I would now like to spend the rest of this series discussing some of the controversial texts such as full immersion or sprinkling, and is baptism essential to your salvation. Most Christian Bible teachers also refer to baptism as a strictly Christian rite. Is that true? We will conclude with a study of baptisms mentioned in Hebrews chapter six. If there are other specific areas concerning baptism that you would like to see covered, please do not hesitate to email me.

Shalom Alecheim!

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