

THE URGENCY OF BAPTISM IN JESUS NAME

2Corinthians 6:2 *(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation).*

The Apostle Peter has declared that this earth will be destroyed by unquenchable fire. “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (2 Peter 3:10). It is the same Peter who stood up on the Day of Pentecost and commanded, “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 Ghost” (Acts 2:38). According to Peter, this is how we shall save ourselves from the impending destruction. “And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation” (Acts 2:40). As such, we need to examine the connection between baptism in the name of Jesus and the destruction of which the Apostle Peter warns.

1Corinthians 15:50 *Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.*

We are all the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve. Adam means “red earth”. Adam inherited a body from this earth and his wife, Eve, inherited her body from him. The absolute and incontrovertible need for salvation can be understood from the fact that we have all inherited a body that God has marked out for destruction with fire. “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Romans 5:12). Just as certain combustible items are put aside to be burnt in industrial incinerators, those who are not baptized in Jesus name walk around with the words “to be burnt” on their backs. This is not an exaggeration: the Lord Jesus Christ himself stated “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:16). Remember, this is the same Jesus of whom the demons said, “And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?” (Matthew 8:29).

God hates the body of Adam. There is no other way to put it. Why? We must never forget the nature of the curse we inherited. God made the earth out of nothing and he clothed us with this earth (our bodies). Imagine his disappointment when his creation, covered with

the earth he created, declared themselves to be gods. It is this immense provocation which is behind the urgency to put away the body of Adam in baptism in Jesus name. In fact, baptism means to “cut off” – it is the body of Adam which has to be cut off. God compares the body of Adam to foreskins which must be cut off and discarded in the Book of Joshua. Joshua chapter five is about the new generation of Israelites who had not been circumcised in the wilderness. They were on the cusp of entering the Land of Canaan, but God refused them entrance since they were uncircumcised. Joshua was ordered to make sharp knives and circumcise this young generation. Once this was done, God said:

Joshua 5:9 And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day.

Note the words of the Lord carefully: uncircumcision is a reproach, called *herpâ* in Hebrew, and is the same word God employs for those who shall be thrown into hell in the Book of Daniel. “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame (*herpâ*) and everlasting contempt” (Daniel 12:2). In other words, failure to urgently remove the body of Adam will bring down everlasting shame. We must understand that this circumcision of the Old Testament is the same as the baptism in Jesus name of the New Testament. The Apostle Paul makes this very clear.

Colossians 2:11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:
Colossians 2:12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

The Jews looked upon gentiles with contempt because they were uncircumcised and hence unclean. “And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?” (I Samuel 17:26). David was unafraid of Goliath because uncircumcision was a great reproach in the eyes of God. David knew that God hated the flesh of Adam, which Goliath carried with such pride. All Goliath had was more Adamic, and hence cursed flesh, than most others. David knew that uncircumcised flesh had to be cut off and was only good for the birds and wild beasts.

1Samuel 17:46 This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcases of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

So far, we have only discussed the urgency of removing the flesh of Adam. However, this is not enough! We must with equal zeal and passion desire to put on the body of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The Ethiopian eunuch knew that he might not make back to Ethiopia – travel was dangerous in those days. One could fall sick or prey to bandits. Above all, he came to the conclusion that Philip’s witness pointed clearly to the Lord Jesus as the one whom Isaiah spoke about.