

John the Baptist's Introduction of Christ, continued

Matthew 3:11, 12

Mark 1:7, 8

Luke 3:15-18

John 1:19-28

John the Baptists Introduction of Christ, continued

Introduction:

I. Introduction to the words “baptize” (verb) and “baptism” (noun).

A. The word “baptism” is one of many words in the New Testament which was not translated into English for us but was only transliterated.

1. To translate a word from another language into English translators look for an English word that means the same thing and use it for their translation.

2. If this had been done with “baptism”, then “baptism” (the Greek word) would not be in our bibles, because translated it means “immersion” in English.

3. Thus, we have “John the Immerser.”

4. But the English translators when they came to the word “baptism” (the Greeks would have written “baptisma”) did not translate it at all, but simply exchanged the Greek letters for English letters, creating a brand new word in the English language.

5. This is called “transliteration.”

6. By bringing letters from one language into another, a new word is created which can be defined anyway the transliterators and readers afterward want.

7. This is why there is still discussion over what the English word baptism means; it is not an English word and never should have been brought into our language!

8. It should have been translated into an English word (in this case “immerse”).

9. To illustrate, if the same thing had been done to the Greek word for “God” (Theos) then “God” would not be in the Bible, only the Greek letters Theos, and that is what we would call our heavenly Father.

10. So when we see the word “baptism” or “baptize” in the Bible, it may not be obvious what the passage means unless we realize that what the original text really says is “immersion” (baptism, the noun) or “immerse” (baptize, the verb).

11. If you want an idea of what these words can mean, look up *immersion* or *immerse* in an English dictionary.

12. Immerse is defined as: (1) To cover completely in a liquid or submerge; (2) To baptize by submerging in water; (3) To involve profoundly, totally include or absorb.

13. All three of these definitions appear to be used in the New Testament.

Baptizing With the Holy Spirit

Text:

Matthew 3:11, 12, “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

Note: We begin with the premise that: **there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all . . . Ephesians 4:5-6.**

Commentary:

I. The terms baptism (immersion) and baptize (immerse) are used in several different contexts in the New Testament.

A. The children of Israel were with Moses when they were immersed in the cloud and the sea. The sea rose up on both sides of them and the cloud was overhead. **1 Corinthians 10:2, They are all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.**

B. baptism of suffering. **Mark 10:38, 39, “You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said. “Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?” “We can,” they answered. Jesus said to them, “You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with.”**

C. baptism for the dead. **1 Corinthians 15:29, Now if there is no resurrection, what will those do who are baptized for the dead?**

If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized for them?

D. baptism of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 3:11, “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.”

E. baptism of fire. Matthew 3:11, “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.”

F. baptism of John the Baptist. Matthew 3:11, “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.”

G. baptism of the great Commission. Mark 16:15, 16, He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. Matthew 28:18-20, Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. Ephesians 4:5, one Lord, one faith, one baptism.

II. Christ Jesus was immeasurably superior to John. John had no problem with this.

III. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was present on Pentecost and at the conversion of the household of Cornelius.

A. Acts 1:5, For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

B. Acts 2:4, All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

C. Acts 11:15, 16, As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. Then I remembered what the Lord had said; ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’

IV. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is named twice in the New Testament.

A. Acts 2

B. Acts 10

V. The Indwelling of the Spirit is frequently mentioned in the New Testament.

A. Acts 2:38, Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

B. Acts 19:1-6, While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” They answered, “No, we

have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” So Paul asked,

D. “Then what baptism did you receive?” “John’s baptism,” they replied. Paul said, “John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.” On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

E. John 3:5, Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.

F. John 7:38, 39, “Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

G. Titus 3:5, he saved us, not because of righteous things we have done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

VI. The baptism of fire is hell.

A. Revelation 21:8, But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars – their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.

VII. Jesus, in regard to the wicked, has his fan in his hand and he will thoroughly cleanse the threshing floor.

- A. fan-judgment
- B. wheat-just people
- C. chaff-unjust people
- D. fire-hell, gehenna
- E. threshing floor – Palestine or the entire world
- F. the one with the fan – Jesus Christ

VIII. God classifies people into only two groups; viz.,

- A. good-bad
- B. wheat-chaff
- C. sheep-goats

Text:

Mark 1:7, 8, And this was his message: “After me will come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.

Commentary:

I. A latchet is a thong or strap that secures a sandal to the foot.

II. John did not feel he was qualified to bend down as a servant/slave and loose the thongs of Jesus' sandals.

Text:

Luke 3:15-18, The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Christ. John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." And with many other words John exhorted the people and preached the good news to them.

