



FAITHFUL LIGHT CHURCH

Pastors Dennis & Diane Gordon

BIBLE JOURNEYS – NT Volume 1 JESUS IS LORD

#7 BORN AGAIN OF WATER AND SPIRIT

John 3:1-36



GOD'S PURPOSE FOR ME

THE JEWS BAPTIZED IN WATER,

TO WASH AWAY UNCLEANNES AND SIN;

WHEN THEY ROSE UP FROM THE WATER,

THEY WERE SAID TO BE BORN AGAIN.

TO SEE THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, JESUS SAID,

WE MUST BE BORN OF HIS SPIRIT TOO,

SO, WE BAPTIZE IN THE WATER TO WASH AWAY OUR SIN,

& JESUS BAPTIZES in HIS SPIRIT SO WE ARE BORN AGAIN in HIM.

SCRIPTURE READING:

John 3:5-6 “Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

Acts 2:38 “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized 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.”

1. INTRODUCTION: From the beginning God taught his people to wash away uncleanness and be set apart as holy to God in baptism. Jesus told Nicodemus, that we must be born of the water and also of the Spirit, to be born again. Our study today looks to see what this meant to Nicodemus and what being born again means for us today.

ORDER OF SERVICE:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Light Candles & Pray | 4. Dismiss Kids to Noah's Ark with 'Animals Go Marching Song' | |
| 2. Children's Songs & Story | 5. Adult Fellowship Break | 7. Bible Lesson & Group Prayer |
| 3. Intro Gospel Craft/Coloring | 6. Worship Song Set | 8. Blessing Songs & Benediction |

2. BEING BORN AGAIN IS A JEWISH TERM THAT JESUS EXPLAINED TO NICODEMUS.

John 3:1-4 “There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: ²The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. ³Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. ⁴Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?”



In light of Jewish experience, if you were born a Jew then you were already a Jew with no need of baptism. **Only converts were said to be born again after being baptized in the Mikveh** to wash away uncleanness at their conversion to Judaism. Nicodemus could not become a Jew through baptism because he was already born a Jew.

BORN AGAIN—A JEWISH TERM Messianic Jewish Bible Society

*“A man who wants to become Jewish must undergo the two main requirements: circumcision and immersion. A woman, however, must only be immersed. When Gentile converts go down into the waters of the mikvah, they leave behind their pagan ways - symbolically dying to their old life - and **come up out of the water as a newborn child with an entirely new identity. They are in essence reborn.**...The Talmud (oral law) states, “When he comes up after his immersion, he is deemed an Israelite in all respects” Yevamot 47b “Rabbi Yose says in the Talmud, “One who has become a proselyte is like a child newly born.” Yevamot 48b **Judaism regards the mikvah as a symbolic expression of rebirth. The mikvah represents the mother’s womb, which is called in Hebrew rechem. This comes from the same root as the Hebrew word for mercy (rahamah). Immersing fully into the waters of the mikvah is like re-entering the womb, the place of mercy; of God’s creative power. Emerging from the mikvah is like being born again. So, we see that the term “born again” originated in Judaism.** Messianic Jewish Bible Society*

Nikodemus wondered how being baptized again, could make him be ‘born again? This puzzle did not make sense to him.

3. IN THE 1ST CENTURY, JEWISH IMMERSION IN WATER WAS PRACTICED TO WASH AWAY UNCLEanness.

Jewish Practices & Rituals – Mikveh – History & Archeology:



