

The following Scripture passages are offered to aid beginning fellowships. The readings and commentary for this week are more in line with what has become usual; for the following will most likely be familiar observations. The concept behind this Sabbath's selection is baptism.

[Printable/viewable PDF format to display Greek or Hebrew characters](#)

## Weekly Readings For the Sabbath of January 24, 2015 [Continued from January 17<sup>th</sup>]

*The person conducting the Sabbath service should open services with two or three hymns, or psalms, followed by an opening prayer acknowledging that two or three (or more) are gathered together in Christ Jesus' name, and inviting the Lord to be with them.*

---

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, *one baptism*, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it says, "When He ascended on high He led a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men." (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that He had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. (Eph 4:1–14 emphasis added)

---

5

There aren't two baptisms, one in water and one in spirit. For Paul, there was only one baptism—and this wasn't John's baptism in water for repentance. Paul's baptism was in spirit and unto life. Nevertheless, Paul wrote,

I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers. What I mean is that each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I

follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or *were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, so that no one may say that you were baptized in my name.* (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) For *Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel,* and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. (1 Cor 1:10–17 emphasis added)

We move forward in this same epistle: "For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor 10:1–2).

Paul seems quick to make the point that he was not sent to baptize but to preach even though he personally baptized a few of the holy ones at Corinth, but he didn't baptize them in his name as apparently Israel was baptized into Moses, Moses' name.

The baptism of Crispus and Gaius would have been in water, and for repentance, the death of the old self. But did Crispus and Gaius receive the Holy Spirit—this we do not know; for it might well be that Crispus and Gaius merely got wet when they were baptized. We don't know if they believed a good argument that Paul made and thus wanted to join themselves to the Body of Christ, or if the Father truly drew them from this world (John 6:44) and delivered them to Christ Jesus as predestined individuals, for the glorified Christ to call, justify, and glorify through the indwelling of His spirit [*pneuma Christou*] in the spirit of the person [*to pneuma tou 'anthropou*] that is in the soul [*psuche*] of the person.

Herbert Armstrong or his ministers baptized a great many people into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—people who became his disciples, not Christ's, even though they sincerely believed they were following Christ, not a human man—but of Armstrong's baptisms in water for repentance (John's baptism), very few of these individuals were actually born of God through the indwelling of Christ Jesus in the form of His spirit. And this became evident following Armstrong's death.

The same can be said of Andreas Fischer following his death in 1540 CE, with Fischer in 1527 CE beginning the reconstruction of the spiritual temple of God, this reconstruction building on the foundation the Apostle Paul laid in heavenly Jerusalem.

There simply isn't a way to know in advance if the person desiring baptism in water as an outward showing of inner repentance has been drawn from this world by God the Father and delivered to Christ as a foreknown and predestined son of God.

Paul said that Christ didn't send him to baptize but to preach. I wasn't called to baptize but to reread prophecy; nevertheless, I have baptized a few individuals in water for repentance. And I would not withhold baptism from anyone desiring to be baptized in John's baptism, analogous to the Flood of Noah's day:

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which He went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. *Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.* (1 Pet 3:18–22 emphasis added)

*But as an appeal to God for a good conscience*—baptism in water represents an appeal to God, a petitioning of God, a request made to God for receipt of the Holy Spirit. The laying on of hands and the prayers of faith afterwards don't amount to an assurance that God will draw this person from the world, and give this person to Christ Jesus to be nurtured as a son of God. Rather, baptism following by the laying on of hands is an appeal to God; is a petition made to God; is (in the legal sense) a prayer made to God to accept this person as one of His own.

And we have arrived at a dilemma if there truly is only one baptism.

Baptism in Christ, or in Christ's name, is baptism in spirit, not in water.

Can a person be baptized in water and not receive the Holy Spirit? Apart from Acts 19:1–7 and Acts 8:5–17, both passages part of a Second Sophist novel, the answer is yes: a person can be baptized in water and have hands laid on the person, and the person merely gets wet. This was the case with most persons baptized by Armstrong's ministers: the person merely got wet. The changed behavior of the baptized person was really unchanged behavior, concealed from the minister by a mask of righteousness that slipped when dealing with *little people*.