Commentary:

I. John was having remarkable success in his ministry.

A. People in expectation of the coming of the Messiah thought that John might be the Christ.

B. John 1:18-28, No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known. Now this was John's testimony when the Jews of Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Christ." They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the desert, 'Make straight

the way for the Lord.” Now some Pharisees who had been sent questioned him, “Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” “I baptize with water,” John replied, “but among you stands one you do not know. He is the one who comes after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.” This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

C. Isaiah 9:6, 7, For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

D. Amos 9:13-15, “The days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when the reaper will be overtaken by the plowman and the planter by the one treading grapes. New wine will drip from the mountains and flow from all the hills. I will bring back my exiled people Israel; they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink their wine; they will make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant Israel in their own land, never again to be uprooted from the land I have given them,” says the Lord your God.

II. Jesus gathers the saved into his garner, granary, storehouse.

III. John used every honorable technique available to him to preach good tidings to the multitudes.

Text:

John 1:19-28,

19. Now this was John's testimony when the Jews of Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was.

20. He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Christ."

21. They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No."

22. Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

23. John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the desert, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'"

24. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees,

25. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, niether that prophet?

26. John answered them, saying, I baptize with water; but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;

27. He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchest I am not worthy to unloose.

28. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Commentary:

I. John witnessed, told what he knew to be fact about Jesus and himself.

A. Religious leaders sent Jerusalem priests and Levites to ask John, "Who are you?"

B. John readily confessed that he was not the Christ. John was for real; he was no pretender.

C. By the time the Gospel of John was written “priests and Levites” were synonymous with the enemies of Christianity as they had been instigators of the crucifixion.

D. Most priests were Sadducees and it is noteworthy that Sadducees and Pharisees joined forces here to “check on John.”

D. Bitter enemies united in their opposition to Jesus and his herald.

II. Having said he was not the Christ, the priests and Levites questioned John further.

A. Are you Elijah? John said he was not the literal prophet Elijah.

1. **Matthew 17:12, But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.**
2. The popular idea was that Elijah would literally be resurrected before the coming of the Messiah.
3. In view of the context in which the question was asked, John’s answer was absolutely correct.

B. Are you the prophet?

1. This is a reference to the prophet like Moses who must be identified with the Messiah. Are you the Christ?
2. **Deuteronomy 18:15-18, The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. For this is what you**

asked of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, “Let us not hear the voice of the Lord our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die.” The Lord said to me: “What they say is good, I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him.

3. John again answered correctly, honestly and factually.

C. “Who are you?” They demanded an answer to take back to their superiors.

1. John replied, “I am a preacher in the wilderness (literally and figuratively, a wilderness of sin) calling people to repentance and Godly living just like Isaiah did centuries before.”

2. **Isaiah 40:3, A voice of one calling: “In the desert prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God.**

3. **Matthew 3:3, This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: “A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”**

4. **Mark 1:3, “A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”**

5. Luke 3:4, As is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: “A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”

III. Certain men who had been questioning John had been sent by the Pharisees.

A. The reason the interrogation of John continued with such intensity and for a longer period of time was because these men were Pharisaical emissaries and were acting as their representatives.

B. The cleansing of the nation was clearly prophesied by Ezekiel as a prelude to the coming of the Messiah.

C. They must have been greatly concerned about John’s work because of this.

D. Ezekiel 36:25, Than will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

E. Ezekiel 37:23, Neither shall they defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.

F. Isaiah 40:3, The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

IV. These men asked John, “If you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, neither the prophet, why do you baptize?”

A. The “expected prophet” was the Messiah Christ.

B. By what right, reasons do you baptize in view of the fact that you are not the Christ, Elijah nor one of the other illustrious Old Testament prophets?

C. In other words, by what right, authority do you preach and baptize since you are a “nobody.”

V. John replied,

A. “I baptize **in** water.”

1. “In” clearly signifies immersion in this passage.

B. “In the midst of you stands one whom you don’t know.”

C. “He is the one that comes after me.”

D. “I am not worthy to loose the latchet of his shoe.”

E. John was preaching repentance and baptizing people to make them ready to receive the Messiah when he would shortly be revealed.

1. John by all means at his disposal pointed everyone to the Christ.

VI. These things were done in Bethany beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

A. This was the Bethany east of the Jordan River, not the Bethany near Jerusalem on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives.

B. While the exact location of this Bethany is not known, Hendricksen placed it thirteen (13) miles south of the Sea of Galilee and twenty (20) miles southeast of Nazareth.

John's Introduction of Christ

Questions

1. John said, "I _____ you with _____ for _____ . After me will come a person who will _____ you with the _____ and with _____."

2. Jesus, the one who was foretold by John, will gather his _____ into the _____ and will _____ up the _____ with _____ .

3. Seven baptisms as mentioned in the New Testament; viz., _____ unto _____, _____ of _____, _____ for the _____, _____ of the _____, _____ of _____, _____ of _____ the _____ and _____ of the _____ .

4. The _____ of the _____ was present on _____ and at the _____ of _____ .

5. Why did John baptize? _____

6. Who was John the Baptist? What was his mission? _____
