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Baptism for the Remission of Sins: An Act of Obedience

Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

— Acts 2:36–42

Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

— Acts 8:35–38

So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha. And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.

But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.

And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean? Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to 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 5:9–14

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

— Luke 6:46

And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

— I Samuel 15:22–23

Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him. When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them.

– Acts 5:29–33

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

– Romans 8:6–11

Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

– Luke 11:52

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Of the commands recorded in the Scripture, few are more memorable and better-known than the exhortation of the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ Jesus. The command was delivered in answer to the distraught plea of repentant Jews of the Remnant of Israel. The Jews, convicted of the crime of rejecting Jesus of Nazareth as the Anointed of the Lord, entreated, “*What shall we do?*” Peter, the chief Apostle, speaking as the very vicar of the risen Christ, gives clear and explicit instruction:

Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus the Anointed, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
—*Acts 2:38*

1.1 Contemporary Disregard of the Command of the Apostle

Curiously, despite the myriad of theological differences which separate the various Protestant denominations, most Protestants are in agreement concerning the declaration of Peter. Remarkably, the consensus of Protestants is that the command should *not* be obeyed.

The repudiation of a command from the Lord Christ is an matter of extreme gravity. Nevertheless, the enemies of the Lord, cunningly challenging the legality and the logic of the command, have managed to raise doubt within the mind of the Protestant as to whether the command should be obeyed. Indeed, the Protestant Pulpit places obedience of the command to be baptized in the same category as circumcision.¹

1.2 Baptism a Portrayal of Entrance into the Way of Life

It is evident that the mode of baptism commanded by Peter is immersion in water, as a simulation of burial and resurrection. The ritual, properly termed “*Baptism for the Remission of Sins*,” is the portal of obedience by which a man is justified, enters the *Way of Life*, and receives the gift of the indwelling Spirit of God. Apart from obedience of the command, no one traverses the portal. Consider the dissertation of the Apostle Paul:

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.
—*Romans 6:1–12*

¹Galatians 5:1–4.

The ritual of water baptism portrays the death, burial, and resurrection of the individual which, in the present life, is positional, and not actual. In baptism, the “Old Man” figuratively is put to death and buried, and is raised a “New Man” who is free from the dominion of sin. As a New Man now walking in the *Way of Life*, the Christian is to pursue Sanctification. That pursuit is a life-long endeavour; for the Christian, it is the very business of life.

1.3 Unobservance the Result of a Deceptive and Persistent Assault

The attack upon obedience to the command, “*Be baptized for the remission of sins*,” shrewdly devised and artfully waged, is but one of innumerable attacks which the enemies of the Cross have made upon the Christian Faith. The purpose of the attack on baptism is simply to prevent or impede those who desire to enter the *Way of Life*.

Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.
—Luke 11:52

Through sophistry and chicanery, false teachers are able to convince sincere and devout men that, without so much as a nod of the head, they have entered the *Way of Life*. But the reality is that, in the present age, one failing to obey the command to be Baptized for the Remission of Sins is not Justified, does not enter the *Way of Life*, and does not receive the gift of the indwelling Spirit of God.

Thus, Protestants by large are not Christians. Moreover, inasmuch as the Protestant clergy is drawn from Protestant laity, most of the Protestant Pulpits of the Land are populated with unregenerate men. To them, the things of the Spirit of God are foolishness, because spiritual truths are discerned only by those who benefit from the indwelling Spirit of God.²

It hardly needs to be pointed out that the Lord God does not impart the gift of Evangelist or the gift of Shepherd-Teacher to a man who is not walking in the *Way of Life*. The Lord does not entrust his sheep to the unregenerate. An unregenerate man is incapable of leading a flock of sheep to green pasture or still water. Moreover, being but a hireling, such a man has no true love for the sheep; upon approach of the predator, the hireling flees and allows the flock to be ravaged.

By no measure is this disdain of Baptism for the Remission of Sins limited to the contemporary Protestant community. Indeed, it is doubtful whether any of the Protestant Reformers, most of whom were monks in the Church of Rome, ever were baptized for the remission of sins.

²I Corinthians 2:14.

Chapter 2

Baptism for the Remission of Sins

2.1 Universal Obedience in the Days of the Apostles

moose tied to justification

And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutes thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutes. And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

— Acts 22:6–16

Subsequently, Ananias, dispatched by the Lord Christ to give sight to Saul after the encounter of Saul and the Lord near Damascus, commanded Saul to be baptized and wash away his sins. This dual witness establishes beyond dispute the association between the ritual of baptism and justification.

In the Scriptural accounts of evangelization, there is not an instance in which the man who hears and welcomes the Gospel is not baptized as soon as possible, even in the case of evangelism which takes place in the middle of the night or during the course of a journey. Thus, it is evident that the command for baptism was taught generally by the Apostles, and that the command does not appertain solely to the crowd which gathered and heard the exhortation of Peter on the Day of Pentecost. Moreover, the urgency which is seen in every Scriptural account regarding baptism attests to the absolute necessity of the ritual.

moose¹

The Gospel makes demands, and the Scripture repeatedly speaks of the necessity for obedience of the Gospel. The issue is obedience. Obedience proceeds from faith (which is to say, confidence) that, through obedience, that which is promised (healing or justification) shall be obtained.

Consider also the requirement for the blood of the lamb to be applied to the doorposts and lintel the first Passover as Israel prepared to leave Egypt, that the Lord might see the blood and not allow the Destroyer to enter the house and smite dead the firstborn. The blood was possessed of no mystical properties.

The “Early Church” was nothing like the Church of the Apostolic Era seen in the Scripture.

To see this, one need only read the writings of the so-called “Church” and it doesn’t take “much water” for pseudo-baptism by pouring. The question of mode may be settled at once and without question, from the Scripture:

¹Some of those who deny the necessity of Baptism for the Remission of Sins claim that the Greek preposition *eis*, translated “for,” means “because of” rather than “resulting in.” However, the context, both local and universal, disallows such an interpretation.

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.

—Romans 6:3-5

Only full immersion portrays burial. Likewise, coming up out of the water portrays resurrection from the dead.

moose How would you explain the argument that burial in bible times was much different than modern western culture? We think of burial as laying the person in a grave 6 foot deep. However in Bible times, the Scripture gives several examples in which burial is above ground in a tomb carved out of rock.

moose An interesting point. However, though entombment in a cave or grotto perhaps was the custom of the wealthy, it appears to have been a luxury, rather than being commonplace. Recall that Jesus was associated with the rich in his death, Isaiah 53:9. Abraham paid well for a field with a cave in which to bury his dead, Genesis 23.

moose In Acts 5:6-10 there does appear to be a burial—it took several young men of the congregation about three hours; the word used is *thapto*.

moose In Matthew 27:6-8, the potter's field is purchased for burial of the indigent; no mention is made of a cave.

moose From the article "burial" in *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, Paul J. Achtemeier, Editor, Harper, San Francisco, 1985:

moose "The most common type of burial arrangement was the simple shaft or trench grave, which was often lined with mats, wood, or stone slabs. These simple graves were sometimes marked by a tree (Genesis 35:8), although in the case of infamous individuals, the burial plot was identified by a pile of stones placed over it (Joshua 7:26; II Samuel 18:17)."