“During the Second Temple period (roughly from 100 B.C.E. to 70 C.E.), the Jewish population in Palestine had a very distinctive practice of purification within water installations known as mikva'ot. Large numbers of stepped-and-plastered mikva'ot have been found in excavations in Jerusalem, in outlying villages, as well as at various rural locations. Most of the installations in Jerusalem were in basements of private dwellings and therefore must have served the specific domestic needs of the city inhabitants...To sum up what we know about the use of the household mikveh in the first century based on the rabbinic texts and archaeological finds: the average size of the mikveh suggests that ritual bathing was ordinarily practiced individually (no more than one person would enter the installation at a time) and the location of mikva'ot within the basements of private dwellings suggests this purification was done regularly and whenever deemed necessary. The purpose of the immersion was to ritually cleanse the flesh of the contaminated person in pure water, but it may also have been undertaken within households before eating or as an aid to spirituality, before reading the Torah or praying. It was neither used for the cleansing of the soul nor for the redemption of sins ...except for the conversion of proselytes following their acceptance of the Torah and circumcision; Pes. 8:8” www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org

Immersing in the Mikveh, is a ritual still practiced in Jewish Synagogues to this day, to cleanse the flesh of unclean contamination before entering into a holy place, before a convert is considered ‘born again’ as a Jew, and before marriage. So, Nicodemus, who had immersed himself in the Mikveh countless times to wash away impurity, was essentially asking Jesus, **“How can I become a born-again convert to Judaism, if I was already born into Judaism?”**



4. JESUS USED HEBREW TERMS UNDERSTOOD BY NICODEMUS to EXPLAIN NEW COVENANT SALVATION.

Nicodemus understood the meaning of his flesh being born again of water, but Jesus explained to him that the new covenant in his blood that is received by faith, requires being born again also of the Spirit.

*John 3:5-6 “Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit**, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and **that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.**”*

Being born of the Spirit is being immersed in God’s Holy Spirit, but is not something man can do of his own will like water baptism, but **it is a gift** given by God, after he is born of the water in baptism.

*Acts 2:38-39 “Then Peter said unto them, **Repent, and be baptized** 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.** ³⁹ **For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off**, even as many as the LORD our God shall call.”*



Before Jesus was taken up, he told his disciples that receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit is the promise of the Father that comes upon the believer, so we are to wait until the promise comes upon us. Jesus described the gift of the Spirit as baptism in the Holy Spirit.

*Acts 1:4-5. “And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but **wait for the promise of the Father**, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. ⁵ For **John truly baptized with water**; but **ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost** not many days hence.”*

*Luke 24:49 “Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but **tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.**”*

After water baptism like all disciples before us we are to wait for the promise of the Father to come from on high: baptism in his Spirit!

5. WE MUST BE EQUIPPED to EXPLAIN the DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OLD AND NEW COVENANT SALVATION.

Jesus did not establish a new religion, but came to fulfill the covenant of salvation in his own blood. Gentiles like ourselves, are new branches *Romans 11* grafted into the olive tree of believing Israel, making us to become **adopted Jews of Abraham's seed**, (*who is Christ*), becoming one believing nation of Israel with them.

Romans 10:12-13 “For **there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek**: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. ¹³ For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Galatians 3:28-29 “*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.* ²⁹ **And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.**”



Jesus came to **replace the old covenant requiring the blood of animal sacrifices**, with the new covenant of faith in **his own blood that was shed once for all**.



In the old covenant sins were transferred to the head of the animal slain for sin, the priest washed in the Laver, and God's Holy Spirit filled the Temple. In the new covenant Jesus took our sins upon himself, shed his own blood, then we as priests wash in water, and his Holy Spirit fills our temple. Baptism in the new covenant has the same purpose as baptism in the Mikveh of the old covenant. Baptism is still for washing away sins, and Jewish people like Nicodemus, understood what it meant to wash away their sins!

Acts 22:16 “*And now why tarriest thou? arise, and **be baptized, and WASH AWAY THY SINS**, calling on the name of the Lord.*”

The Lamb of God took our sins upon himself, so our sins are washed away in baptism, and his Spirit comes as promised to fill our temple!

