

By Joseph F. Dumond

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Genesis 38

I have said in the past that I wanted to do this 3 ½ year Torah study in alignment with the Sabbatical cycle. I did not know why but I suspected I would be shown certain things at certain times which we could not know unless we got on Yahovah’s time schedule.

I have been very hard on the teachings of Judah the past month. So now we are about to read about the story of Judah; interesting. I had not planned this.

The first thing we are told is that Judah married a Canaanite woman which you are not to do. We were told in Gen 24 how Abraham made his servant promise not to take a wife from amongst the Canaanites for Isaac. Then in Chapter 28 we read again how Isaac charged Jacob not to take a Canaanite for a wife. Yet here we read how Judah did this exact thing.

Then each of his boys dies and leaves no heir.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamar \(Genesis\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamar_(Genesis))

In Genesis chapter 38, Tamar is first described as marrying Er, the eldest son of Judah;[2] according to the text, God killed Er because he was wicked (although it doesn’t give any further details),[3] and so Judah asked his second son, Onan, to have sex with Tamar, so that the offspring could be declared Er’s heir.[4] The narrative implies that Onan didn’t object to the sex itself, but performed coitus interruptus so that there wouldn’t be any offspring he couldn’t claim as his own, so God killed him.[5] Judah is portrayed as viewing Tamar to be cursed, and is therefore reluctant to give her to his remaining son, Shelah;[6] he first tells Tamar to act like a widow, until Shelah, the youngest son, has grown up,[6] and then when he finally does, he still won’t give Tamar to Shelah in marriage.[7]

According to the text, after Judah’s own wife had later died,[8] he decided to use a prostitute at Enaim; the prostitute in question was Tamar, who wore a veil, making herself unrecognisable. [9] The passage goes on to state that Judah offered to pay her a goat in arrears, but she asked for Judah’s staff and seal as security towards this payment;[10] having given her this security, he made her pregnant,[11] but when he later sends the goat, she has gone and taken the seal and staff with her.[12] The text states that three months later, Judah is told that Tamar had been acting as a prostitute, and had become pregnant as a result, so he orders that she should be burnt to death;[13] Tamar sent a message to Judah with his signet ring and cords and staff; and announced that the owner of the items is the father of the children. Judah recognises them, stating that she is more righteous than he is. Judah, afterwards, takes her in to his house, but does not have any more sexual relations with her. Tamar later gives birth to twins (Pharez and Zerah). Pharez is in King David’s lineage.

Beginning in verse 27 we read about the twins that Tamar now was about to give birth to. This short section is so important that volumes have been written about it. We have covered much of this in the series of articles to be found at https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon_2015/?page_id=595 titled The Throne of Britain: Its Biblical Origin and Future.

I urge you all to read this entire series as it so important that you know who and where the Jews are and who has the promised sceptre promise. One of the people who recently wrote to me was claiming as does much of Judah that they have the sceptre promise and therefore the rest of us must listen to them because this gives them the right to make the laws. This is the exact thing I have been arguing against this past month. Judah does not have the right to change the laws. Levi was placed in charge of the Torah not Judah. But here we are about to see where that sceptre promise is. For from these two lines of Perez and Zerah have come all the Kings of Israel and as promised to King David his line would never lack someone to sit upon the very throne of David. So where is that Jewish King today? Will Judah submit to their rule over them?

Psalms 89:20-37 I have found My servant David; with My holy oil I have anointed him.... 27 Also I will make him My firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth. 28 My mercy I will keep for him forever, and My covenant shall stand firm with him. 29 His seed also I will make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. 30 If his sons forsake My law and do not walk in My judgments, 31 if they break My statutes and do not keep My commandments, 32 then I will punish their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. 33 Nevertheless My lovingkindness I will not utterly take from him, nor allow my faithfulness to fail. 34 My covenant I will not break, nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips. 35 Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David: 36 His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me; 37 it shall be established forever like the moon, even like the faithful witness in the sky. Selah

So where is that throne today; that Davidic throne? Queen Elizabeth the 2nd now sits on this very throne. She is the direct descendant from King David and She is Jewish. Surprised, you would not be if you studied those things I have urged you to read.

The line of Perez came to an end with the last king of Judah.

The last king of Judah was the third son of Josiah, and his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah, and hence he was the brother of Jehoahaz (2Kg 23:31; 2Kg 24:17f). His original name was Mattaniah; but when Nebuchadnezzar placed him on the throne as the successor to Jehoiachin he changed his name to Zedekiah.

The prophet Jeremiah was his counsellor, yet "he did evil in the sight of the Lord" (2Kg 24:19f; Jer 52:2f). He ascended the throne at the age of twenty-one years. The kingdom was at that time tributary to Nebuchadnezzar; but, despite the strong remonstrances of Jeremiah and others, as well as the example of Jehoiachin, he threw off the yoke of Babylon, and entered into an alliance with Hophra, king of Egypt. This brought up Nebuchadnezzar, "with all his host" (2Kg 25:1), against Jerusalem.