Burial in a hole in the ground being the common practice, the analogy between immersion in water and burial would have been obvious to everyone.

moose Thus, the matter has been established, though no amount of evidence is sufficient to silence those who seek to justify their disobedience to the command of Acts 2:38.

Though John practiced baptism for the remission of sins (Mark 1:4, Luke 3:3) as a precursor to the New Covenant, the baptism of John was superseded by baptism in the name of Jesus, Acts 19:1-7. The former baptism emphasized repentance; the latter, faith in the blood of the Lamb.

moose The point, Arthur, is that the Apostle Paul and the writer of the book of Acts separate the baptism of John from the baptism which the apostles were administering; read Acts 19:1-7!

Take as your authority the plain declaration of the Scripture—not the convoluted reasoning of Calvin or others recently emerged from the morass of Papistry.

All you are doing by citing Calvin is to resort to the tradition of the elders, as did the Pharisees whom Jesus condemned, and to the wisdom of men, as did the Greeks who rejected the Gospel as foolishness.

moose Chris M - You'd do well to read and meditate upon the millstone passages—Matthew 18:6-7, Mark 9:42, Luke 17:1-2. He who causes the neophyte in the Faith to stumble shall pay a fearful price.

I find it curious that Christians generally argue that, in any matter, the declaration of the Word of God must be accepted even if the declaration appears to be contrary to reason or to science—except with respect to baptism.

All which I know to say I have said already; search SermonAudio for "expositor." But to recapitulate:

obedience is required for salvation, I Thessalonians 1:8, I Peter 4:17 moose

other things which are commanded include repentance, faith, endurance, and the willingness to sacrifice everything, including life itself

How it is proper, on the basis of human reasoning, to set aside the commandment and the example of the Scripture?

If the Lord commands baptism (and, without question, he does), are you so presumptuous as to tell him that his command is contrary to grace?

Obviously, that which the Lord is seeking is willing obedience—that is the key.

moose Our conversation reminded me of a previous conversation with the Fink, and the need for critical consideration of Acts 16:30. Protestants almost invariably assume that the Philippian jailor is thinking in terms of so-called "personal salvation"; but that assumption flies in the face of the evidence.

In the Olivet Discourse, Christ Jesus spoke of the coming epoch, that of the Apostles. He foretold the social upheaval and warfare, and the calamity and peril which would characterize that monumental period of transition. The culmination of the epoch came in A.D. 70 with the utter destruction of Jerusalem, an event which was a testimony to the Jew and to the entire World of the final, irreversible dissolution of Israel as a physical nation. Speaking of the epoch, Paul uses the term "the present distress."

The plea of the Philippian jailor indicates two things.

1. The jailor perceived that the social unrest throughout the Roman Empire placed in jeopardy the physical survival of himself and his household.
2. The jailor, like the populace in general, was aware of the proclamation and teaching of Paul concerning the advent of the Kingdom of God, though the jailor obviously lacked a detailed understanding of the Gospel; consider Acts 17:6–8. moose

Accordingly, upon witnessing the miraculous loosing of the bonds of the prisoners, the jailor looked to Paul for instruction regarding deliverance, his concern being physical deliverance. But the Gospel includes not only the promise of deliverance, but also notice of the price to be paid for entrance into the Kingdom. There is no doubt that Paul communicated to the jailor and his household the Gospel in detail; consider Acts 16:32. The command, “*Believe on the Lord, Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved,*” is but synecdoche which represents the entirety of the Gospel message. moose

At this point, it behooves us to consider closely the meaning (which is to say, the implications) of the command “believe on the Lord, Jesus Christ,” taking care to eschew false assumptions.

moose *An Example.* Protestants reading John 1:11–12 commonly assume that the meaning of “receive” corresponds to the contemporary Protestant concept of “receiving Jesus as personal saviour”; but that assumption is false. From the immediate context, as well as from other passages, it is clear that the reception in view is the recognition that Jesus of Nazareth is the prophesied Christ. You see, Nazareth was about the last place in the world from which anyone would expect the prophesied Christ to emerge. Remember the remark of Nathaniel, “*Can anything good come out of Nazareth?*” From these words, it is obvious that the town of Nazareth is of the same category as are the American cities Chicago, Miami, and Washington, D. C.; Nazareth was a locale of ill repute, a community in which vice prevailed.

So, because of our conversation, I have begun writing an article titled “*What Must I Do to be Saved?*” In the article I shall demonstrate from the Scripture the error of the contemporary Protestant notion of Salvation as an instantaneous and irreversible transaction. Curiously, as attested by John Bunyan in his epic *Pilgrim’s Progress*, Protestants did not always entertain such a superficial and trifling concept of Salvation.

Bunyan correctly portrays Salvation as the end or goal of a process. The process is termed “*The Way of Life*,” and entrance into the Way is gained solely through Justification by Faith. Regrettably, Protestants in general have failed to apprehend the fact that there is but one *Way of Life* and one mechanism of entrance into that Way, irrespective of historical epoch. From Adam and the Woman in the Garden until the end of time, the sole basis of justification is faith in the Word of the Lord God.

Protestants generally are oblivious to the fact that, during the epoch of the Old Covenant—from the inception of the Covenant until the dissolution of thereof—the physical nation of Israel was comprised of a mixture of the Just and the Unjust: though every Israelite was subject to the Law of Moses, even perfect observance of the Law could not justify. Thus, some Israelites were justified by faith, while others refused to be justified by faith. But, of necessity, such is the case with any group in which members are added by physical birth; justification of the parents does not imply justification of the offspring.

xxx moose the beginning of the physical nation at Mount Sinai until the end confused by the

xxx moose Much confusion Israelites under the Old Covenant were justified by as not attaining to the Resurrection, Noah, Abraham, the Remnant

Not everyone who enters the *Way of Life* perseveres to the end; this is portrayed in the parable of the soils. Some who embrace the Gospel are but the proverbial “flash in the pan,” being long on enthusiasm but short on determination; under testing these fall away or turn back and consequently perish. Others set forth with determination but fail to count the cost, and eventually turn back, unwilling to sacrifice the present life for the life beyond the grave which is afforded by the Resurrection. But some have not only determination, but also willingness to die in order to lay hold upon Life Everlasting; these alone persevere in the *Way of Life* unto the end, thereby attaining to the Resurrection Out From the Dead.

Chapter 3

Baptism: Portal to the *Way of Life*

The Apostolic Age was a time of turmoil, both for the Church and for Society in general. The Church was suffering great persecution from the Talmudic Jew. And Society was experiencing the calamities which Jesus foretold in the Olivet Discourse. But even without turmoil, there is the fact that baptism is the portal of obedience through which Man in the present age¹ enters the Way of Life; that itself is reason for urgency.