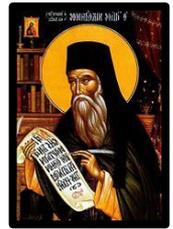
6. YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN OF WATER BAPTISM AND IN THE HOLY SPIRIT TO SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

Some time ago in a Fundamental Baptist church, it was unsettling to hear the pastor mock the workmate of his friend, who had come to work praising the Lord that he had been baptized, thinking it funny that the friend laughed saying that if he had already been born again, then all he did was get wet! But is that true? Of course not. Jesus commanded baptism in water to wash away sins to be born of the water; and baptism of Spirit to be born of the Spirit, if we would enter the kingdom of Heaven. Nicodemus understood being born of water but he was astonished to hear the news that not only priests, but now even common men as he, will be filled with the Holy Spirit!

John 3:7-8 *“Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. ⁸The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: **so is every one that is born of the Spirit.**”*

When a person is born again of the Spirit, you cannot see when it happened, but you witness the change of their heart and joy on their face! But Nicodemus did not understand how to get baptized in the Holy Spirit.

John 3:9-12 *“Nicodemus answered and said unto him, **How can these things be?**” ¹⁰ Jesus answered and said unto him, **Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?** ¹¹ Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. ¹² If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?”*



As a teacher in Israel, Nicodemus was surely aware of the scriptures promising God would come to accomplish exactly what Jesus said.

Ezekiel 36:25-27 *“Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and **ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.**” ²⁶ A new heart also will I give you, and **a new spirit will I put within you:** and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. ²⁷ And **I will put my spirit within you,** and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.”*

7. NEW BIRTH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GIVEN BY JESUS.

John 3:6 “*That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and **that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.***”

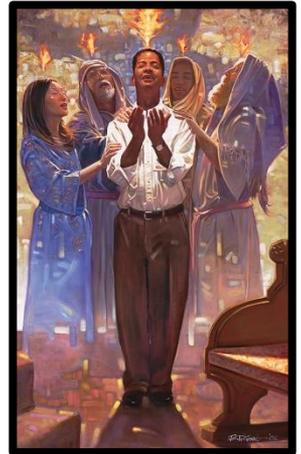
John had been baptizing ‘the flesh’ to set people apart as holy unto the Lord, in preparation to receive the soon appearing Messiah. Jesus came to make a new covenant in his own blood, with his people called Israel. Jesus told Nicodemus that, not only did he need to be born again of the water by washing in the Mikveh, but there is more, because now Nicodemus will be baptized in his Holy Spirit!

Numbers 11:29 “*And Moses said unto him, **Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the LORD's people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!***”

In the old covenant, only the high priest was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies to meet with the Holy Spirit of God. God’s Holy Spirit would come upon his prophets to empower them, but now through Jesus, all who receive him become a royal priesthood, and his Holy Spirit comes upon his people with power and great joy!

1 Peter 2:9-10 “*But **ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;*** ¹⁰ *Which **in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God;** which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.”*

Jesus told Nicodemus that he must also be born again of the Holy Spirit – meaning he would be baptized in the Holy Ghost! God promised that the Holy Spirit will come upon his people to fill us with new life and power to live for Him!



Luke 24:49 “*And, behold, **I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.***”

.8. COME TO JESUS THE LIVING WATER AND DRINK!

Jesus commissioned his disciples to preach the Gospel of repentance.

*Luke 24:46-47 “And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: ⁴⁷ And that **repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.**”*

We have seen that **being born again** means to be born of both water and Spirit: born of water as from a mother’s womb, and born of Spirit.

*Luke 8:11 “Now the parable is this: **The seed is the word of God.**”*

The word of God planted in the heart, is the seed that is quickened by the Spirit enabling the person to obey the Gospel to wash away his sins in baptism, born of water, and receive birth of the Spirit. Many have felt the quickening of the seed of the Gospel planted in their heart, but have been hindered by false teaching to disobey Jesus, who commanded all people to be born again both of water and of Spirit to receive salvation and see the Kingdom of God. If you have received the Gospel but you have not been baptized in water, Jesus said very strongly in **Mark 16:16** that you are not saved.