During this siege, which lasted about eighteen months, "every worst woe befell the devoted city, which drank the cup of God's fury to the dregs" (2Kg 25:3; Lam 4:4ff). The city was plundered and laid in ruins. Zedekiah and his followers, attempting to escape, were made captive and taken to Riblah. There, after seeing his own children put to death, his own eyes were put out, and, being loaded with chains, he was carried captive (B.C. 588) to Babylon (2Kg 25:1ff; 2Chr 36:12; Jer 32:4ff; Jer 34:2f; Jer 39:1ff; Jer 52:4ff; Ezek 12:12), where he remained a prisoner, how long is unknown, to the day of his death.

After the fall of Jerusalem, Nebuzaraddan was sent to carry out its complete destruction. The city was razed to the ground. Only a small number of vinedressers and husbandmen were permitted to remain in the land (Jer. 52:16). Gedaliah, with a Chaldean guard stationed at Mizpah, ruled over Judah (2Kg 25:22ff; Jer 40:1ff).

Jeremiah took the Kings daughter and brought her to Ireland where she would be married into the line of Zerah which then flowed to Scotland and then down to Queen Elizabeth of England. We can easily see the red Hand of Ulster with its cord tied around the fingers symbolic of this birth of Zarah. You can read more about this red cord in history at

http://parowanprophet.com/Great_Seal/british_symbols-2.htm

There is so much to say on this subject. I must leave the rest to your own research.

2 Samuel 3

In this chapter we read how Abner recruits all of Israel who are under Ishbosheth's rule after the death of Saul, to come and join up with David after 7 years of civil war. Abner was Sauls general and now Ishbosheth until they had a falling out.

It was during this civil war that the back of the spear went through Asahel the brother of Joab David's General which we read about in Chapter 2.

David made a covenant with Abner and Joab found out and tricks Abner to come back to Hebron where he kills him. David did not know about it and states so publicly so all of Israel knew of David's remorse at the death of a great man as he says in verse 38.

This evil thing of killing Abner was done by Joab like an honour killing to avenge the death of Asahel. Abner was an innocent victim here. The death of Asahel was during a war battle and Asahel was trying to kill Abner.

However, according to Josephus, in Antiquities, Book 7, Chapter 1, Joab had forgiven Abner for the death of his brother, Asahel, the reason being that Abner had slain Asahel honorably in combat after he had twice warned Asahel and had no other choice but to kill him out of self-defense. If this was the case, the reason Joab killed Abner may have been that he became a threat to his rank of general, since Abner had switched to the side of David and granted him control over the tribe of Benjamin. Yet the narrative explicitly states that Joab killed Abner "to avenge the blood of his brother Asahel" (2 Samuel 3:27).

After leading the assault on the fortress of Mount Zion, Joab was promoted to the rank of General (1 Chronicles 27:34). He led the army against Syria, Ammon, Moab and Edom. He also took part in David's murder of Uriah (2 Samuel 11:14-25).

Joab played a pivotal role as the commander of David's forces during Absalom's rebellion. Absalom, one of David's sons, rallied much of Israel in rebellion against David, who was forced to flee with only his most trusted men. However, David could not bring himself to harm his son, and ordered that none of his men should kill Absalom during the ensuing battle. However, when a man reported that Absalom had been found, alive, caught in a tree, Joab and his men killed him (2 Samuel 18:1-33).

David later replaced him as commander of the army with his nephew, Amasa (2 Samuel 17:25; 19:13). Joab later killed Amasa (2 Samuel 20:8-13; 1 Kings 2:5).

On the brink of death, David told Solomon to have Joab killed citing Joab's past betrayals and the blood that he was guilty of, and for this Solomon ordered his death by the hand of Benaiah (1 Kings 2:29-34), who then replaced him as commander of the army. Joab was buried in 'the wilderness' (1 Kings 2:34). It is interesting to note that Joab fled

to the Tent of the Tabernacle and told Benaiah that he will die there. Benaiah, as ordered by King Solomon, kills Joab in the House of Yahweh.

The Tent of the Tabernacle at this time was in the Kidron Valley right in front of the Gihon Spring. If you have been there then this is where the construction entrance to the Jebusite Gates is just before you go into Hezekiah's

Tunnel. Psalm 78

<http://www.ucg.org/brp/brp.asp?get=daily&day=30&month=August&year=2005&Layout=>

“Again and Again They Tempted God” (Psalm 78) August 29-31

Like Psalm 74, Psalm 78 is a maskil—an instructional psalm or “contemplation” (NKJV)—of Asaph. In this closing psalm of the first cluster of Book III, the second-longest psalm in the Bible, Asaph reflects on God's faithfulness despite Israel's history of rebellion against Him— and on God's decision to dwell with Judah rather than with Israel at large. Where the KJV and NKJV have “my law” in verse 1, the NIV has “my teaching,” as the Hebrew word torah means instruction—principles to understand and live by, thus a law for life (compare Proverbs 1:8; 3:1; 4:2).