A perspective of which few teachers appear to have caught sight is that the Scripture juxtaposes *Baptism for the Remission of Sin* and the *Works of the Law*,² both being viewed as means of justification. Accordingly, *Baptism for the Remission of Sins* is a portal to the *Way of Life*. In the present age, it is the sole portal. The individual who submits to baptism thereby exercises the faith by which he is justified. Baptism is an act of obedience by which, in terms of positional, the Old Man dies and the New Man is born and begins the pursuit of sanctification. For the individual who perseveres in the *Way of Life*, the actuality occurs in two stages:

1. Upon physical death, the old man (a fleshly being) dies.
2. Upon resurrection, the new man (a spiritual being) is born.

A fact which few teachers appear to have apprehended is that the Resurrection is the actual point of spiritual birth. At the present time, Christ Jesus alone has been born spiritually; accordingly, the Scripture describes Jesus as the “firstborn” out from the dead. The Resurrection also is the actual point of Salvation; for, ultimately, Salvation is deliverance from the grave—deliverance from death.

Protestants often speak of the so-called “Golden Chain of Salvation” which they find enumerated in the epistle of Paul to the Romans:

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. — Romans 8:29–30

But they generally are oblivious to the sequence of concepts which constitute the mechanics of the Golden Chain; these are:

1. Obedience, Baptism
2. the *Way of Life*
3. Sanctification
4. the Resurrection

There must be obedience to the call of the Lord. Of the parables of Jesus, three in particular portray the Jews of the Remnant of Israel who refused the invitation to enter the New Covenant. They are the parable of the king who

¹The epoch of the *Reign of the Christ*.

²moose CITE PASSAGES.

prepared a marriage for his son,³ the parable of the man who made a great supper and bade many,⁴ and the parable of the nobleman who went to a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.⁵ By application, these parables also portray the response of the Lord to men in general who are disobedient to the call of the Lord.

The offer of resurrection to Life Everlasting has been open since the day of the rebellion of Adam. Acceptance of the offer necessitates justification. Throughout history, the sole basis of justification is faith. Adam and the Woman were the first to avail themselves of the opportunity; the lambskin garments provided by the Lord are tokens of their faith.

To those living in the era of the Old Covenant and in prior eras, no particular act of obedience was prescribed. And inasmuch as the Old Covenant was temporary and could not provide benefit beyond the Grave, those who sought Life Everlasting placed confidence in a future covenant which could provide everlasting benefit. That future covenant is the New Covenant; it was inaugurated by the death of Christ Jesus in the role of *Covenant Sacrifice*, and is now in effect.

In the company of all, pursue peace and sanctification, without which no man shall see the Lord.

—Hebrews 12:14

Anyone who takes the trouble to actually read the Scripture cannot fail to notice the constant emphasis upon the necessity of obedience to the instruction of the Lord God.

If ye love me, keep my commandments.

—John 14:15

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

—Psalm 51:17

Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

—I Corinthians 10:11

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

—Romans 15:4

³Matthew 22:1–14.

⁴Luke 14:16–24.

⁵Luke 19:11–27.

Chapter 4

A Succinct History of Baptism

In the present day, a proper discussion of Baptism for the Remission of Sins is necessarily complex and lengthy. This is because the enemies of the Lord God have been successful in their efforts to obfuscate the true issue, which is obedience.

The original attack was made by the prototype of the Church of Rome, beginning in the Apostolic Era. The attack continues in the present day, through both the Church of Rome and the various Protestant Denominations to which the Church of Rome has given birth.

4.1 Analogous Old Covenant Ritual

In the era of the New Covenant, the ritual of Baptism for the Remission of Sins corresponds to the ritual of circumcision in the era of the Old Covenant. Submission to either ritual is simply an act of obedience, by which one enters the covenant.

Although circumcision indeed is commanded by the Law of Moses, it is incorrect to categorize circumcision as a “*act of the Law*.” In the first place, the act has no merit, because, typically, a man is circumcised eight days after birth. Of course, the obedience is that of the parents. However, if the parents of a man did not have their son circumcised as an infant, and if the man subsequently refuses circumcision, he is excluded from the Old Covenant.

The condemnation which the Apostle Paul delivers to those who are circumcised must be understood in context. After all, Paul himself, an Israelite, was circumsized. Paul is speaking to those moose

4.2 In the Apostolic Era

The Scripture records absolutely no disputation concerning baptism within the Church in the days of the Apostles.

4.2.1 Universal Compliance

The record of the Scripture indicates that, in the Apostolic epoch, *baptism for the remission of sins* was practiced universally. Indeed, the Scripture records that there were divisions within the Christians at Corinth. The lines between the groups were not drawn on the basis of support of athletic teams, but, rather, according to the Evangelist by whom one was baptized. Thus, some boasted of being a convert of Paul, some, of being a convert of Apollos, some, of being a convert of Peter (“Cephas”), and some, of being a convert of the Christ.¹ Paul then asks, rhetorically, whether Christ is divided. Of course, baptism is not a basis for division, for every Christian is baptized into Christ.² The point to be noted is the centrality of the ritual to those of the local assembly.

¹1 Corinthians 1:10–17.

²Romans 6:3, Galatians 3:27.

4.2.2 Much Water

The record of the Scripture shows clearly that the mode of baptism was immersion in water. This is apparent from the fact that both the convert and the baptizer are said to enter the water.³ Immersion is the mode utilized by John the Baptizer.⁴

4.2.3 Extreme Urgency

Baptism was considered a matter not only of vital importance, but also one of extreme urgency.⁵ Once a man has counted the cost and has determined to enter the *Way of Life*, there is every reason to be baptized as soon as possible; to delay is foolish.⁶

4.2.4 A Declaration Misconstrued

Those who oppose Baptism for the Remission of Sins sometimes point to the declaration of Paul, that the Lord did not send him to baptize.

For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.
—I Corinthians 1:17

Of course, they are taking the declaration out of context. Paul condemns the childish behaviour of the Corinthians, who moose

4.3 The Transition

The change in attitude toward baptism came about following the death of the Apostle Paul.⁷ Historians report that, in the century following the Apostolic Era, the visible Church underwent a major change. But historians also report that almost nothing is known concerning events of that first century of the Christian Era, nor of the identities of the agents of the alteration. One historian compares the transition of the visible Church to the transition of scene between acts of a theatrical play: the curtain falls on one scene, and when the curtain rises a century later, a totally different scene is in view.

4.3.1 A Transformation of Structure

Originally, the visible Church and the Church of the Apostolic Era were one and the same. The Church which Christ Jesus builds through his Apostles is comprised of a multitude of local assemblies. The structure of that Church is “flat.” Each local assembly is independent, and the Shepherd of each local assembly reports directly to the Lord, Christ Jesus. But a century later, the visible Church had a hierarchical structure, and before long, the office of the Pope capped the structure.