*Mark 16:15-17 “And he (Jesus) said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and **preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;** but he that believeth not shall be damned.”*

Jesus and his disciples showed us the way to be born from the water in likeness of his coming death and resurrection, and receiving birth of the Spirit, there is no other way of salvation. Baptism sets young and old apart as holy to God, with fullness of joy in his presence!



*Acts 22:16 “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and **wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.**”*

Jesus loves you, and calls all who are thirsty to come to the water, be baptized, drink of his Living Water, and be filled with his Spirit!

9. GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOU AND ME.

1. Many today say asking Jesus into your heart is when you are born again, but Jesus said being born again must be of both water and Spirit.
2. Being born again is a Jewish term for being born of the water of baptism in the Mikveh, for purification and for becoming a Jew.
3. In the 1st century and still today, the Jewish purification ritual of immersion in water is practiced, to purify and set apart as holy.
4. Jesus used Hebrew terms to explain to Nicodemus new covenant salvation for Jews of Israel, and for Gentiles adopted in to Israel.
5. Being baptized in water is the ritual of washing away all uncleanness, and setting yourself apart as holy unto the Lord.
6. Jesus said that without the washing away of your sins in baptism, to set yourself apart as holy to the Lord, you cannot be saved.
7. We must be equipped to explain the difference between Old Covenant and New Covenant salvation.
8. Jesus taught that you must be born again of both water baptism, and of the Holy Spirit to see the Kingdom of God.
9. After being baptized and born of the water, only Jesus can give you the free gift of the new birth baptism in the Holy Spirit.
10. Come to Jesus through his word and his Spirit, and drink!

Our Dear Father, thank you for your word and for your Holy Spirit living in our hearts that teaches us all things. Lord Jesus, we see in your word that you are the same God yesterday, and today, and forever! We are amazed as you open our eyes to see how you have knitted the Gospel of salvation together from the beginning of Genesis through the last word of Revelation, revealing to us again that you are the God who was, and who is, and who is to come, until you come again! If there are any here who have not been born again of the water in baptism, may they come forward for baptism today and receive the free gift of your Spirit! Thank you for washing away our sins! Come Lord Jesus to immerse us again in your Spirit, **in Jesus' name, Amen.**



10. CHILDREN'S STORY: BORN AGAIN OF WATER AND SPIRIT

Nicodemus was a ruler in Israel but he was afraid to follow Jesus, so he came secretly at night. Nicodemus knew Jesus must be of God because of the miracles he performed and he wondered if Jesus' teaching was true because he loved God and wanted to go to Heaven.



For many hundreds of years, in obedience to scriptures, the Jews had practiced immersing their pots and cups and utensils and themselves, in a special bathing pool to wash away uncleanness and to set themselves apart as holy to the Lord. Nicodemus had been baptized in water many times to purify himself. When a Jewish person rose up from the water they were said to be born again, or if they were a new convert they were said to be born again as a Jew. Nicodemus could not figure out how he could be born of water when he had already been baptized in water many times, and he was already born a Jew, so how could he be born again as a Jew?



Here was Jesus, a master in Israel, perhaps the Messiah, saying that Nicodemus, a Jew, must be born again! Jesus had also practiced the baptisms for purification in the Mikveh for his whole life, but now Jesus had gone into the river and was baptized to be born again of the water, and the Holy Spirit had come upon him to show that he was born again of the Spirit! Jesus modeled for Nicodemus and for us, the New Covenant way of salvation, that we must be born of both water and of Spirit.

The Holy Spirit will teach you all things and help you to live your life for God. When you are baptized, all your sins are washed away and you are set apart as holy unto the Lord, born of water, and you are born again of the Holy Spirit because Jesus comes to live in your heart when you ask him to! Have you been baptized? Have you asked Jesus to live in your heart? How wonderful! You are saved!

11. GOSPEL CRAFT: BORN AGAIN OF WATER AND SPIRIT

DIRECTIONS: Make a copy on white card stock for each child (do not enlarge).

