

THE FRUIT OF BAPTISM IN JESUS NAME

Resurrection and growth

John 12:24 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.*

This statement of Jesus was for the Greeks who wanted to see him. “And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast. The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus” (John 12:20, 21). Europeans generally have travelled the world – some out of curiosity and others to conquer and own. Europeans love to be tourists, see places and bring back photos of distant lands and people. But the first Europeans who came to see Jesus were given a strange, ominous message – fall into the ground die. Greeks were philosophers; they must have wanted to talk to Jesus about Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Philosophy is to love wisdom and search for the truth, but they were shocked to hear that they first have to fall into the ground and die in order to see Jesus – forget about talking to Jesus.

In a sense, this was the message of Jesus for all of Europe – so let us who are in Europe study the meaning of Jesus’ statement. If Europe wants to see Jesus, it first has to fall into the ground and die. This is the only way to see Jesus. This is why you and I were baptized in Jesus name – so we can see Jesus! I am here to remind you, saints of God in Europe, that you were baptized in Jesus name and hence have the promise of seeing Jesus soon. Hallelujah! Only those who are willing to fall into the waters of baptism in Jesus name will experience the power of resurrection and growth. A seed has the promise and power of growth in it. Look at any seed – we cannot know what mighty tree it might become tomorrow. To find out, it must fall into the ground and die, then with each passing day the secret of its destiny will be revealed – whether it will become a cypress, pine, fir etc. You and I cannot know what God has destined for us to become until we die to ourselves in the waters of baptism in Jesus name. Glory be to Jesus!

Genesis 1:28 *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

Before the flood, humans were unable to fulfill this command to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. It was only after the flood covered the whole earth that humans fulfilled

this command to replenish/fill the earth. Even when they tried to build a tower in one city, Babel (Genesis 11), God came down to scatter them because the flood of Noah was the seed of replenishing the whole earth. It is baptism in Jesus name that makes us fruitful. Baptism contains the seed of replenishing – of spreading and covering the whole earth. Noah was not only saved by water, but now the power of the seed of baptism began to make him fruitful to subdue to the whole earth.

1Peter 3:20 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.

1Peter 3:21 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.

To those of you who have been baptized in Jesus name, I want you to know that the most powerful seed in the universe is now working in you to fulfil the purposes of Jesus Christ. Just as one cannot know what a seed will become just by looking at its appearance, we cannot know what power is working in us to shape us for some great work that Jesus has for us. Consider the seed of the famous cedar tree, the national symbol of Lebanon (see flag). The seed is only 10-14 mm long, yet the native tree can grow to a height of 60 meters and live for a maximum of 1000 years. This tree is often mentioned in the Bible. Moses told the priests to use the bark of this tree to treat leprosy. The wood used in the building of Solomon's temple also came from the cedar tree.

Leviticus 14:4 Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop.

1Kings 5:10 So Hiram gave Solomon cedar trees and fir trees according to all his desire.

Once you fall into the ground and die, the life force of Jesus Christ will begin to make you flourish like the cedar of Lebanon. God has given you this promise in the Book of Psalms. "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon" (Psalm 92:12). May God may you a blessing like the cedar of Lebanon! Why would a person want to abide alone? Is it not clearly better to fall to the ground and die – be baptized in Jesus name so you can fulfill your God-ordained purpose?

The call of the great prophet, Moses, serves as a reminder of the importance of baptism in Jesus name before one can accomplish the will of the Lord. He abode alone in

Midian for 40 years; everyone in Egypt must have forgotten him. But this seed was going to be resurrected soon. God appeared to him in the burning bush and now he was ready to go to Egypt armed with the power of God. Only one thing remained which Moses had neglected: circumcision of his children.

Exodus 4:24 And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the LORD met him, and sought to kill him.

Exodus 4:25 Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me.

Exodus 4:26 So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision.

Circumcision represents baptism in Jesus name (Colossians 2:11-13). The foreskin of the male child cut off and falling to the ground represents the seed which must fall into the ground and die, as Jesus commanded the Greeks. Only when the foreskin fell to the ground could Israel resurrect as a nation in Egypt and accomplish the purposes of God. The same goes for Abraham whom we spoke about last week. In him God invested the seed of becoming the father of many nations which is why he was the first to be circumcised/baptized in Jesus name. Do you want to unleash the power of the seed word of God? Be baptized in Jesus name! Have you been baptized in Jesus name? Then you must believe the power of the seed/Jesus is working in you and will continue to grow making you more fruitful. Expect to grow, expect to spread out into the world, expect amazing fruits and gifts in the name of Jesus. This is the nature of Jesus himself – he grows and conquers the whole earth!

Daniel 2:34 Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.

Daniel 2:35 Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

Jesus is the promised seed. “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ” (Galatians 3:16). This seed will grow and conquer the earth. It is this seed which is planted in you through baptism in Jesus name – it is your destiny now to grow and spread the knowledge of Jesus Christ everywhere. May God grant you to feel the power of this growth in Jesus name! May you be fruitful for his glory!