Needless to say, the visible Church no longer was comprised of local assemblies belonging to the true Church of Christ Jesus. The true Church had been driven underground, and the visible Church was but a counterfeit.

³Acts 8:36–40. In contemporary settings, the baptism sometimes takes place in an above-the-ground tank, with the baptizer remaining outside the tank and dry.

⁴Mark 1:4–11, John 3:22–24.

⁵Acts 8:26–40, Acts 16:16–34, Acts 22:16.

⁶Proverbs 27:1, Isaiah 49:8, II Corinthians 6:2.

⁷II Thessalonians 2:7. The changes were wrought by counterfeit of the Church; the Apostle Paul terms the counterfeit the “Mystery of Iniquity.” Paul is the restrainer who eventually was taken out of the way by death.

4.3.2 By Agency of the Mystery of Iniquity & the Man of Sin

While secular historians are perplexed concerning the motivations and mechanisms for the change in structure of the Church, both are apparent from an objective reading of the Scripture.

In his second epistle to the Thessalonians, Paul speaks of the *Mystery of Iniquity* and the *Man of Sin*.⁸ The *Mystery* about which Paul was speaking is the Church of Rome, also known as the Papal System or “Papistry.” The Church of Rome, which became the visible Church, is a counterfeit of the true Church. It appears that formal installation of the Pope did not take place until the lower tiers of the *Mystery* were in place and functioning.⁹ However, the discourse of Paul to the Thessalonians shows that, from the start, the *Man of Sin* was integral to the scheme. And, from the record of the Scripture, it is apparent that James of Jerusalem was the prototype of the Pope.

The Papal System is the invention of the great and perennial enemy of Christ Jesus and the People of God, the Talmudic Jew. The early working of the *Mystery* is seen in the Scripture, in the account of the first “Church Council.” The Council was held in Jerusalem, and was presided over by James of Jerusalem, half-brother of Christ Jesus and false Apostle.¹⁰

4.3.3 By Agency of the Daughters of the Whore

The parallels between the Protestant Faith and Talmudic Judaism are many; but this is no surprise, given the origin of Protestantism. The Church of Rome with its religion, Papistry, is the invention of the Talmudic Jew; it was crafted in the days of the Apostles.

The Protestant Reformers as Midwives to the Whore. Christians sometimes refer to the Church of Rome as “the Great Whore.” The various Protestant denominations are the daughters of the Church of Rome. The Protestant Reformers served as midwives to the Whore in the birth of the daughters. Instead of attempting to reform the Whore, the Protestant Reformers should have obeyed the command of the Scripture, which is “*come out and be separate*.¹¹

The Talmudic Jew developed a concept of God in which the Godhead is a monolith; accordingly, the concept of the Son of God is blasphemy. This concept is contrary to the revelation of the Scripture, as even a casual reading of the *Book of Psalms* shows. The Jew proudly chants the mantra, “*Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord*,”¹² though the Jew has not the foggiest notion of the true sense in which oneness characterizes the Godhead.

In much the same manner, the Protestant has developed a concept of Salvation contrary to the revelation and teaching of the Scripture. In this Protestant Salvation, man and the actions of man play no role. Man is simply the recipient. The purpose of the Salvation proclaimed by the Protestant is deliverance from an imagined fate which is foreign to the Scripture. The fate, everlasting torture in a place called Hell, is contrary to the nature of the Lord God; to assert that the Lord tortures his creatures is blasphemous. The Protestant postulates no motivation for the deliverance, other than a love of God for his creatures. Protestant Salvation promises the individual an eternal abode in Heaven, but essentially says nothing regarding productive activity. But the prospect of untold millions of years of inactivity is repugnant to the sane mind.

The Protestant acknowledges the phenomenon of the second birth,¹³ but claims that the second birth is experienced in the present life, at the moment of faith in Christ. Thus, Protestants typically boast of being “born again.” However, according to the Scripture, the mechanism of the second birth is the *Resurrection Out From the Dead*. The Resurrection is a transformation in which the corruptible and mortal fleshly creature of the Natural Realm, becomes an incorruptible and immortal being of the Spirit Realm. And the Resurrection is a birth, in which those who have been Justified by faith are born into the family of God, with the status of mature Son.

⁸II Thessalonians 2:1–12. The contemporary Protestant, having embraced the fantastic Dispensational schemes of Scofield and deluded by the spurious *Book of Revelation*, thinks that the *Mystery of Iniquity* and *Man of Sin* are phenomena which lie yet in the future and have nothing to do with the Church. But that is not true. Paul said that the *Mystery* already was at work in the days of the Apostles, II Thessalonians 2:7.

⁹The English word “pope” is a transliteration of the Latin word *papa*, which means “father.”

¹⁰Acts 15:1–29. James is not an apostle, he is not numbered among the Twelve. The *Book of James*, generally attributed to James of Jerusalem, has no rightful place in the Canon of Scripture.

¹¹II Corinthians 6:14–18.

¹²Deuteronomy 6:4.

¹³John 1:11–13, John 3:1–21.

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

– Romans 6:4

- Though the instances of baptism recorded in the Scripture are exclusively by immersion, the mode employed for baptism among Protestants varies from one denomination to the next: some immerse, others pour water on the head, still others sprinkle.
- Though the Scripture (Christ Jesus speaking through Peter) declared the purpose of baptism to be the remission of sins, there is no general agreement among Protestants regarding the significance of baptism, other than a consensus that the ritual of baptism has nothing to do with the remission of sins or cleansing from sin.
- Most importantly, though in the Apostolic Era, men were baptized immediately upon embrace of the Gospel, virtually no one today is teaching the necessity of baptism for salvation.

4.4 Is There No “*Defender of the Faith*”?

The Protestant Church is largely indifferent toward baptism. Protestants in general refuse to acknowledge that baptism has a vital role in salvation. Indeed, some Protestants argue that the ritual of baptism has no role at all; that it has been done away. But, among Protestant denominations, is there none which has assumed the role of “*Defender of the Faith*”?

4.4.1 The Duplicity of the Baptist

Judging on the basis of appellation, the most obvious candidate would seem to be the Baptist. But the appellation “Baptist” is a deceptive misrepresentation.

The Baptist does not baptize for the remission of sins. Rather, the Baptist denomination demonstrates its contempt of the Scripture by relegating the ritual of baptism to a post-salvation rite by which one may “join the Church.” Of course, the “church” in view is the particular local Baptist congregation.

Compounding their mockery of the Scripture, many Baptist congregations practice “Closed Communion,” in which only those who have been baptized in the baptismal pool of the particular local assembly are allowed to participate in the ritual of the Table of the Lord.

4.4.2 The Church of Christ

The only other Protestant denomination which would seem to be faithful to the Scripture regarding Baptism for the Remission of Sins is the so-called “Churches of Christ.” However, the “Churches of Christ” refuses to recognize that Scripture penned prior to the Incarnation is applicable to the present age. For example, the Church of Christ turns a blind eye toward the exhortations found in the Psalms regarding the use of musical instruments in the praise of the Lord. This eclecticism is a serious error, for the Scripture is a coherent whole, no part of which may be set aside.

