

# Baptism -- A Spiritual Surgery

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When an alien sinner is immersed in water for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), that very act itself is an appeal to God for a clean conscience. The apostle Peter writes in his first epistle: "Baptism...now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but an appeal to God for a clean conscience" (3:21). The baptism of Saul of Tarsus had to be a calling on the name of the Lord for his clean conscience – Acts 22:16. But since it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins (Heb. 10:4); and since no gift or sacrifice of man could make the conscience perfect, but served only to sanctify him for the purification of the flesh (Heb. 9:9, 13); how can one's immersion in water cleanse the conscience?

## **God Performs an Operation!**

Since man can only be redeemed with the precious blood of Jesus Christ, as a lamb unblemished and spotless (1 Pet. 1:18-19), we learn that Christ entered into heaven itself, not with the blood of goats and calves but by means of His own blood, securing for us our eternal redemption (Heb. 9:12, 24). Hence, only the blood of Christ, who offered Himself without blemish to God, can purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God (Heb. 9:14). Therefore, when an alien sinner is immersed in water for the remission of sins, he is appealing to God to apply the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ, to his sins. The sinner is being circumcised with a spiritual circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, being buried with Him in baptism, in which he is raised with Him through faith in the operation of God (Col. 2:11-12).

## **When God Sees the Blood!**

We sing the song, "When I See the Blood," which has dual significance. First of all, our minds probably will go back to Exodus 12 where God instructed the congregation of Israel to apply the blood of an unblemished lamb to the two doorposts and on the lintel of their houses. And that night, when God passed over Egypt and saw the blood on the houses, He passed over those houses and spared their firstborn from death (Ex. 12:7, 13). Secondly, after Christ our Redeemer died on the cross, and God sees His precious blood applied to our sins as we have faith in His operation, then He will pass over our sins and we will be delivered. When we are baptized into Christ we are also being baptized into His death where we reach His precious blood (Gal. 3:26-27; Rom. 6:3-4).

Since baptism is a form of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, when we obey from the heart that form of doctrine, we then are made free from sin and become servants of righteousness (Rom. 6:17-18).

### **A Covenant with God**

God draws sinners to Himself with His everlasting love and kindness (Jere. 31:3; John 3:16, Rom. 2:4). If the sinner has an honest and good heart (Luke 8:15), he then hears and learns from the Father and comes to Christ (John 6:44-45). By obeying the gospel, the sinner is making a covenant with God to be raised from the watery grave of baptism to begin walking in newness of life by becoming a servant of righteousness for the rest of his life. God in turn adopts him into His family (Gal. 4:4-5), allowing him boldly to approach His throne of grace in prayer at any time (Heb. 4:16), and has given him the gift of the Holy Spirit which includes all the promises, blessings and benefits made known by the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2).

**QUESTIONS:** Do you have faith in the operation of God? Have you submitted to spiritual surgery? Has God seen the precious blood of His Son on your life? Have you made a covenant with God to walk in newness of life for the rest of your life?