In Psalm 78:2, “the terms parable and dark sayings or riddles indicate sayings with ‘deeper meanings’ or ‘teachings with a point’ (Prov. 1:6)” (Nelson Study Bible, note on Psalm 78:1-2). The apostle Matthew quoted Psalm 78:2 as a prophecy of Jesus' use of parables (Matthew 13:34-35)—using stories to teach lessons. In Psalm 78 the story is that of Israel's history—a pattern followed by Christ's disciple Stephen in his message of Acts 7.

The general instruction here is not new, Asaph explains, as it was to have been passed down from one generation to the next so that succeeding generations would come to know God's laws and learn from the mistakes of past generations who failed to follow these laws (Psalm 78:3-8). Asaph is participating in this passage of instruction on a broad scale through the composition and performance of his psalm for the national audience.

Yet what may be new, the more subtle point of the psalm, as we will see, concerns the shift of the center of God's worship and of civil rule from the northern tribes to Judah. This is first hinted at in verses 9-11. The tribe of Ephraim son of Joseph here, as the leading tribe in Israel, was representative of the nation of Israel in general, particularly the northern tribes. Indeed,

the mention of Ephraim in verse 9 with respect to a battle may be specific. The Expositor's Bible Commentary states: “From the description of God's judgment on Israel, on Shiloh ([the site of His tabernacle through the period of the judges] located in the mountains of Ephraim), and, particularly, on Ephraim (vv. 56-64, 67), the psalmist may be thinking of the Philistine incursion and victory at Ebenezer, which resulted in the loss of the ark and the destruction of Shiloh (1 Sam 4:1-11)” (note on Psalm 78:9).

The loss at Shiloh, due to Israel's refusal to obey God, was a momentous development, as the psalm later points out. Yet it followed a pattern of Israel's rebellion since the nation's deliverance from Egypt, which is recounted in the psalm. (Zoan in verses 12 and 43 was an Egyptian city in the Nile Delta.)

Despite God's awesome deliverance (verses 12-16), the Israelites rebelled in the wilderness, trying God's patience (verses 17-18). Though He had divided the Red Sea, they didn't believe He would provide food and drink for them in the desert. They thought they would starve because of His “deliverance” (see Exodus 16). And when He did provide, they were later unsatisfied with what He gave them (see verses 18-22)—even though He gave them manna, the “bread of heaven...angel's food” (verse 24), which Jesus later explained was symbolic of Himself given for others to partake of in a spiritual sense (see John 6). So God gave them what they craved—sending birds in abundance to

provide them with meat—but He struck them with a plague for their voracious lust and outrageous ingratitude (Psalm 78:26-31). The full account of this episode is found in Numbers 11.

“In spite of this,” says Psalm 76:32, the Israelites continued to sin against God, not believing “in His wonderful works” (Psalm 78:32). How is this possible when they saw the supernatural intervention with their own eyes? Perhaps some did not trust what they had seen—or they willfully forgot. Yet on a wide scale this probably means that the people did not retain confidence in these things as proof of God’s care for them or an indication that He would judge evil the next time as He had before. This too is a form of forgetfulness. In Hebrews 3:12-13, Christians are warned against following the Israelites’ example in developing an “evil heart of unbelief...hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”

Because they didn’t believe Him, God caused the Israelites to spend the rest of their days “in futility” and “fear” rather than entering the Promised Land (Psalm 78:33). For 40 years they wandered, seeking God then forgetting Him and becoming unfaithful (verses 34-42). Yet in His compassion, God averted His wrath on many occasions, remembering “that they were but flesh” (verses 38-39). God is still the same merciful God, for which we can be ever thankful (compare Malachi 3:6).

Again, at the root of the Israelites’ unfaithfulness was their failure to remember—in the way they should have—God’s power as exercised to deliver them from their enemies (Psalm 78:42). Asaph, expressing what parents should have been teaching their children, again recounts God’s striking of Egypt to free His people and His driving out of the Canaanites to give His people the Promised Land (verses 43-55). Having come to “His holy border” in verse 54, “this mountain” in the same verse is evidently the whole land of Israel (as mountains often represent nations in Scripture).

Even in the Promised Land, the people “turned back and acted unfaithfully like their fathers” (verse 57). A major reason is probably that succeeding generations failed to pass on what God did for the nation—and to pass on God’s laws. Verses 58-59 show that the Israelites sank into syncretistic and idolatrous practices, which infuriated God.