Moreover, a significant segment of the denomination (if not the entire denomination), failing to apprehend the fact that the Scripture is a coherent whole in which the old foreshadows the new and the new fulfills and illuminates the old, depreciates *Moses* and the *Prophets*.¹⁴ The most obvious manifestation of this artificial division and depreciation of the Scripture is seen in the superstition of the Churches of Christ regarding the use of musical instruments in worship.

¹⁴ *Moses* and the *Prophets* are the portion of the Scripture commonly but incorrectly known as the “Old Testament.”

Chapter 5

Examples Found in the Record of the Scripture

moose

5.1 Peter on the Day of Pentecost

On the Day of Pentecost following the ascension of Jesus into Heaven, the Apostle Peter addressed a large crowd which gathered at Jerusalem. Peter spoke in the power of the Spirit of God, as the personal representative or vicar of the King, Jesus. Immediately after Peter concluded his address, about three thousand souls obeyed the command of the Lord and entered the Way of Life.

These did not “*invite Jesus into their hearts;*” nor did they “*accept Jesus as Personal Saviour.*” Rather, they simply obeyed the command of Jesus, issued through Peter, his Apostle, and submitted to baptism for the remission of sins.

But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord come: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in the grave, neither his flesh did see corruption.

This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear: For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right

hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

— Acts 2:14–41

5.2 Paul, the Last Appointed of the Twelve

The election of Matthias as a replacement for Judas Iscariot was not legitimate. Jesus, personally and face-to-face, called each of his disciples. In that manner Jesus called Saul of Tarsus, known as Paul, to be the twelfth Apostle. The encounter, which took place on the road to Damascus, blinded Paul. The Lord sent Ananias to Paul, to restore the sight of Paul and to command him to be baptized.

And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

— Acts 22:12–16

And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

— Acts 9:17–18

5.3 At the First Opportunity

The angel of the Lord dispatched the Evangelist Philip to proclaim the Gospel to a high official (such is the meaning of the term “eunuch”) of Ethiopia. And though Ethiopia is a nation comprised of the Negro race,¹ it is certain that the official was a Jew (and thus of the Adamic Race, which is white), rather than a Negro.² After release from captivity in Babylon circa 516 B. C., many Jews took up residence elsewhere, rather than returning to the Land of Promise. Skills gained by exposure to the culture of the Babylonians, the Medes, and the Persians, enabled the Israelites to secure positions of prominence in less-developed lands. Some among the descendants of these expatriate Israelites made one or more annual pilgrimages to Jerusalem, particularly to observe the Feast of Passover. This is evidenced by the amazement caused by the gift of Tongues on the Day of Pentecost.³

Philip then made to the man that which obviously an extensive presentation of the Gospel, including the necessity of baptism for the remission of sins. Consequently, as the chariot came to a place in which there was sufficient water for immersion,⁴ the officer proposed that he be baptized.

¹ Jeremiah 13:23.

² Though the Jew made proselytes of men outside of the line Abraham-Isaac-Jacob, Matthew 23:15, there is no reason to believe that the proselytes were other than descendants of Adam. The deluge in the day of Noah demonstrated the degree to which mixing of the races is abhorrent to the Lord God. Though some Protestant Pulpits claim that the “Sons of God” were angels, such a tale abounds in absurdity. The truth is that the Sons of God are members of the Adamic Race and the daughters of men belong to other races; consider Luke 3:38. Despite the ejection of Adam and the Woman from the Garden, the intention of the Lord was to use the Adamic Race as a pool from which to draw candidates for staffing the many offices of the government of God; consider John 14:2–3.

³ Acts 2:1–13.

⁴ Consider John 3:23.

And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?

Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.

— Acts 8:26–40

5.4 A Command Which Seemed Nonsensical

Scripture written prior to the Incarnation has been preserved for our admonition, reproof, correction, and instruction.⁵ The account of the healing of Naaman the Leper,⁶ perhaps better than any other passage, demonstrates the necessity of obedience of the command of the Lord, even when the command does not seem to make sense.

Naaman moose

5.4.1 A Test of Obedience, Not a “Work of the Law”

Two matters are being overlooked:

1. The “works” which are in view with respect to salvation are the *Works of the Law* (of Moses), Romans 9:32. In no sense is ritual baptism a *Work of the Law*. Ritual baptism is an act of obedience.
2. The Scripture distinguishes between salvation and justification. Justification is the erasure of indebtedness. Salvation is deliverance, the ultimate deliverance being that of resurrection from the dead.

It is impossible to be justified by the *Works of the Law*, Galatians 2:16.

However, repentance, faith, obedience, and endurance are required for deliverance.

It would appear that entrance into the *Way of Life* is no guarantee of the attainment of life everlasting; consider Matthew 18:23–35.

Baptism is not, as some claim, a “*Work of the Law*.” Rather, baptism is a test of obedience.

Supporting his argument that salvation cannot be dependent upon the one who is saved, the Protestant can cite only one passage of Scripture:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

— Ephesians 2:8–10

But they cite only the first two verses. The next verse that passage clearly moose

⁵Romans 15:4, I Corinthians 9:9–10, I Corinthians 10:11, II Timothy 3:16–17.

⁶II Kings Chapter 5.

5.4.2 Obedience Demands Humility

Obedience of a command is tantamount to submission to the authority of the one who issues the command. And submission to authority requires humility. The Scripture declares, “*God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.*”⁷

Though a leper, Naaman was a man worthy of respect. A mighty warrior, Naaman was the chief of the army of Syria, “*a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria.*” The status of Naaman is reflected by the value of the gift which the King of Syria was willing to pay for the healing of Naaman; the King sent with Naaman “*ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment.*”

The Prophet did not speak directly to Naaman, but sent out his servant, to command Naaman to wash seven times in Jordan. The lack of personal attention was a further humiliation. It is noteworthy that, on the Day of Pentecost, Christ Jesus did not speak directly to the multitude, commanding them to repent and be baptized, but issued the command through his servant, the Apostle Peter.

Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper.

And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman’s wife. And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy. And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel. And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel.

And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment. And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy. And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.

And it was so, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.

So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha. And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.

But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.

And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean? Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to 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 5:1–14

The initial response of Naaman to the command to wash seven times in Jordan demonstrated the pride of Naaman. Naaman considered himself a very important person. But only after he swallowed his pride and obeyed the command of the Prophet was Naaman healed.

The conclusion is inescapable: even as the healing of Naaman was contingent upon his obedience to the Word of the Lord as spoken by the Prophet, so also the man who refuses to be Baptized for the Remission of Sins is not justified, nor is he imparted the indwelling Spirit of God.⁸

And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

— Acts 5:32

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

— Luke 6:46

⁷ I Peter 5:5.

⁸ Acts 2:38.