When baptism is addressed as an appeal to God for a good conscience and not addressed as a necessary Christian sacrament, then the disciple is mentally free to comprehend that for Christians, there is really one baptism: baptism in spirit and into life, with <spirit> forming the non-symmetrical chiral image of water.

Jesus did not baptize in water—and about this, John wrote,

Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples), he left Judea and departed again for Galilee. (John 4:1–3)

Again, for pedagogical redundancy, Jesus did not baptize disciples. He did not baptize anyone of the crowds that followed Him. There was no reason for Him to appeal to God on behalf of another for a good conscience in the other person. That would have made no sense at all when His prayer of faith could raise the dead. It was the spiritually dead that needed to petition the Father for a good conscience.

In Scripture, scenarios change: death reigned over humanity from Adam to Moses. A change occurred when Israel was baptized into Moses. Israel, for a while, regained the freewill that Adam lost when Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden: the children of Israel could choose life or death, good or evil, when the children of Israel crossed the Jordan entered into the Promised Land that topographically represents Sabbath observance as well as entering into the Millennium and entering into heaven.

The timing of all that precedes from here is important; for context gives meaning to signs, with inscribed words being *signs* ...

Baptism corresponds to the Flood of Noah's day, but baptism isn't for the removal of dirt from the body. Submersion in water, however, does remove dirt. But submersion in water does not save anyone; rather, submersion represents the death of the old self. Submersion does not give a new life to the dead old self.

[YHWH] said to Moses, "You shall also make a basin of bronze, with its stand of bronze, for washing. You shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and *you shall put water in it, with which Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet*. When they go into the tent of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn a food offering to the Lord, *they shall wash with water, so that they may not die. They*

*shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they may not die. It shall be a statute forever to them, even to him and to his offspring throughout their generations." (Ex 30:17–21 emphasis added)*

And,

[YHWH] spoke to Moses, saying, "On the first day of the first month you shall erect the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. ... Then *you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting and shall wash them with water and put on Aaron the holy garments. And you shall anoint him and consecrate him, that he may serve me as priest.* You shall bring his sons also and put coats on them, and anoint them, as you anointed their father, that they may serve me as priests. And their anointing shall admit them to a perpetual priesthood throughout their generations." ... He set the basin between the tent of meeting and the altar, and put water in it for washing, with which Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet.

(Ex 40:1–2, 12–15, 30–31 emphasis added)

Moses, as God to Aaron (Ex 4:16), washed Aaron and his sons in water and thereby formed the chiral image of the Lord washing His disciples in spirit for a clean conscience—

Do you not know what Peter wrote?

So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. *Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation—if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.* As you come to Him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, *you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.* For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone," and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense." *They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.* But ***you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession,*** that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. (1 Pet 2:1–11 emphasis and double emphasis added)

The Levitical priesthood has been rejected. There is no longer standing a physical temple with its sanctuary in which was the basis for washing. Rather, since Calvary, disciples have been the temple of God (1 Cor 3:16–17; 2 Cor 6:16). And the living inner selves of disciples have replaced the Levitical priesthood: they are a royal priesthood washed in the blood of Christ, poured out for the forgiveness of sins of many (Matt 26:28).

Washing in water was for cleaning what was defiled, or removing the taint of "commonness," that is common to humanity ... Israel was to be holy as the Lord was holy. Washing in water didn't change the molecular structure of what was common, but did symbolically remove the taint of being *common*.

Hair [hair growth] is common to humanity, and to be covered with hair as Esau was harkens back to when Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden of Eden, their nakedness covered by hair coats (Gen 3:21). Linguistically, these hair coats are of the

same sort as the hide and hair of goats [hair coats of the sort worn by Sasquatch]. Hence, when Rachel deceived her husband into giving Esau's blessing to Jacob, she instructed Jacob to conceal his "smoothness" with the skin of goats: "And the skins of the young goats she put on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck" (Gen 27:16).

