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THE DAYS OF AWE AND REPENTANCE

WATER BAPTISM – PART 2

Yesterday I wrote of the fact that some Jews during the Days of Awe (Repentance, Admitting, Returning) would choose to be immersed in a body of water as a symbol of washing their sins away. This is what we call “water baptism.”

When John the Baptist preached repentance and the coming of Messiah, all his converts were baptized by immersion. John even baptized Jesus. During Jesus’ ministry, his twelve disciples baptized those who chose to follow Jesus. Later on, we see Peter baptizing the household of Cornelius. Philip baptized the Ethiopian in the desert where God provided a pool of water.

Saul (Paul) was baptized in Damascus as soon as he was converted. Paul baptized Lydia’s household. Certain men, disciples of John the Baptist, had been baptized unto repentance by John, but when they were told of Jesus by Paul in Acts 19:1-2 they received salvation and they were re-baptized in the name of Jesus.

We are commanded in the New Testament to be baptized in water. (Acts 2:38.) All new believers of the apostle’s time were baptized in water. It must be pointed out that all baptisms were by immersion (whole body under the water). It is a public testimony that they have identified as a believer on Jesus Christ. When one goes fully down into the water, it symbolizes the death of Jesus and being put down in the grave with Jesus. When one comes up from the water, it symbolizes being raised up to the new life found in Jesus’ resurrection.

The symbolic testimony of death and burial, then resurrection to identify with Christ is only found by immersion. It cannot be found in “sprinkling.” The so-called baptism by sprinkling of water is NOT biblical baptism. If you have only been sprinkled, then you have not been scripturally baptized regardless of what your church or your pastor might tell you. Ask them where in the bible does one find “sprinkling?”

The only sprinkling found in the Bible is in the Old Testament and it was done only once a year on the Day of Atonement. The High Priest (and nobody else) would dip his hand in the blood of a sacrificed bull and sprinkle the blood with his fingers seven times on the horns of the altar in the Holy place of the Temple.

If you have never been baptized by immersion, you should seek out someone to baptize you in the biblical manner. That is an act of obedience to God’s word. If you refuse to do it, that is an act of rebellion against God. We live by God’s word as our guidebook. God rewards obedience.

I Samuel 15:23 says, **“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness (to God’s word) is as iniquity and idolatry.”** Other scriptures also address rebellion to God as sin against God. (Job 34:37; Deut. 31:27; Proverbs 17:11, etc.).

Not everyone who is not biblically baptized is in rebellion. For many it is ignorance (lack of knowledge), or they have been falsely taught. That is not rebellion. But once you have learned the truth, it is rebellion against God if you choose not to do it.

We must live in obedience to God and His word. Baptism by immersion was good enough for Jesus; so, it should be good enough for you.