

**Baptism from O.T. thinking** Hebrew *Mikvah*=Gathered waters  
Genesis 1 v9 Waters gathered in one 'Mikvah' Was Earth 'baptised'?  
Cleansing with water Leviticus 8 v6, 15 v5, v7,  
*Mayim Chayim*, 'Living Water' Leviticus 14 v1-7  
In First Century Israel, a community of Jews would build a Mikvah  
before the synagogue. Mikvah's were also discovered in the Qumran  
Community near the Dead Sea.

In Jewish thought, waters represent the waters of the womb, to  
emerge from the waters is a new birth.



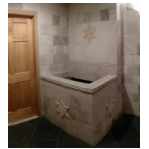
### **The Jewish Mikvah**

Today used 1. Regain ritual purity 2. Consecration 3. Convert to Judaism

*"Blessed are You, O Lord, our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with Your commandments and commanded us concerning the immersion."*



The idea of total immersion in it, is to become pure in the sight of God.  
The water used, is a mixture of rainwater and chlorinated tap water.  
They shower and wash in a preparation room before entering the main Mikvah. There are six Mikvahs in the NW  
Some Jews use a *kelim mikveh* for immersing dishes.



## Questions

What can we take from these ancient Jewish practices and ideas?

### **Two important Biblical ideas**

#### **1. Signs happen a lot in the Bible!**

Noah Genesis 9 v12-13 Rainbow sign of covenant

Abraham covenant Genesis 15 v6 v17-18

Circumcision Genesis 17 v2 v9-13

Colossians 2 v 9-15 - link circumcision and baptism.

We still have signs of covenants e.g. Wedding ring



#### **2. Water is significant in the Bible**

Waters of flood 1 Peter 3 v20-21

Waters of Red Sea, a Mikvah, arising from sea bed to new life freed from slavery of Egypt. 1 Cor 10 v1-2

Waters also provided a separation from past for the Israelites.

### **John the Baptist**

Sign of repentance, after confessing their sin. Mark 1 v 2-5. That message spread Acts 18 v 25

Jewish authorities would have been baffled as to why people would have been baptised.

Jesus was baptised. Matthew 3 v 13-17 Why? 1. He identifies with us. 2. Links water and Spirit.

Jesus's disciples baptised (before the crucifixion) John 3 :22, 4 :1-2

### **What does 'Baptism' mean?**

Greek word *baptizo* means "to plunge, dip, immerse". It was used in everyday speech, for example dyeing cloth.

In context, several passages confirm this - Mark 1:5, 1:10 - 'came up out of the water', John 3:23, Acts 8:36-39

There is a secondary meaning to the word *baptizo*, 'to come under the influence of.' so under God's sway.

Immersion is a symbol of union with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection

Romans 6:3-4, Colossians 2:12 "Sprinkling infants" does not match the symbolism of complete immersion.



## Different viewpoints on, what Baptism does

1. Roman Catholic Causes regeneration (salvation) as original sin is washed away. The child is now a Christian. Q) Does the Bible teach ceremonies save?
2. Orthodox Similar to the R.C. except the child is totally immersed three times.
3. Protestant Paedobaptism Symbolises entry into the covenant community of God (the Church)



Those that support this view look at Acts 16 :33. Were children part of the household?

The OT stipulated that male infant children of God's people should be circumcised on the 8th day (Lev 12:3) is an external sign of entry into the covenant community of God by virtue of being born into a Jewish family. Is Baptism just a new covenant version of the old covenant tradition?

However, the old covenant was made to a nation, which someone is born into, you are only born into the Church when you are born again.

Symbolises a regeneration that could occur in the future, when the infant is old enough to come to saving faith. However, could this lead to a false hope, that someone who doesn't believe, think 'it's ok if it's all true, I was made a Christian anyway'?

Paedobaptists argue that infant baptism has been the tradition of the church for centuries.

4. Believers' Baptism Symbolises a regeneration (salvation) that has already occurred. It is a picture of dying to sin and rising to new life. Romans 6:3-4 Could this ever apply to an infant?



Peter in his Pentecost sermon Acts 2 :38 urged people to repent, then to be baptised. In the book of Acts the pattern is always the same, repentance and faith come before baptism. In the Great Commission, (Matt 28) baptism is in the context of discipleship.

The Greek language has a separate word for sprinkle, *rontizo*, which is never used in reference to baptism.

## Questions

What has been your experiences of different forms of Baptism?

### Reasons to get baptised

1. Sign of obedience Mark 16 :16 Debate– Is Baptism a condition of salvation? However thief on the cross?  
“Baptism separates the type kickers from the car buyers.” - Max Lucado
2. Identification with Jesus Galatians 3 v27
3. Sign of what Spirit has done within us. (Baptism of the Spirit) Luke 3 :16 Acts 10 :44-48
4. Publicly confess our faith and show we are part of the Church I Corinthians 12 :12-13. It can also be a good witness to family and friends, to show them how seriously you take your faith.

### Other Baptism stuff

- A) Does it matter who does the baptism? No, there are no instructions in the Bible on who does it.
- B) How do we get on with Christians who hold a different viewpoint? It can be difficult to hold different views within a single church or even denomination. However, if our unity across different groups, is based on a common acceptance of the Bible as the ultimate authority, and the need for salvation, we can work well together.
- C) Does it matter where a Believers Baptism takes place? No, many places have been used.
- D) How do I get baptised? Ask church leaders.

## Questions

Any thoughts and final questions?

In September  
Who is the Holy  
Spirit?