5.5 Why Saul Lost the Throne

When Samuel was sent by the Lord to anoint Saul as King over Israel, Saul was “*little in his own eyes.*” But with his elevation to the throne, his pettiness became apparent. Saul proved to be irresponsible, haughty, vengeful, and incapable of repentance. At the beginning of his reign, purposeful disobedience of the Word of the Lord cost Saul the Throne.

Samuel also said unto Saul, The Lord sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the Lord.

Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and sucking, ox and sheep, camel and ass.

And Saul gathered the people together, and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah. And Saul came to a city of Amalek, and laid wait in the valley. And Saul said unto the Kenites, Go, depart, get you down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them: for ye shewed kindness to all the children of Israel, when they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites. And Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah until thou comest to Shur; that is over against Egypt.

And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly.

Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying, It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments.

And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the Lord all night. And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, and, behold, he set him up a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal. And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord. And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the Lord hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on. And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel? And the Lord sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed. Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord?

And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal.

And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice. Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord. And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.

And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent. And Samuel said unto him, The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou.

– I Samuel 15:1–28

5.6 The Mocking Sycophant

In the Incarnation, Christ Jesus dealt with many hypocrites who called him “Lord” (meaning “Master”) but were not subservient to his will and his commands. Like Saul, who disobeyed the commandment of the Lord, taking Agag captive and sparing the livestock and wealth of the Amalekites, these consider themselves wiser than the commandments of the Scripture.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

— Matthew 7:21–27

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

— Luke 6:46–49

5.7 “Even If It Is Midnight”

The urgency of baptism for the remission of sins is witnessed by the account of the conversion of the jailor at Philippi. He and his household, hearing the Gospel in the middle of the night and gladly embracing it, that same hour of the night was baptized. This, of course, was in an age long before the advent of flashlights and heated baptismal pools. Thus, the baptism was dangerous, as well as inconvenient. It would seem foolish not to wait until morning light.

This account perhaps is the most convincing evidence to the fact that the ritual of baptism for the remission of sins is the portal through which man in the present age—the Age of the *Reign of the Christ*—enters the *Way of Life*.

And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.

And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go. And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace. But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out. And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans. And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city.

And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.
—*Acts 16:16–40*

Chapter 6

The *Plan of God* and the *Way of Life*

Moose.

6.1 The Misapprehension of the Protestant

The Protestant, having no understanding of the *Plan of God*, construes the purpose of life to be the attainment of Salvation. And the Protestant understanding of Salvation likewise is defective. The Protestant thinks that all men by birth are consigned to everlasting torture in a place called Hell. Accordingly, to the Protestant, Salvation consists simply of rescue from the face of Hell. And, indeed, the Protestant Faith focuses upon this concept, which the Protestant calls “Personal Salvation.” But the *Plan of God* is not at all the rescue operation envisioned by the Protestant.

T but makes no mention of the *Way of Life*. The Scripture offers entrance into the *Way of Life*, with Salvation as the reward of those who persist in the *Way*, enduring unto the end.

6.2 The Cost of Life Everlasting

Christ Jesus warns that the Way of Life is expensive and demanding, and that a man ought count the cost before entering, lest he discover that the price is greater than he is willing to pay. In order to ensure that none fail to apprehend this vital truth, Jesus repeats the warning, illustrating with similes which are unforgettable.

- After telling a rich man to divest himself of all that he possesses, Jesus says that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle,¹ than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God.²
- Noting that he is not come to bring peace, but rather, a sword, and division within families, Jesus says that a man whose love of father, mother, son, or daughter exceeds his love for Jesus is not worthy of him.³
- Jesus says that a man who does not take his torture stake and does not follow him is not worthy of him.⁴
- Jesus says that a man who finds or saves his life shall lose it, and the man who loses his life for the sake of Jesus and the Gospel of the Kingdom of God shall find it.⁵
- Jesus instructs the man who would become his disciple to deny himself, take up his torture stake, and follow him.⁶

¹Some commentators claim that the “eye of a needle” is a tiny gate in the city wall, supposedly used for passage after the main city gates are closed at sunset. Supposedly, a camel is able to pass through the “eye,” albeit with great difficulty. Other commentators claim that Jesus used the term *kamilos*, meaning cable, rather than *kamelos*, “camel.” However, it must be remembered that Jesus frequently spoke in his role of the Prophet, the *Son of Man*, and that prophetic utterances typically abound with hyperbole.

²Matthew 19:20–26.

³Matthew 10:35–37, Luke 14:26.

⁴Matthew 10:38.

⁵Matthew 10:39, Matthew 16:25, Mark 8:35.

⁶Matthew 16:24, Mark 8:34, Mark 10:21, Luke 9:23, Luke 14:27.

- Jesus compares the man contemplating entry into the *Way of Life* to the man contemplating building a tower. He cautions that the man ought first sit down and count the cost, lest, having laid the foundation, he not have the wherewithal to complete the tower.⁷
- Jesus compares the man contemplating entry into the *Way of Life* to a king contemplating battle with another king. He cautions that the king ought first sit down and determine whether his army is sufficiently strong to gain victory over his opponent.⁸

6.3 The Portal to the *Way of Life*

Moose.

6.4 The Gift of the Spirit of God

The Spirit of God is imparted in consequence of obedience of the command to be baptized.⁹ Obedience to God, which is nothing other than obedience to the commands of God, is a condition of impartation of the Spirit.¹⁰

6.5 The Penalty of Turning Back After Entry into the *Way of Life*

The Scripture not only warns that continuance in the *Way of Life* is demanding and that not all who enter the *Way* endure unto the end, but also provides examples of individuals who entered the *Way* and then turned back. Only the Justified enter the *Way of Life*. Justification, which is the remission of sins, is imputed upon baptism, thus, the ritual is named “*Baptism for the Remission of Sins*.”

The purpose of the *Way of Life* is Sanctification, which is a “*renewing of the mind*”.¹¹ Sanctification is essential to Salvation.¹² The Scripture declares that it is impossible to renew again to repentance the man who enters the *Way of Life* and turns back.¹³ What, then, of the Justification of such a man? The answer, which generally is overlooked, is found in a parable of Jesus.

6.5.1 The Cross, the Tower, & the King Going to War

Moose.

If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

— Luke 14:26–33

⁷Luke 14:28–30.

⁸Luke 14:31–32. This and the previous warning parallel the warnings found in the *Epistle to the Hebrews* regarding those who fall away from the *Way*, Hebrews 6:1–9.

⁹Acts 2:38.

¹⁰Acts 5:32.

¹¹Romans 12:2, Ephesians 4:21–24.

¹²Hebrews 12:14–16.

¹³Hebrews 6:4–8.