We come, then, to verse 60. Because of their pattern of unfaithfulness, God forsakes the tabernacle at Shiloh, allowing the enemy Philistines to capture, for a period of time, “His strength...and His glory” (verse 61)—referring to the Ark of the Covenant (compare 1 Samuel 4:22). Many Israelites were killed in the battle, including the high priest Eli’s wicked sons Hophni and Phinehas (see Psalm 78:62-64; 1 Samuel 4).

In Psalm 78:65-66, God is portrayed as afterward rousing Himself and, with a great shout, beating back His enemies, putting them to a “perpetual reproach.” Asaph is speaking of events leading up to the time he wrote this, essentially describing God leading Israel to defeat its enemies in the time of King David, creating an ongoing period of Israelite peace and triumph under Solomon.

As part of this process, Asaph says that God “rejected the tent of Joseph, and did not choose the tribe of Ephraim, but chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Zion which He loved, and He built His sanctuary like the heights” (verses 67-69). Thus, the center of worship is moved from the tabernacle of Shiloh in the territory of Ephraim to the temple of Jerusalem in the land of Judah.

Focus is also placed on God choosing David, of Judah, as king over all Israel (verses 70-71). David’s demeanor and care-giving knowledge as an actual shepherd of sheep was valuable training for shepherding God’s people on behalf of God Himself, the great Shepherd (see Psalm 23).

Yet there may be much more to this psalm. After all, Psalm 78:2 is prophetic of Christ’s parables. His parables mostly concerned His servants and the Kingdom of God. Might there be a Kingdom parable here in Psalm 78?

Certainly the need to remain faithful to God and His continual faithfulness to forgive upon repentance are Kingdom themes. But there may be more.

The exaltation of Judah as God's dwelling in Psalm 78 would take on greater meaning after the division of the kingdom into north and south upon Solomon's death and the subsequent apostasy of the northern kingdom. As the prophet Hosea would later write in Hosea 11:12: "Ephraim has encircled Me with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit [following Israel's historical pattern in Psalm 78—see especially verse 36]; but Judah still walks with God, even with the Holy One who is faithful." Judah was in essence the faithful remnant of Israel. But Judah would later apostatize as well. Even then, however, an elect few remained as the true Jews, so to speak—the true Jews of today, the elect remnant according to grace, being God's Church (compare Romans 2:28-29; 11:5).

In that sense, God building His sanctuary on Mount Zion could today figuratively represent the building of His spiritual temple, the spiritual Zion. Indeed, the psalm could be seen, in type, as showing the center of God's worship being moved from the physical nation of Israel to the spiritual remnant of Israel. Yet in looking forward to God's Kingdom, we should understand that the people of spiritual Zion will be established at the earthly Zion and all Israel will ultimately be saved—no longer enslaved to the pattern outlined in this psalm. David in the concluding verses of Psalm 78 is in this picture representative of the rulers of God's coming Kingdom, especially the chief ruler, David's descendant Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd who will reign from the throne of David over all nations. David himself and all the saints will then reign with Him in perfect integrity and skill.

Mark 16- Luke 1:26

In Mark 16 the one verse that jumps out me in this study is verse 16: 16 "He who has believed and has been immersed, shall be saved, but he who has not believed shall be condemned.

Then for the rest of this study we are told about the conception of John the Baptiser who is described in Luke 1: 16 "And he shall turn many of the children of Yisra'el to Yehovah their Elohim. 17 "And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of ?liyahu, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the insight of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for Yehovah."

We are told in Malachi 4: 4 "Remember the Torah of Mosheh, My servant, which I commanded him in H?or?b? for all Yisra'el – laws and right-rulings. 5 "See, I am sending you ?liyah¹ the prophet before the coming of the great and awesome day of Yehovah. Footnote: 1Lk. 1:17. 6 "And he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with utter destruction¹." Footnote: 1Zech. 14:11. What does this mean.? 16 "He who has believed and has been immersed, shall be saved Even though we are believers we still have to commit to water baptism. A mikvah.

Before the Torah was given at Sinai, all of Israel was commanded to immerse themselves in preparation for coming face to face with Yahovah. Exodus 19: 10 And Yehovah said to Mosheh, "Go to the people and set them apart today and tomorrow. And they shall wash their garments, 11 and shall be prepared by the third day. For on the third day Yehovah shall come down upon Mount Sinai before the eyes of all the people

And Aaron and his sons' induction into the priesthood was marked by immersion in the mikvah.

Leviticus 8: 4 And Mosheh did as Yehovah commanded him, and the congregation was assembled at the door of the Tent of Meeting. 5 And Mosheh said to the congregation, "This is the word Yehovah commanded to be done." 6 So Mosheh brought Aharon and his sons and washed them with water,

In Temple times, the priests as well as each Israelite who wished entry into the Temple had to first immerse in a mikvah.