In order for Levites to separate themselves from the sea of common humanity as well as from the pool of common Israel, instruction were given:

And [YHWH] spoke to Moses, saying, "Take the Levites from among the people of Israel and cleanse them. *Thus you shall do to them to cleanse them: sprinkle the water of purification upon them, and let them go with a razor over all their body, and wash their clothes and cleanse themselves.* (Num 8:5-7 emphasis added)

The Levitical priesthood was separated from common Israelites by the water of purification, and by shaving all of their body hair and by washing their clothing and their bodies ... the inner self of a human person has no body hair; is not physical. In order to approximate the inner self so that Levites could represent the chiral image of living inner selves, bodies and clothes were washed so as to remove dirt, and hair was shaved, not from just the face but from the entirety of the body.

For the purposes of this Sabbath Reading, it is sprinkling the waters of purification that has greatest significance ...

By the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup>-Century CE, the Old Church [the Roman Church] had become so corrupt that change had to occur: Reformers prospered. First to achieve success was Martin Luther, followed by Swiss Reformers who had the right to "protest" thus becoming Protestant Reformers, followed closely by the Radical Reformers, Anabaptists or rebaptizers that practiced full immersion baptism ... the Old Church and the Protestant Reformers sprinkled with water as Moses sprinkled Levites with the *water of purification*.

The High Church sprinkles; the Low Church dunks—fully submerges—the person being baptized. In both cases, however, baptism by water is an enacted *prayer* made to God for Him to give to the baptized person a good conscience.

The High Church sprinkle and the Low Church dunk are enantiomorphs, non-symmetrical mirror images of each other—and as such, they function as a living thought-couplet, the physical presentation of physical baptism being sprinkling as Moses sprinkled Levites with the water of purification for their cleansing, and the spiritual presentation of physical baptism being full submersion of the person being baptized as all Christians will be fully immersed in spirit following the Second Passover liberation of Israel.

The physical portion of the spiritual presentation of baptism comes via receiving the Holy Spirit by measure (receiving the earnest of the spirit), with this receipt of spirit by measure coming via the spirit of Christ entering into the spirit of the person [*to pneuma tou 'anthropou*] thereby giving birth to an infant son of God that has the mind of Christ as a human infant has the mind of a man but doesn't yet think like a man. The spiritual portion of the spiritual presentation of baptism comes in two steps, the first being filling all Christians with the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*], both those Christians already born of spirit as well as those who have not been born of spirit but who have "petitioned" God for a good conscience. The second step will see the Holy Spirit poured out on all flesh (Joel 2:28), thereby liberating all human persons from indwelling sin and death through God having mercy on all (Rom 11:32).

Again, timing is important: the Holy Spirit being poured out on all flesh occurs halfway through seven endtime years of tribulation, and at this halfway point through seven years all that will remain of humanity not physically dead or condemned to spiritual death is the third part (from Zech 13:9) and a remnant of Christians (Rev 12:17) ... this third part of humanity will be, in count, approximately 2.4 billion individuals, the majority of which will be Muslims, Hindus, or Buddhists. In type, the children of Israel that crossed the Jordan behind Joshua [in Greek, *Iesou* — *Jesus*] form the shadow and copy of this third part that will mostly enter heaven IF they petition God for a good conscience via the sacrament of baptism in water.

In essence, greater Christianity [all of whom will have been baptized by either sprinkling or dunking] will have petitioned God for a good conscience prior to being filled with the spirit of God. The mirror image of greater Christendom in the Affliction, the first 1260 days of the seven endtime years, will be the third part of humanity in the Endurance of Christ, the last 1260 days of these seven years, and this third part will be filled with spirit prior to petitioning God for a good conscience. They will then have to petition God through being baptized, but their petition will be that of taking judgment upon themselves for they will already have good consciences. God gave to them good consciences when Christ Jesus was given dominion over the single kingdom of this world.

The subject of baptism will warrant at least one more Sabbath Reading that addresses the correspondence between the ceremonial washings of Judaism and Christian baptism in water and in spirit.

\*

"Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved."

[ [Home](#) ] [ [Sabbath Readings](#) ]