

// INTRO

I was presented some information a few weeks ago and it sent me down a path of information that I want to share with you today.

This is on the **Day of Pentecost**, and Peter stands before a diverse crowd in Jerusalem and preaches the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The people are *cut to the heart* and ask what their next steps are.

Acts 2:38-41 ESV

³⁸ And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.” ⁴⁰ And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.” ⁴¹ So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

This week, I finally found my answer!

Having been to Jerusalem last year, there aren't many places of water that a large amount of people would've been able to be baptized.

For the record: we are talking FULL IMMERSION, NOT A SPRINKLE!

BAPTISM IN OT VS NT

Here in [Acts 2](#), the word Baptized is the greek word **baptizo** meaning *to fully immerse, to wash, to bathe*

In Hebrew the word is **tevilah** again meaning, *to fully immerse*.

The idea of fully immersion is to show a full cleansing. If a man were to immerse and leave the tip of his finger out of the water, he would still be considered unclean.

The beauty of this is not to make a legalistic thing out of full immersion but to take joy in the fact that God wants **all of you cleansed**.

There is no filth in your life that He cannot cleanse! There is no sin that the blood cannot wash.

[Revelation 7:14](#) "...They have washed their robes and **made them white in the blood** of the Lamb."

[Isaiah 1:18](#) "18 "Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord: **though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow**; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool."

[1 John 1:7](#) "7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and **the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.**"

So this idea of baptism is not a New Testament only idea, this is a ceremony that the Lord himself instituted, signifying the transition of someone.

So, back to [Acts 2](#), the answer to where they were baptized...they were baptized in a Mikvah

THE MIKVAH

WHAT IS IT?

Mikvah has several meanings:

- i. a gathering of water.

as seen in [Genesis 1:10](#) “10 God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered (mikvah) together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.”

also seen in [Leviticus 11:36](#) “36 Nevertheless, a spring or a cistern holding (mikvah) water shall be clean, but whoever touches a carcass in them shall be unclean.”

- ii. a human-made stepped bath used to restore one’s condition from unclean to clean.

as seen in [Isaiah 22:11](#) “11 You made a reservoir (mikvah) between the two walls for the water of the old pool. But you did not look to him who did it, or see him who planned it long ago.”

WHERE WAS THE MIKVAH?

A mikvah could’ve been anywhere.

In the New Testament we see the Pool of Siloam and the Pool of Bethesda - both would’ve been large, public mikvahs.

John 9:7 *ESV*

⁷ and said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

In [Matt 8](#), Jesus cleanses a leper and tells him to go to the priest and to “present the gift that Moses commanded.”

[Leviticus 14](#) gives us insight into what that “gift” would’ve been.

- there is a whole cleansing process for a leper that the priest would’ve performed.
- the cleansed leper would’ve also brought a sacrifice.

Leviticus 14:8 ESV

⁸ And he who is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes and shave off all his hair and bathe himself in water, and he shall be clean. And after that he may come into the camp, but live outside his tent seven days.

MODERN MIKVAH

There are mikvah's very much in operation all around the world.

One of the things about a mikvah is that it must have natural or living water in it.

Many of the modern ones in metropolitan areas have city water but also have water being fed in by a natural (living) source.

THE NIDDAH

THE REDEMPTION

Going to mikvah is not and should not be an act or place of shame.

Going to mikvah is a hopeful occasion!

You are going in **unclean, filthy, decrepit** and coming out **clean, new and alive!**

2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

PRAISE GOD!

In the same way, we should be viewing Repentance!

THE CLEANSING

REPENTANCE

Matthew 3:1-2 ESV

¹ In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ² “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Matthew 3:7-8 ESV

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.

John the Baptist comes as a forerunner to Jesus, the Messiah, and his message is, “Repent!”

He said, bear fruit in accordance with repentance!

Matthew 3:11 ESV

¹¹ “I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

After this Jesus is baptized and is led by the Spirit into the desert for 40 days to be tested (or proven).

And we may think that John just came preaching repentance and Jesus came preaching grace...

Matthew 4:17 ESV

¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Mark 1:15 ESV

¹⁵ and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

Jesus sends out the 12 Apostles...

Apostles: *are messengers from the King to go into a region and prepare that region for the arrival of the king. They take any message the king wishes to share and begin to make that area look like the rest of the kingdom. Apostles are sent ones, on mission, with purpose.*

And what was the message that King Jesus sent his Apostles with?

Mark 6:12 ESV

¹² So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent.

There's more but I will stop here with this...

Luke 13:5 ESV

⁵ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

FORGIVENESS

Cleansed [1 John 1:9](#) “9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to **cleanse us** from all unrighteousness.”

Healed [James 5:16](#) “16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that **you may be healed**.

