

The BEACON

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WHEN GOD USED WATER

By Connie W. Adams

Water has always played an important role in the world which God made. "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters..." (**Gen 1:2**). God divided the water from the dry land and left the water in seas with rivers and streams to feed them (**Gen 1:9-10**). He left 3/4 of the earth covered in water. Water is essential to the sustaining of life. God has also used water to accomplish spiritual purposes.

The Flood

When the earth was "filled with violence" God purposed to destroy life on the earth. "And yet seven days and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy



from off the face of the earth...And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth" (**Gen 7:4-6**). God made provision for the saving of

Noah and his family in the ark. Peter said, "when o n c e t h e longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water" (**I Peter 3:21**). If the water caused the world of violence to be

destroyed, then how did it 'save' Noah and his family? The water which destroyed the rest of the world, lifted the ark above it and transported Noah and his family to a cleansed and purified earth. God used water to deliver Noah

and his family.

The Red Sea

When the Israelites were fleeing Egypt, they came to the Red Sea. Pharaoh and his host decided to pursue them and there they were, with a hostile army on one side and the sea on the other.

"And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; then the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry land: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left" (**Ex. 14:21-22**). Through a corridor of water God delivered His people. Pharaoh and his army perished as the walls of water collapsed upon them. Paul reminded the Corinthians "how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (**I Cor 10:1-2**). God used water to deliver them.

Gideon and His Three Hundred

Gideon had too many men in his conflict with the Midianites. The Lord said they would boast that they had prevailed by their might, rather than because God was with them. All who were fear-ful were sent home. Still there

were too many. Then the Lord said to Gideon, "The people are yet too many, bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there" (**Judg 7:4**). God gave a test as to which ones should be allowed to fight. The rest were to be sent home. The result? Only three hundred men to oppose the Midianites. And the Lord said, "By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand" (**Judg 7:7**). And so it was. God used water as a test to decide who would fight for Him.

Naaman the Leper

II Kings 5 relates the cleansing of the Syrian captain, Naaman. He was a leper. He arrived at the house of the prophet, Elisha, with gifts and expectations of great enchantments and rituals.

Elisha simply sent a servant out to him with instructions that he should go and dip seven times in the Jordan River. At first, he was enraged. Only after listening to the good advise of his servants did he resolve to do as the prophet said. "Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according t the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean" (**II Kings 5:14**). Were there magical powers in the waters of the Jordan? No. God used the water as a

test of the willingness of this man of authority to obey the instructions of the Lord's prophet. Did the water cleanse him? No. The Lord cleansed him. But He used water in the plan.

The Man Born Blind

In **John 9**, Jesus met a man who was blind from birth. He spat on the ground, made clay from the spittle, and instructed him to "go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which is by interpretation, Sent). He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing" (**John 9:1-7**). What healed him? Was it some special property in saliva? Or in clay? Perhaps some special quality in the water of the pool of Siloam? No, none of that. The water simply tested the man's faith in the Lord to do what He said. Jesus said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (**John 14:15**). "Why call ye Me, Lord, Lord and do not the things which I say?" (**Lk 6:46**). The water itself did not heal, but the Lord used water in His plan.

The Baptism of John

John came baptizing "in Enon near to Salem, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized" (**Jn 3:23**). John preached the "baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (Mk. 1:4). He used water. Was there repentance in the water? Did the water itself remit sins? No, the answer is given

in **Luke 7:30**. "But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him." The baptism of John, in water, for the re-mission of sins, was "the counsel of God." To refuse it was to refuse that counsel. God used water to determine whether they would follow his counsel or reject it. The Pharisees and lawyers rejected it.

The New Birth

Jesus told Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (**Jn. 3:5**). This birth of "water and the Spirit" stands between us and the kingdom of God. The Holy Spirit gave instruction through the word of God so that all men might be saved. Peter said we have "obeyed the truth through the Spirit...Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever...but the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (**I Peter 1:22-25**). The Spirit's word leads to obedience to the truth. This is equated with being "born again...by the word of God," the same word which "by the gospel" is preached. James said, "Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth" (**James 1:18a**)

The Purpose of Baptism

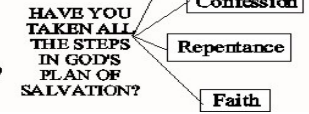
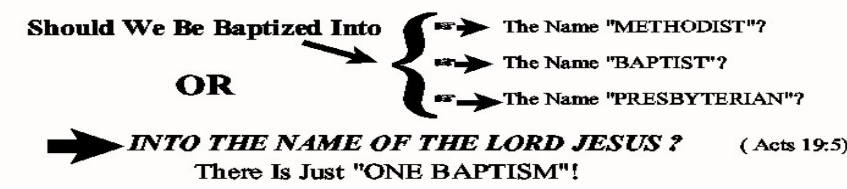
WHAT IT CANNOT DO: **WHAT IT DOES FOR US:**

<p>CHANGE THE HEART (This is done by Faith)</p> <p>CHANGE THE LIFE (Repentance — Matt. 21:28-29)</p> <p>REMOVE TEMPTATION (Man at Fault — James 1:14)</p> <p>PREVENT ALL WRONG (Ex., Peter - Galatians 2:11,14)</p> <p>ASSURE ETERNAL LIFE (Ex., Paul — 1 Cor. 9:27)</p> <p>GIVE LIFE TO THE LIVING (Only the dead are buried — Col. 2:12)</p>	B A P T I S M	<p>INTO JESUS CHRIST - Galatians 3:27</p> <p>INTO HIS DEATH - Romans 6:3-4</p> <p>SAVES FROM SIN - Mark 16:16</p> <p>REMISSION OF SIN - Acts 2:38</p> <p>WASH AWAY SINS - Acts 22:16</p> <p>INTO THE NAME - Matthew 28:19-20</p> <p>INTO THE BODY - 1 Cor. 12:13</p> <p>NEWNESS OF LIFE - Romans 6:3-5</p> <p>FREE FROM SIN - Romans 6:16-18</p> <p>ANSWER OF CONSCIENCE - 1 Pet. 3:20-21</p>
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There Are 101 Ways to go to Hell, BUT only 1 way to go to Heaven

Every Religious Baptism Is Essentially INTO Some Name!
Into Which Of These Should We Be Baptized?



Then what does water have to do with it? The Spirit's word taught that there is water in the plan. In God's plan to save us, there is a "washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (**Tit. 3:5**). This is a parallel verse to **John 3:5**. The church is made up of those whom he did "sanctify and cleanse...with the washing of water by the word" (**Eph. 5:26**). The "washing of water" is baptism which is taught by the word of God, which was revealed by the Holy Spirit. Saul of Tarsus was told to "arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (**Acts 22:16**). Baptism is into the death of Christ (**Rom. 6:3-4**) where he shed His blood (**Jn 19:34**). That is why John wrote, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood" (**Rev 1:5**). Look at what we have here. We are washed from our sins in His blood when we are baptized into His death. This baptism is in water appointed by God and preached by the apostles of the Lord.

Take away water baptism and you remove God's plan for bringing us into contact with the saving power of the blood, you prevent the washing away of sins, cleansing, and abort the new birth. You prevent people from entering into the kingdom of God. Does the water save? No, God does that, but don't you forget that God used water in His plan. By that He knows who is obedient to His word and who rejects His counsel.

Does water stand between you and deliverance, cleansing, healing from sin, and the new birth into the kingdom? If so, then you ought to submit to what the Lord required.