6.5.2 Revocation of Justification

Answering the query of Peter as to how many times a Christian should forgive a brother who asks forgiveness, Jesus taught the *Parable of the Unforgiving Forgiven Servant*.¹⁴ In the parable, a servant, having received from his lord, the king, forgiveness of an astronomical debt,¹⁵ then goes to a fellowservant and with violence demands immediate payment of a minuscule debt.¹⁶ Upon learning of the unmerciful behaviour of the forgiven servant, the king revoked the forgiveness he previously granted. Jesus warns, “*So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.*” Thus it is apparent that Justification may be revoked.

6.5.3 The Case of Simon the Sorcerer

The experience of Simon the Sorcerer demonstrates that Salvation is not guaranteed to everyone who enters into the *Way of Life*.

Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city.

But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me. — Acts 8:5–27

The exhortation of Peter, “*And pray God, if perhaps he thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee,*” indicates that xxx moose

6.5.4 The Warning to the Hebrews

Moose.

¹⁴Matthew 18:21–35. Consider also Matthew 6:14–15, Mark 11:25–26, Luke 6:37, Luke 11:4, Luke 17:3–4, Luke 23:34, Acts 7:58–60, Ephesians 4:32.

¹⁵The amount is described with the Greek terms *muriōs* and *talanton*. The meaning of *muriōs* depends upon the context; it can mean a literal quantity of ten thousand, but in the Ancient World *muriōs* also was used to describe an innumerable quantity. *talanton* is a weight, used for measure of precious metals such as silver or gold. The *talanton* varied from time to time and from county to country; it seems at this date impossible to determine the weight or the material with which the audience to whom Jesus was speaking would have been most familiar. However, the context being a parable, the meaning is “an unfathomable amount of money.”

¹⁶The debt is described as a hundred “pence” (Greek, *denarion*). The same term, *denarion*, is used in the *Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard*, Matthew 20:1–16; the *King James Version* translates it “penny.” In that parable, a *denarion* is the daily wage of a day labourer in a vineyard.

Chapter 7

Straw Men Used by Opponents of Baptism

Those who adamantly refuse to recognize the teaching of the Scripture regarding the necessity of the ritual of baptism typically resort to the use of a “straw man.”¹

However, those who argue thus must be suspected of being disingenuous and guilty of sleight of hand; for the first of their objections does not reflect the thinking of a rational individual, and the second fails immediately upon investigation of the Scriptural use of the term “works.” Thus, rather than arguing on the basis of that which the Scripture teaches, they set up straw men which easily are knocked down, and employ ridicule in an attempt to discredit their opponents and to dissuade objective inspection of the facts.

7.1 Water Cannot Wash Away Sin

moose

7.1.1 The Apostle Peter

Those who counter with the argument that Water cannot wash away sin often cite the Apostle Peter:

But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror; neither be troubled; But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing. For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the 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. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

— 1 Peter 3:14–22

¹The straw man is a technique employed by to clever but dishonest debaters. It consists of an appealing but deceptively misleading argument, often involving a false issue. The straw man deliberately is flawed, so that it easily may be demolished. A debater creates a straw man in the expectation that, when he demolishes the straw man, the audience shall conclude (erroneously) that he has defeated the logic of his opponent. It is designed to make the gainsayer appear to be a fool, and to dissuade investigation of the matter with open Bible and readiness to accept truth. Thus, the success of the straw man technique depends upon the credulousness of the audience: a discerning audience which is righteous and just has no tolerance for deception or for the would-be deceiver.

7.1.2 The Apostle Paul

moose

Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I make now unto you. (And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith,) I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished. And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord. And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance; And saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him. And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live. And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air, The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him. And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned? When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman. Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea. And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born. Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him. – Acts 22:1–29

And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink. And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. And when he had received meat,

he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ. And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him: But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket. And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem. And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him. Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus. Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.

— Acts 9:1–19

7.2 The Greek Preposition *eis* Can Mean “In Consequence Of”

In his indictment of the Scribes and the Pharisees,² Christ Jesus cited the repentance of the men of Nineveh, “because they repented *at* the preaching of Jonas.”³ In that citation, the word which the *King James Version* translates “at” is the Greek preposition *eis*. While *eis* can have a variety of meanings, in the context of the citation, *eis* clearly indicates that the repentance is a consequence of the proclamation of Jonah. On the basis of

But this objection ignores the instruction of the Lord concerning baptism which Paul received from Ananias:

And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

— Acts 22:12–16

7.3 The Malefactor Was Not Baptized

The thief on the cross died before the New Covenant was instituted by the death of Christ Jesus as covenant sacrifice.⁴

The incarnate Christ had the prerogative of granting forgiveness of sins to whomever he chose.⁵

7.4 Baptism Is a *Work of the Law*

moose

Those who deny the necessity of baptism often assert that baptism is a “*Work of the Law*.” But deniers ignore the fact that the *Law of Moses* does not prescribe baptism; baptism is not a “*Work of the Law*.” Sadly, few Protestants are familiar with the Scriptural account of the healing of Naaman the Leper; the account teaches that submission to the ritual of water baptism is a test of obedience.

moose

According to the Protestant concept of salvation, compliance with the command to be baptized for the remission of sins is an act of merit, and thus is disallowed. Supposedly, the individual who obeys the command thereby disqualifies

²Matthew Chapter 12

³Matthew 12:41.

⁴Because of a blunder on the part of William Tyndale, English Bibles commonly translate *diatithemai* as “testament,” rather than “covenant,” and *diatheke* as “testator,” rather than covenant sacrifice. The sacrifice of Jesus was portrayed in the sacrifice prepared by Abraham, Genesis 15.

⁵Matthew 9:6

himself from receiving Salvation. Likewise, the Protestant rejects the concept of the *Way of Life* as necessary to Sanctification, as well as the concept of Sanctification as the means whereby men attain to the Resurrection. The Protestant finds abhorrent the thought that the Lord God should require work of his creatures. But in his unqualified rejection of works, the Protestant turns a blind eye to a multitude of Scriptures.

moose Baptism is a portal which in the Scripture [moose EXAMPLES] is juxtaposed with/against works; it is an act/sacrifice of obedience.

Baptism is an act of obedience which one does because of his faith in the promise of the Lord God.

The works which are excluded as means of salvation are *Works of the Law*, that law being the *Law of Moses*. In passing, note that the subject is justification, and not the complete package generally termed “salvation.”

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.
— Galatians 2:16

One enters the *Way of Life* by obeying the command “Repent and be baptized.” Contrary to the braying often heard from the Protestant Pulpit, baptism is not a “work.” When the Scripture says “not of works” it has in view the *Works of the Law* (which law is the Law of Moses). Just as Naaman would not have been cleansed of leprosy apart from obedience, so no one in this epoch of the New Covenant enters the *Way of Life* apart from baptism; that is why baptism is so prominent in the Scriptural record of the Church in the Apostolic Epoch.

moose Indeed, in open defiance of the command of Peter (which actually is the command of Christ Jesus), the Protestant argues that baptism as a requirement for Salvation is a “work,”⁶ and thus is disallowed.

