

Synopsis 014d Description of the Messiah part 4

[John 1:14-29] Last week, we looked at the fact that sometimes there seems to be a conflict between verse 18 and other passages of Scripture. It says, “No man has seen God at any time”. We read where Isaiah says, “Woe is me, for I have seen the Lord.” Here, where it says, “No man has seen God at any time”, it is talking about the complete God-head, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit in all His glory. Moses had a desire to see the glory of the Lord, he desired to see the face of the Lord, but that was not granted to him.

But, the Lord Jesus Christ is the one who came to reveal the Father. “The only begotten son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him.” He reveals him; he shows him forth. Think to John 14: Jesus says to Philip, “He who hath seen me hath seen the father”. There’s continuity and an order to the revelation. The Lord came to reveal the Father; he never drew attention to himself.

[Hebrews 1] We read in John 1:14, that the Word became flesh. The glory of the Lord was enclosed in a body of flesh, and we beheld the glory of the only begotten of the father. That reminds us of [Hebrews 1:1-2]. The revelation of God to man is as the Son. If you want to know God the father, then study the son.

That was the message that John had when the Jews sent priests and Levites to ask him, “Who art thou?” In verse 23, he told them, “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness”. He said, “I’m not important; I’m just a voice; listen to my message! Listen to what I have to say!”

When someone becomes more interested in how he says something than in what he’s saying, he’s finished. If you’re more interested in your appearance or if you’re more interested in the messenger than the message, you’re done.

If someone were to come in right now and yell, “Fire!” we wouldn’t care what his words or gestures are; we would listen to the message. “I’m just a voice.”

This group that was sent by the Pharisees went out to see him, and they asked him, “If you’re not the Christ, and you’re not Elijah, and you’re not that prophet like unto Moses, then why are you baptizing all these people? Only we have the right to baptize.” You will run into that today. People teach that unless you are baptized by a person who was baptized by a person who was baptized by John, then you have no authority to baptize. It’s a little trick that men worked up to try to get things under their dominion and out of the hands of the Lord. Should we be baptizing today?

[Matthew 28:19] “Go ye therefore and teach all the nations.” Make disciples of all the nations. Not just the Jews scattered among the Gentiles, but the Gentiles themselves in every land. And not by making Jews of them. Jesus has promised that he’s coming back, but he has never named the date. We are to simply be ready for his coming at any time and to look for it joyfully. (Do you?) But we are to leave that to the Father and push on

the campaign for world conquest. This includes making disciples such as they were. That means evangelism in the fullest sense and not merely “revival” meetings.

“Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy ~~Ghost~~ Spirit:” Literally, it says “baptizing them into the name”. Baptizing into the name has a twofold meaning.

First of all, it denotes object or purpose, such as in Matthew 3:11 in which he baptizes unto repentance, or in Acts 2:38 in which they were baptized on the name of Jesus Christ for [into] the remission of sins.

Secondly, it denotes communion with, such as in Romans 6:3 which says, “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?” In other words, we’re brought by baptism into fellowship with his death. Baptizing into the name of the Holy Trinity implies a spiritual union with him. This word “into” is commonly used with “baptize”.

However, in Acts 2:38, Peter says, “Be baptized upon the name of Jesus Christ”, and in Acts 10:48, he commanded Cornelius and his friends to be baptized in the name of the Lord.

To be baptized upon the name is to be baptized on the confession of that which the name implies. It’s on the foundation of the name. The name “Jesus”, as the contents of the faith and confession, is the foundation upon which baptism rests.

“In the name” has reference to the sphere within which true baptism is to be accomplished. It’s not merely a designation or a symbol. If it were, then it would simply have the force of a charm. The “name”, as in “Hallowed be thy name”, is the expression of the God. It’s not his designation as God, but it’s the way that all his attributes and characteristics are summed up. It’s his complete person.

When you are baptized into the name of God, you are professing to acknowledge God in all that he is and all that he does for man. You recognize and depend upon God the Father as your creator and preserver, you are receiving Jesus as your mediator and redeemer and the pattern for your life, and you are confessing the Holy Spirit as your sanctifier and comforter. Being baptized entails much more than simply getting dunked!

Notice that it says “name” and not “names”. The use of “name” here is a common way to use it in the Septuagint and the papyri for power or authority. “Into” denotes object or purpose, and communion. “Name” has to do with power and authority. Baptize them in communion and the authority of God! That’s what we’re commanded about baptism.

But, back in John 1, they ask him, “Why are you baptizing?” What does he answer? [John 1:26] “I baptize; there standeth.” With these two phrases, John once again illustrates the sharp contrast between himself and the one of whom he’s the forerunner. “I’m just the voice.”

John is telling them, “You’re all worked up about me baptizing people with water, when there’s standing in your midst, the Messiah; Jehovah; the Christ; Jesus!” [John 1:26b] They were so wrapped up in their rituals and schemes that they didn’t know and didn’t see the Lord. John told them, using Scripture that he was the forerunner of the Messiah, and he told them who the Messiah was. Did they listen?

“But there standeth one among you.” This verb “standeth” has the added sense of firm or persistent standing. It means to stand fast. It emphasizes the firm, dignified attitude of Jesus. The same word is used in 1 Corinthians 16:13, which says, “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.” Galatians 5:1: “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” Philippians 1:27 says, “Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.”

“But there is one in your midst who stands fast, whom ye know not.” You don’t know him! The real tragedy here is that this declaration didn’t elicit any further questions from this group. “Oh, well.”