On Yom Kippur, the holiest of all days, the High Priest was allowed entrance into the Holy of Holies, the innermost chamber of the Temple, into which no other mortal could enter. This was the zenith of a day that involved an ascending order of services, each of which was preceded by immersion in the mikvah. Leviticus 16: 1 And Yehovah spoke to Mosheh after the death of the two sons of Aharon, as they drew near before Yehovah, and died. 2 And Yehovah said to Mosheh, "Speak to Aharon your brother not to come in at all times to the Set-apart Place inside the veil, before the lid of atonement which is on the ark, lest he die, because I appear in the cloud above the lid of atonement. 3 "With this Aharon should come into the Set-apart Place: with the blood of a young bull as a sin offering, and of a ram as a burnt offering. 4 "He should put on the set-apart linen long shirt, with linen trousers on his flesh, and gird himself with a linen girdle, and be dressed with the linen turban – they are set-apart garments. And he shall bathe his body in water, and shall put them on.

When we are baptised or mikvahed we are cleansing ourselves, our old sinful natures. Just as Israel passed through the Red Sea and once they come out the far side they were able to see the sin that pursued them washed away when the Sea closed up upon the Egyptian army.

In the end times when we see Jerusalem surrounded by armies we are to flee towards the East, to Moab and when we do we will have to cross the Jordan River. Once again we will be symbolically mikvahed, just as Joshua was when he and all of Israel crossed over the Jordan to enter the Promised Land.

By doing this we will be washing away our sins, our old way of life. The Egyptian way of life, the Babylonian system that seeks to keep us enslaved in its system of government and religions which are against Yehovah.

We are to be baptised to remove sin from us and to make room for the Holy Spirit to come into us. We must ask for this. The Holy Spirit will not force itself upon you like Satan and sin do. Even though you ask you must also do this outward presentation of actually being mikvahed or baptised.

In 2 Kings 5 we read about Naaman. 1 And Naaman, commander of the army of the sovereign of Aram, was a great man in the eyes of his master, and highly respected, because by him Yehovah had given deliverance to Aram. And he was a brave man, but leprous.

When Naaman came to be healed he wanted or expected some great thing to be done for him because he was a great leader.

10 And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go, and you shall wash seven times in the Jordan, that your flesh might be restored to you, and be clean." 11 But Naaman became wroth, and went away and said, "See, I said to myself, 'He would certainly come out to me, and stand and call on the Name of Yehovah his Elohim, and wave his hand over the place, and recover the leprosy.' 12 "Are not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Dammeseq, better than all the waters of Yisra'el? Could I not wash in them and be clean?" And he turned and went away in a rage. 13 And his servants came near and spoke to him, and said, "My father, if the prophet had spoken to you a great matter, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, 'Wash, and be clean?'" 14 Then he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of Elohim. And his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

Yahovah has said through the Gospel of Mark that you must believe and be immersed, and then you shall be saved. It is really that simple.

You must humble yourself and be baptised even after you have come to believe. But some will say I was baptised as a child or I was saved at some alter call, or I was baptised by such and such a group or I was already baptised once. Once saved always saved they will say.

But you have forgotten. In Jerusalem the Jews mikvaed regularly in order to be purified. They did it each time they went to the Temple. The Priest did it as often as they needed and the High priest did it at least once a year on atonement. Knowing all this read now acts 1:3 to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them for forty days, speaking concerning the reign of Elohim. 4 And meeting with them, He commanded them not to leave Yerushalayim, but to wait for the Promise of the Father,¹ “which you have heard from Me – Footnote: 1Lk. 24:49, John 14:16 & 26. 5 because Yoh?anan truly immersed in water, but you shall be immersed in the Set-apart Spirit not many days from now.” 6 So when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Master, would You at this time restore the reign to Yisra’el?”¹ Footnote: 1Lk. 1:33. 7 And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. 8 “But you shall receive power when the Set-apart Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses in Yerushalayim, and in all Yehud?ah and Shomeron, and to the end of the earth.”

Although we are baptised in water, the symbolism is that we being baptised into the Holy Spirit.