Forgiveness [Psalm 32:5](#) “5 I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,” and **you forgave the iniquity** of my sin. Selah”

DEAD TO SIN, ALIVE IN CHRIST

[Romans 6](#) is a fantastic passage on baptism, and in modern Christianity we would sum baptism up in the phrase Paul uses in [Romans 6:11](#), “dead to sin, alive in Christ.”

When I read this, I always seem to gravitate towards [John 3](#) when Jesus and Nicodemus have a midnight encounter and Jesus opens Nicodemus' eyes to the need for a rebirth.

THE VALLEYS

John 3:1-6 ESV

¹ Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ² This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.” ³ Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” ⁴ Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” ⁵ Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Now, Jesus says to Nicodemus that unless someone is born of **WATER** and the **SPIRIT** that he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

Interestingly enough, from our viewpoint we know that there are two types of baptism that we see in Acts:

- i. Water Baptism for Repentance
- ii. Spirit (Fire) Baptism for Power

The **main point** I’m making here is that baptism is absolutely central to our faith!

Now, as their conversation continues, Jesus makes this interesting phrase ...

John 3:14-15 ESV

¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

LET’S GO DIG!

MERIBAH

The serpent situation happens in [Numbers 21](#), but I scrolled back to gain some context and some interesting things take place.

In [Numbers 20](#), Israel comes to a place now called, Meribah.

This becomes a transitional moment in Israel's history.

They arrive at this place where there is seemingly no water.

They complain and quarrel with the Lord.

God give specific instructions to Moses about how to get water.

Moses partially obeys, but in his partial obedience, takes the glory from the Lord and places it on himself.

Side note: it says that water came out abundantly. God knows how to bring you abundance when it looks like nothing.

Out of this act, Moses and Aaron are both sentenced and end date.

Shortly after this moment, Aaron dies and was unable to enter the promised land.

FIERY SERPENTS

Israel grumbles with God again and this time God releases vipers upon the camp.

The people repent and God gives Moses a creative way to attain their deliverance.

Make a bronze serpent and place it on a pole. We've seen this symbol on a paramedic's uniform.

THE BAPTISM CYCLE

From here God brings them to Beer (*be-air*)

Beer means “well” - God brought his people to water.

From Beer to **Mattanah** – *a sacrificial offering or gift*

From Mattanah to **Nahaliel** – *the valley of the Lord*

From Nahaliel to **Bamoth** – *heights*

- a. *God bring them to water*
- b. *A sacrifice is made*
- c. *They go through the valley of the Lord*
- d. *They are brought to new heights*

NAHALIEL & THE VALLEYS

“the valley of the Lord”

[Psalm 23](#) talks about the valley of the shadow of Death, I will fear no evil.

If we can walk through the valley of the shadow of death and have no fear, we should not be afraid to approach the valley of the Lord.

We approach with reverence, but not fear.

- It was in the valley that **David** defeated Goliath.
- It was in a deep pit that God met **Gideon** and called him a man of mighty valor.
- It was in the depths that **Joseph** was plummeted before being exalted to second in command of the greatest world power of that day.
- It was in a garden valley that **Jesus** spoke to his father and said, not my will but yours be done, I will drink the cup you have placed before me. Interestingly enough, it was

after this valley moment that he was exalted to a high place and brought life to all of creation.

Valleys are low places, deep places, dark places, less desirable places, there's usually very few ways out of a valley (or few easy ways out).

Many times, the valley is where the water is!

Water is incredible, it knows how to penetrate and it will always find the lowest place.

We wonder why God is overflowing in our lives, maybe we haven't descended low enough to be fully immersed!

[Isaiah 40:4](#) “4 Every valley shall be lifted up, ...”

Psalm 68:18 NLT

When you ascended to the heights,
you led a crowd of captives.
You received gifts from the people,
even from those who rebelled against you.
Now the LORD God will live among us there.

THE NEW LIFE

2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

When talking with an outcast woman who had been married 5 times, Jesus tells her

[John 4:10](#) “10 Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have **given you living water.**””

Revelation 21:5-6 ESV

⁵ And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” ⁶ And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.

Ephesians 4:20-24 ESV

²⁰ But that is not the way you learned Christ!— ²¹ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, ²² to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Romans 6:4 ESV

⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

CLOSING

Today is not a specific call that you must run out and be fully immersed in water, although if you are desiring that, we can definitely make that happen.

There's water everywhere around here!

Today is a call to the gospel, to repent for the kingdom of Heaven is near.

Examine your heart this day, see if there is any wicked way in you. See where you have misaligned your beliefs about who God is and what He has called you to do.

Tear down and crush the idols that have sprung up in your life.

The Kingdom of Heaven is near!

Healing, Deliverance, Vision, Destiny, Wholeness is in the Kingdom of Heaven!