⁶The Protestant invariably cites Ephesian 2:8–9, ignoring Romans 9:32, Galatians 2:16, and Galatians 3:2–13, all of which make clear that the “works” in view are “works of the Law” done in an attempt to be justified apart from faith. But there is more to Salvation than Justification.

Chapter 8

The Fruit of Disobedience

Few have given serious contemplation to the repercussions of ignoring the command to be baptized for the remission of sins.

The trouble with that which most Americans call “Christianity” is that it is not the Christian Faith of the Scripture. Rather, it is the religion known as Protestantism, which is a counterfeit of the Christian Faith. Protestantism is the fruit of purposeful disobedience to the plain and explicit commandment of the Scripture.

8.1 Countless Counterfeits

Devised by unregenerate man, Protestantism is comprised of a litany of forgeries:

8.1.1 Godhead

Protests worship a false Godhead. The Godhead of the Protestant is an ill-defined mystical “Trinity.” The Scripture reveals that the Godhead is a family, comprised of God the Father and God the Son.

8.1.2 Christ

The Protestant worships a false Christ, who demonstrated his deity by resurrecting himself and who has yet to commence his reign.

The Protestant claims that the Christ did not divest himself of the attributes of deity for the purpose of Incarnation. Thus, the Christ of the Protestant, being immortal, could not die. But apart from death, there is no atonement for sin.¹

The Protestant disregards the profound truth revealed by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Philippians.² In the bungled translation found in the *King James Version*, the Greek term *arpagmos*, which means the act of seizing or the thing seized, spoil, an object of eager desire, or a prize, is rendered as “robbery.” Prior to the Incarnation, the Son of God did not consider equality with God a thing to be grasped or held tightly; which is to say that the Son was willing to relinquish his divine attributes for the purpose and duration of the Incarnation.

The willingness of Jesus to experience such debasement was motivated by the joy which God the Father set before him.³ The joy, that of a neverending reign over the Kingdom of Heaven, was the *sequel* (Greek, *ekbasis*) which enabled the Incarnate Christ to endure the testing of the torture stake.⁴

¹Hebrews 9:22. In the Scripture, the phrase “shedding of blood” means death, irrespective of whether blood actually was shed; likewise, the “blood” of a man means the life of the man.

²2:5–11.

³Hebrews 12:2.

⁴The goal of testing is endurance, not escape, I Corinthians 10:13. As a reward to motivate endurance, the Lord creates an outcome or sequel. The bungled translation of the *King James Version* stupidly renders *ekbasis* as a “way of escape.”

8.1.3 Gospel

The “Gospel of Personal Salvation” proclaimed by the Protestant is a false Gospel. It is the announcement of a supposed deliverance from a supposed fate of everlasting torture. The focus of the contrived “Gospel” of the Protestant is upon man, and it looks no farther than alteration of consignment. Supposedly, the fate of man is changed from neverending torture in a place called “Hell” to everlasting idleness in Heaven.

But the focus of the true Gospel, the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven, is government. The populace of the Earth groans under oppression, and longs for relief. The desired relief shall come when the Resurrection manifests the Sons of God.⁵ The great purpose of the Lord God in his Creation is to bring about a realm in which endless generations of mortals may experience the joys of life, free from the incompetence, injustice, and oppression which is inevitable in societies governed by man.

The Gospel or “glad tidings” is the proclamation that the prophesied Kingdom of God became a reality when Jesus ascended into Heaven and was seated upon the revived Throne of David, to begin his everlasting reign. The Gospel includes instruction whereby men may gain citizenship in the Kingdom, thereby becoming officers in the government of God.

Finally, the Lord God is merciful; torture is contrary to his nature. To allege that God tortures his creatures is blasphemy.

8.1.4 Salvation

“Personal Salvation” is an invention of the Protestant. As it is advertised by the Protestant Pulpit, Personal Salvation has several characteristics which are remarkable:

- Salvation is imparted indiscriminately, without regard to race or ethnicity.
- Salvation is imparted without precondition.
- The recipient of Salvation incurs no obligation.
- Salvation is a gift which is imparted without charge.
- Salvation is imparted in a momentary transaction which entails only a temporary exercise of faith or volition.
- Salvation is irrevocable.

The purpose of Salvation is to transform mortal men into Sons of God. The transformation involves more than the change wrought by the Resurrection, in which corruptible mortal creatures of the Natural Realm are transformed into incorruptible immortal beings of the Spirit Realm. What is needed is a transformation of the inner man, the phenomenon which the Scripture calls a “renewing of the mind” or Sanctification. The pursuit of Sanctification is the purpose of the *Way of Life*. The *Way of Life* is a cyclic affair which entails repeated episodes of instruction, testing, failure, repentance, and correction. The goal of those in the *Way* is endurance unto the end,⁶ which is tantamount to attainment to the Resurrection.⁷

8.1.5 Baptism

Protests practice a false Baptism, which is not the *Baptism for the Remission of Sins* commanded by the Apostle Peter on the Day of Pentecost.⁸

And the list goes on and on, *ad infinitum*.

8.2 In the Local Assembly

The man standing in the Protestant Pulpit is not a Christian, for he has not been baptized for the remission of sins.

The man sitting in the Pew is not a Christian, for he has not been baptized for the remission of sins.

⁵Psalm 102:15–22, Romans 8:19–23.

⁶Matthew 10:22, I Peter 1:13.

⁷Philippians 3:7–17.

⁸Acts 2:38.

8.3 In the Nation

The Protestant Pulpit constantly is seeking to motivate the congregation to fight evils (real or imagined), and to undertake the reformation of Society. In past generations, the Pulpit has supported campaigns against slavery and alcohol; today a principal target is abortion. But the Scripture forbids the Christian from engaging in efforts of reformation.⁹ The rule for the Christian is “Come out and be separate.”¹⁰

Jesus told his followers that they were “salt” and “light” to Society.¹¹ In the Ancient World, salt was the primary preservative. And light is necessary for understanding, for the orderly conduct of life, and for work.¹² Of course, the followers of Jesus are those who hear and gladly embrace the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven. Justified by faith, they enter the Way of Life and pursue Sanctification. The result is a transformation of their thinking—a renewing of the mind.¹³ Their new perspective is communicated to Society as light, and they proclaim the Gospel. Consequently, an entire Society may be transformed.

But, as the Scriptural accounts demonstrate, some nations and some ethnic groups are not receptive to the Gospel. The soil is not of favourable,¹⁴ so the seed of the Gospel cannot multiply. The Lord does not squander evangelistic efforts on such nations and groups.¹⁵

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⁹I Corinthians 5:9–13.

¹⁰II Corinthians 6:14 – 7:1.

¹¹Matthew 5:13–16.

¹²Proverbs 4:19, Isaiah 59:10, Jeremiah 13:16, John 8:12, John 9:4, John 11:9–10, Philippians 2:15.

¹³Romans 12:2, Ephesians 4:21–24.

¹⁴Matthew 13:1–23, Mark 4:1–20, Luke 8:4–15.

¹⁵Acts 13:14–52.