Now read carefully Acts 2: 1 And when the Day of the Festival of Weeks had come, they were all with one mind in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from the heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and settled on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Set-apart Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them to speak. 5 Now in Yerushalayim there were dwelling Yehud?im, dedicated men from every nation under the heaven. 6 And when this sound came to be, the crowd came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. 7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying to each other, “Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? 8 “And how do we hear, each one in our own language in which we were born? 9 “Parthians and Medes and ?ylamites, and those dwelling in Aram Naharayim, both Yehud?ah and Kappadokia, Pontos and Asia, 10 both Phrygia and Pamphulia, Mitsrayim and the parts of Libya around Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Yehud?im and converts, 11 “Cretans and Arabs, we hear them speaking in our own tongues the great deeds of Elohim.” 12 And they were all amazed, and were puzzled, saying to each other, “What does this mean?” 13 And others mocking said, “They have been filled with sweet wine.” 14 But K?pha, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and said to them, “Men of Yehud?ah and all those dwelling in Yerushalayim, let this be known to you, and listen closely to my words. 15 “For these men are not drunk, as you imagine, since it is only the third hour of the day. 16 “But this is what was spoken by the prophet Yo’el: 17 ‘And it shall be in the last days, says Elohim, that I shall pour out of My Spirit on all flesh. And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams, 18 and also on My male servants and on My female servants I shall pour out My Spirit in those days, and they shall prophesy. 19 ‘And I shall show wonders in the heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: blood and fire and vapour of smoke. 20 ‘The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and splendid day of Yahovah. 21 ‘And it shall be that everyone who calls on the Name of Yahovah shall be saved.’¹ Footnote: 1Joel 2:28-32, Rom. 10:13. 22 “Men of Yisra’el, hear these words: Yeshua of Natsareth, a Man from Elohim, having been pointed out to you by mighty works, and wonders, and signs which Elohim did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know, 23 this One, given up by the set purpose and foreknowledge of Elohim, you have impaled and put to death through the hands of lawless men – 24 “Him Elohim raised up, having loosed the pangs of death,

because it was impossible that He could be held in its grip. 25 "For Dawid says concerning Him, 'I saw Yehovah before me continually, because He is at my right hand, in order that I should not be shaken. 26 'For this reason my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad, and now my flesh shall also rest in expectation, 27 because You shall not leave my being in the grave, nor shall You give Your Kind One to see corruption. 28 'You have made known to me the ways of life, You shall fill me with joy in Your presence.'¹ Footnote: 1Ps. 16:8-11. 29 "Men and brothers, let me speak boldly to you of the ancestor Dawid, that he died and was buried,¹ and his tomb is with us to this day. Footnote: 1See v. 34. 30 "Being a prophet, then, and knowing that Elohim had sworn with an oath to him: of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, to raise up the Messiah to sit on his throne, 31 foreseeing this he spoke concerning the resurrection of the Messiah, that His being was neither left in the grave, nor did His flesh see corruption. 32 "Elohim has raised up this Yeshua, of which we are all witnesses. 33 "Therefore, having been exalted to the right hand of Elohim, and having received from the Father the promise of the Set-apart Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. 34 "For Dawid did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself said, 'Yehovah said to my Master, "Sit at My right hand, 35 until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet." '1 Footnote: 1Ps. 110:1. 36 "Therefore let all the house of Yisra'el know for certain that Elohim has made this Yeshua, whom you impaled, both Master and Messiah." 37 And having heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to K?pha and the rest of the emissaries, "Men, brothers, what shall we do?" 38 And K?pha said to them, "Repent, and let each one of you be immersed in the Name of Yeshua Messiah for the forgiveness of sins.¹ And you shall receive the gift of the Set-apart Spirit. Footnote: 1See 2:40, 3:19, 3:26. 39 "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are far off, as many as Yehovah our Elohim shall call." 40 And with many other words he earnestly witnessed and urged them, saying, "Be saved from this crooked generation."¹ Footnote: 1Jer. 51:6, Phil. 2:15, Rev. 18:4. 41 Then those, indeed, who gladly received his word, were immersed. And on that day about three thousand beings were added to them. 42 And they were continuing steadfastly in the teaching of the emissaries, and in the fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers. 43 And fear came upon every being, and many wonders and signs were being done through the emissaries. 44 And all those who believed were together, and had all in common, 45 and sold their possessions and property, and divided them among all, as anyone might have need. 46 And day by day, continuing with one mind in the Set-apart Place, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47 praising Elohim and having favour with all the people. And the Master added to the assembly those who were being saved, day by day.

First thing you need to take note of is that this happened on the Feast of Weeks, which is Pentecost. It is the exact same time when Yahovah came to Israel at Mount Sinai and spoke directly to them. Israel was to clean themselves before Yahovah came.

For the Feast of Weeks the Israelites would have cleansed themselves in preparation for the Holy Day.

At Sinai the Torah was given to Israel and on the exact same day The Holy spirit was given as we have just read.

What did those who heard and saw this event take place say? And having heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to K?pha and the rest of the emissaries, "Men, brothers, what shall we do?" 38 And K?pha said to them, "Repent, and let each one of you be immersed in the Name of Yeshua Messiah for the forgiveness of sins.¹ And you shall receive the gift of the Set-apart Spirit. Footnote: 1See 2:40, 3:19, 3:26. 39 "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are far off, as many as Yehovah our Elohim shall call."

Brethren I was born and raised Catholic. So I would have been baptised by sprinkling of water on my head when I was a child. That really does not amount to anything as it does not conform to what we are told to do. To humble ourselves and be completely immersed in living waters.

When I joined the World Wide Church of God in 1982 I was not allowed to keep Passover in 1983 unless I was a baptised member. I wanted to take part in Passover so bad that I was baptised by emersion in a horse trough the week before that year and I thought I only had to do this once forever. I began to learn about Yahovah over the next 22 years.

