

Christian Israelites and Baptism

“He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved.” Mark 16:16.

Baptism is one of the basic requirements of the Christian Israelite faith, and we believe it must be performed by total immersion in an open river or sea. Baptism is a confession to God that we have sinned and evidence that we want our sins forgiven through the cleansing blood of Jesus:

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptised 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.

We believe that baptism cleanses a person of their sins and that that person should then, by prayer, seek help from God to be strengthened against sinning again. However, as Paul said in Romans 3:23, “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”, and one may seek to be cleansed by the water more than once.

While baptism is important, Christian Israelites believe that God’s plan does not end there. John the Baptist, who was the first to teach baptism by total submersion, also taught that it was not God’s ultimate power and plan:

“I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” Matthew 3:11.

Jesus was the Son of God and born free of sin, but he too submitted to baptism. It was through baptism that he received the Holy Spirit or Christ, and therefore power to perform miracles and complete the will of God:

“And Jesus, when he was baptised, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him.” Matthew 3:16.

One of the crucial teachings of the Christian Israelite Church is that we work towards leaving the principles and doctrines of Christ (i.e. the teachings for the salvation of the soul) and go on to perfection (i.e. the salvation of the spirit, soul *and* body):

“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on

of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit.” Hebrews 6: 1-3.

Christian Israelites believe this is speaking about seeking the complete removal of the evil from within us by God:

“In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.” Jeremiah 50: 20.

“For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed.” Joel 3: 21.

Christian Israelites fully believe and accept the doctrine of the salvation of the soul, but build on it and move forward to seeking the salvation of spirit, soul and body. Baptism is an important part of this process and one that allows us to be cleansed from sin and empowered by the Holy Spirit; however, we believe that seeking for evil to be removed altogether is the ultimate will of God:

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” 2 Corinthians 5:17.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9.