1. Cut out Word Strip and glue to front of half plate & staple to whole back plate.
2. Cut around outside of 2 doves, fold in half on dotted line & cut slit for wings.
3. Fan-fold 6" x 6" paper, insert through slit, fan out to form wings & glue on eyes.
4. Fill pocket with blue tissue paper for water & attach fuzzy stick handle.
5. Insert 1" end of large craft stick inside dove & glue. Make the Holy Spirit fly!

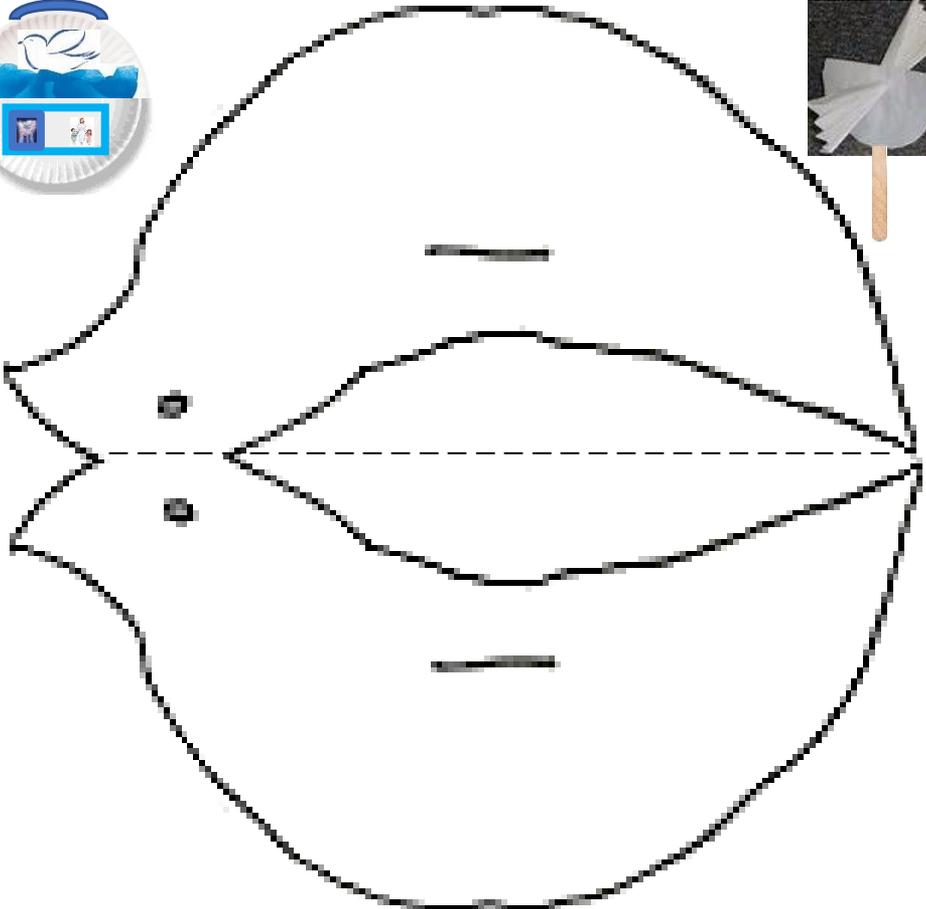


**THE JEWS BAPTIZED IN WATER,
TO WASH AWAY UNCLEANNESS AND SIN;
WHEN THEY ROSE UP FROM THE WATER,
THEY WERE SAID TO BE BORN AGAIN.**



**TO SEE THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, JESUS SAID,
WE MUST BE BORN OF WATER & SPIRIT TOO,**

**SO, WE BAPTIZE IN THE WATER, TO WASH AWAY OUR SIN,
& JESUS BAPTIZES in HIS SPIRIT SO WE ARE BORN AGAIN in HIM.**



12. COLORING PAGE: BORN AGAIN OF WATER & SPIRIT

THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS ME LIVE MY LIFE FOR JESUS!



Acts 2:38 “Then Peter said unto them, **Repent, and be baptized 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.**”