In 2005 I had the urge and desire to know more. The spirit in me was becoming restless. In 2006 I mikvahed in the Gihon Spring in living waters. Then I had men lay hands on me and ask Yahovah to bless my gifts and talents for the benefit of His Kingdom. I had no idea at the time what had just happened as from that moment on my life was changed. I could no longer be quite about those things I was learning and this quickly got me kicked out of the United Church of God. Although at the time I was upset, it was a blessing as it caused me to begin the web site www.sightedmoon.com that very same week. In March of 2007 I began a weekly News Letter which I thought I could do for just 7 weeks. That Newsletter has grown from about 100 emails addresses to over 11,000 at one time and this Newsletter is being read around the world each week since then. It is translated into many other languages by people who are also moved by Yahovah's Ruach.

That same spirit has shown me in 2005 how to know which Moon to be used to begin the month; A teaching which no one had published before that time. It then showed me in 2005 about the Sabbatical and Jubilee years; again a teaching that no one had taught before this time. Then in 2009 the Ruach ha Kodesh showed me the Prophecies of Abraham and since then how much of the scriptures is tied into the understanding of the Sabbatical and Jubilee cycles. The Holy Spirit has blessed me in the ability to show people those things in Jerusalem about the Temple and where it was and the Crucifixion and burial place of Yahshua.

Because of that Mikvah in 2006; since I was rebaptised at Sukkot in 2006 and I have mikvahed each year in the Gihon which were and are the living waters that flowed from beneath the very throne of Yahovah in Jerusalem; since that time of my mikvah into the name of Yahovah I have gone from sitting in a pew to teaching many brothers and sisters. It is as if a great power has come along and blessed me in many areas. In areas I could never have done on my own.

Brethren AS Peter has said and as the scriptures show us, each of you needs to be rebaptised each year in living waters and you need to have someone lay hands on you in the name of Yahovah the creator of all, so that you can go out and do the will of the Father in power and might. Baptism is not a onetime event. Please go and do it again.

When you do this then you will be turning your heart to the Father in heaven and as He sees you drawing near to Him His heart will turn towards you again. And by doing this you will avoid the curse that is going to come upon all the earth.

You can read more about it at <http://www.gnmagazine.org/issues/gn67/baptism.htm> Baptism: Beginning of a New Life

Previous articles in this series have covered the vital spiritual tools of prayer, Bible study, meditation, fasting and repentance. But to receive the greatest gifts of God, there is another step you must take—the commitment of water baptism. by Don Hooser

The greatest gifts anyone can receive come “from above”—from our Creator God (James 1:17). And God offers us two gifts that are by far the most important that any human being can receive in this life. The first gift is the forgiveness of sins. The second is the indwelling presence of God's Holy Spirit.

In turn, these two gifts make possible the greatest gift of all, which is eternal, glorified life after death in the everlasting Kingdom of God (Romans 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:50-58).

Countless people are confused, thinking they have already received God's forgiveness when they haven't, and thinking they already have God's Holy Spirit when they haven't. This article will help you to know one way or the other.

First, it is always God who must initiate a relationship with Him. Jesus said, "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws [or calls] him" (John 6:44). God calls a person by causing him to hear the true gospel while at the same time opening up his mind to spiritual understanding (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14).

There is nothing we can possibly do to earn eternal life, but God does have conditions that we must fulfill. The last article in this series focused on one of those conditions—real heartfelt repentance over having disobeyed God's laws. Another condition is faith in God—trusting in Him and believing His Word, the Bible. Jesus Christ emphasized these two conditions during His ministry (Mark 1:15).

What shall we do?

But for us to receive forgiveness and the gift of the Holy Spirit, more is required than just repentance and faith. In Acts 2, we read a summary of the apostle Peter's inspired sermon. He explained that the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ was necessary to pay the penalty for our sins. It is our sinfulness that was responsible for His suffering. In essence, "you crucified" Him (Acts 2:36).

Notice the reaction of the listeners: "Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?'" (verse 37, emphasis added throughout). They knew God would require them to do certain things if they were to be given eternal life.

"Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission [forgiveness] of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'" (verse 38). Peter made it clear that we must receive two things to be reconciled to God— forgiveness and the Holy Spirit.

Peter said we must first repent. But Peter didn't mention the other condition, which is faith. Why not? The very question "What shall we do?" showed Peter that the people believed in his message and in the Scriptures. They wanted to know what they should do next to act on that faith!

Therefore, once a person mature enough to make important lifelong decisions has a basic spiritual understanding of and belief in the "gospel," meaning the good news of the coming Kingdom of God and His plan of salvation, God urgently desires to see him or her repent and be baptized as soon as is practical. Then he can receive the forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit.

What is baptism?