Who was this one whom they knew not and didn’t care that they didn’t know him? He was the Messiah. What does that mean? What was he there for?

Well, the first thing that comes to mind is that he came to save. What does this mean? There are several words translated as “saved”. In Luke 1:71, it is salvation from our enemies. In Matthew 8:25 and 14:30, it is physical salvation. In Acts 16:30-31; it is salvation of the spirit. In Luke 9:24, it’s the salvation of the soul.

Did he come to just save us partially? No. He came to save us completely: Body, soul, and spirit. Never forget that man is a trichotomous or three-part being, according to 1 Thessalonians 5:23. [And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.] It’s the teaching of evolution that man has two parts: A body and a soul or spirit. Jesus came so that we might be completely saved and completely preserved.

A salvation from sin is three-fold, in one sense of the word. We’re saved from the penalty of sin. The first penalty for sin was announced to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden: “In the day you sin, you shall surely die.” The primary meaning of death is separation from God. In the day you sin, you shall be separated from God. The creature will be separated from the creator. Jesus, in his death, died to bring us to God. So, with the entrance of sin came the penalty of sin. The first aspect of salvation is that Jesus died to do away with the penalty for sin.

The second aspect of a salvation from sin is that he will save me from the power of sin, if I let him, in what some call the present tense of salvation. If I let him. 1 Corinthians

10:13 says, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.” He will not allow us to be tempted beyond that which we can endure, but he will, with that temptation, provide us with a way of escape. “My grace is sufficient unto thee.” (2 Corinthians 12:9) His strength is available unto us and he will give us victory over the power of sin and deliverance from that power if we so desire it.

Not only that, but one day, this savior will deliver us from the presence of sin. The unlimited wealth, time, and energy that man expends in trying to do away with the presence and effects of sin is almost incomprehensible. There are conferences, councils, meetings held around the world, all trying to figure a way to deal with the problem of sin. Think about the groups that are trying to deal with the drug situation, the alcohol situation, pornography, etc., and that doesn’t count the ones that are trying to call sin “normal” and “alternative”. But, one day the Lord is coming back, and he’s going to take us out of the presence of sin. He will take us out of it!

Then, when we’re gone, he will deal with this sin-cursed earth, which has been judged by God and will one day feel the wrath of God. The elements shall melt with a fervent heat and pass away with a great noise. Then, he will bring in a new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness will dwell.

[Matthew 3] He not only came to save, but he also came to judge. [Matthew 3:7-12] Those to whom John was speaking would have surely been reminded of two OT prophecies. Let’s look at those two prophecies.

Hold your hand here and turn with me to [Joel 2:28-29] “I will pour out my spirit”; the Spirit proceeding from the father and the son, yet one with the father and the son. Compare this to Isaiah 11:2, which says, “And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him [talking about the rod out of the stem of Jesse], the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.” “I will pour out my spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge and fear of the Lord upon all flesh.”

“Your sons, daughters, old, and young” shall prophecy, have dreams, and have visions. Not just a select few, as in the old days. Everyone.

Notice here that dreams are attributed to the old men in accordance with their age and wisdom, and visions are attributed to the young men, which are more in accordance with their young and lively minds.

There are three ways that God revealed his will under the OT. Numbers 12:6 tells us that they are prophecy, dreams, and visions. Here in Joel, we are told that this full manifestation of himself will be to all people. Not merely in the miraculous gifts to some, but by his indwelling spirit to all his people. (John 14:21, 23; 15:15)

In Acts 16:9 and 18:9, Paul has visions. [Acts 16:9: And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.] [Acts 18:9: Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace.] These are visions, even though they occurred at night.

As far as I know, the only times that dreams are mentioned in the NT are those given to Joseph in the very beginning of the NT, and the one that the wife of Pilate (who was a Gentile) had in Matthew 27:19.

The word “prophesying” in the NT is applied to all speaking under enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, and not simply the foretelling of events. That’s a different word [puthon] that is applied only to the damsel in Acts 16:16.

But, in Matthew 3, John is telling them that the one coming after him will one day baptize them in the Holy Spirit. When does this happen? (Pentecost and Acts 2:17 – The last days.)

Well, the one coming after John will be baptizing in the Holy Spirit; what else? He will be baptizing in fire. This should have reminded them of another passage.

[Malachi 3:1-5; 4:1] The baptism in fire in Matthew 3 is a reference to the judging and cleansing of those who would enter the Kingdom as prophesied in Malachi 3. This symbolism is carried through by John in [Matthew 3:12]. In this passage, we are given the picture of a farmer at his threshing floor. This is an area of well-packed ground on which the sheaves are spread and the grain is trodden out by animals. His fan (winnowing shovel) is in his hand, and he takes the fan and throws up the trodden grain, in which the wheat and chaff are still mingled, and the wind separates the grain from the chaff. Wheat is then gathered into the barn, and the chaff is burned up.

John is saying that the Messiah came to judge. He will separate the wheat from the chaff. He will prepare the elect for entrance into the Kingdom by empowering and cleansing them. Chaff will be burned up. Our worthless works will be consumed and destroyed.

John is telling them that one day, everyone will be baptized in the Holy Spirit and in Fire. We will all be purified. Mark 9:49 tells us that everyone will be salted with fire. We will all be purified. Not just some of us.

The Messiah came to save and he came to judge. Don’t be like the Pharisees. “There standeth one among you, whom ye know not.” They were looking for the Messiah, but they didn’t know him. Do you know the Messiah? Are you ready for his return? Are you excited?