The Greek word translated "baptize" is baptizo, the common Greek term for immerse, submerge or put into. So most English Bibles merely anglicize the word to a slightly different spelling rather than translate it. The important point is that, in the Bible, "baptize" always means immerse.

Other authors of the time write of naval battles in which ships were "baptized"—completely sunk—in the sea. Therefore, it is nonsensical to say one can baptize (immerse or submerge) by pouring or sprinkling. The Bible itself proves that baptism meant immersion. John the Baptist needed "much water" for baptizing (John 3:23). Jesus, when John baptized Him, "came up immediately from the water" (Matthew 3:16). When Philip baptized the eunuch, they "went down into the water" (Acts 8:38).

Afterwards, “they came up out of the water” (verse 39).

Why is this important? Because of what baptism represents. Being put into and under water pictures a burial, and rising from the water pictures a resurrection.

Baptism actually pictures three deaths, burials and resurrections. First, baptism symbolizes our faith “that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

Second, it symbolizes our acknowledgement of the need for our old sinful way of life to be “put to death” and be buried forever (Colossians 3:5; 2:12). And our rising from the water symbolizes our beginning to “walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:3-6). Of course our spiritual character isn’t immediately transformed in those few seconds. Baptism is a sign of our lifelong dedication and commitment to that goal.

Third, baptism symbolizes one’s faith in the hope of the literal resurrection to come—“that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust” (Acts 24:15).

Baptism: Much more than a ceremony

Symbolism is important, but baptism is much more than symbolism. If you were to ask 100 people who are seeking to be baptized, “Have you ever asked God to forgive you?” probably 99 would say yes. Then ask the 99, “Do you think God answered those prayers and forgave you?” Maybe 98 of them will say yes. Then ask them, “So why be baptized if God has already forgiven you, since Acts 2:38 says that the purpose of baptism is to have your sins forgiven?”

Most people are confused. Even when they realize baptism is a biblical requirement, they think of it as a mere ritual of thanksgiving for God’s forgiveness. But Acts 2:38 states that baptism is a required condition for forgiveness. Before forgiveness, God requires this public profession of commitment to Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord (meaning Master—to rule over our lives, Luke 6:46).

Many have misinterpreted 1 John 1:9, which says, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Most people fail to realize that the New Testament epistles were written primarily to Church members—those who had already been baptized. In the epistles, the pronouns “we” and “us” refer to baptized members; “they” and “them” usually refer to nonmembers.

Therefore, 1 John 1:9 tells us that if a person who has received initial forgiveness through baptism sins after that, he does not need to be baptized again and again. Each subsequent time he sins, he only needs to repent of that sin, confess it to God and ask God’s forgiveness—and God will immediately forgive. This is one of the awesome privileges a person has once he has been baptized!

This explains why baptism is so important! God holds each person guilty of every sin he has ever committed until those sins are blotted out at baptism (Acts 3:19; 22:16). At the moment the repentant person is immersed in water, all his past sins are forgiven! What a joy it is to stand clean before God!

The next step: Receive God’s Holy Spirit

Once a person has been baptized, he is ready to receive God’s Holy Spirit. The Bible shows that the Holy Spirit is the spiritual essence and power that emanates from God the Father and from Jesus Christ. Many are surprised to find that the Bible never mentions a Trinity. Indeed, careful study shows that the traditional formulations of men are quite different from the biblical teaching. (For a definitive scriptural study, read our free booklet *Who Is God?*)

The gift of the Holy Spirit does not come during the baptism. Scripture shows that God gives it immediately afterwards during the laying on of hands by one of God's ministers as he prays for the baptized person to receive the gift of God's Spirit (Acts 8:14-17; 19:6; 2 Timothy 1:6).

Once you have the Holy Spirit, you have "Christ in you" (Colossians 1:27). You are "baptized into Christ" (Galatians 3:27). You abide in Christ and He abides in you (1 John 3:24). You are among the "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). You have a "new heart" and are becoming a "new man" (Ezekiel 18:31; Ephesians 4:24).

"For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body . . . the body of Christ" (1 Corinthians 12:13, 27). That "body" is the Church—the "church of God" (Colossians 1:18; 1 Corinthians 1:2). We cannot "join" the Church of God. God adds us to it when He gives us the gift of His Spirit. We are then members of God's Church (1 Corinthians 12:27).

"Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His"—he doesn't belong to Christ (Romans 8:9). He is not a true Christian or "son of God" (verse 14). To become a real Christian, you must believe, repent, be baptized, experience the laying on of hands from one of God's ministers, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Once a mature person has spiritual understanding and faith and has repented of his sins, he should not delay baptism. When God is offering you a gift, why not accept it? Jesus warned against rejecting God's offer: "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16). As Ananias said to Saul (whose name was changed to Paul), "And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins" (Acts 22:16).

After one receives the Holy Spirit, that is when real spiritual growth begins! The next article in this series will explain much about what a baptized member should do to grow spiritually. GN