



PREPARING

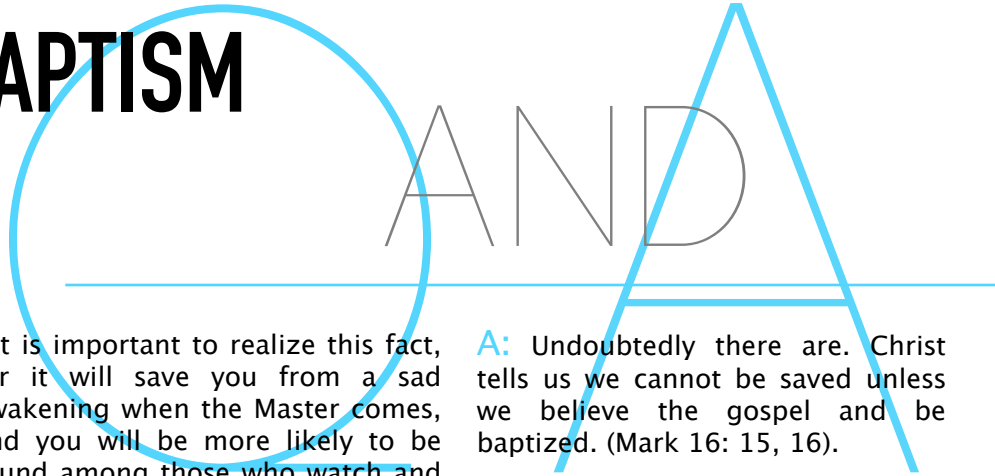
FOR

BAPTISM

PREPARING FOR BAPTISM

THE PURPOSE OF THIS QUESTIONING IS DESIGNED TO ASCERTAIN BOTH YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIBLE AND YOUR ATTITUDE OF MIND TOWARDS THE THINGS OF YAHSHUA. OUR PRACTICE IN DOING THIS IS BASED UPON APOSTOLIC CUSTOM.

PAUL TOLD TIMOTHY THAT HE HAD “PROFESSED (THE WORD IS BETTER RENDERED CONFESSED) A GOOD PROFESSION (OR CONFESSION OF FAITH) BEFORE MANY WITNESSES”; AS YAHSHUA HAD BEFORE HIM WHEN HE WAS SUBJECTED TO QUESTIONING BY PONTIUS PILATE AS TO HIS BELIEFS (1 TIMOTHY 6:12-13). THEREFORE, IN NOW QUESTIONING YOU, WE ARE FOLLOWING AN APOSTOLIC PATTERN.



(“It is important to realize this fact, for it will save you from a sad awakening when the Master comes, and you will be more likely to be found among those who watch and pray that they enter not into temptation.”)

A: Undoubtedly there are. Christ tells us we cannot be saved unless we believe the gospel and be baptized. (Mark 16: 15, 16).

Q: It is the gospel that must be believed. What do you understand the gospel to be?

A: The word Gospel means glad tidings or good news. The gospel which we must believe before baptism is the gospel which Christ and the apostles preached which was “the glad tidings of the Kingdom of Yahweh.” (Matt. 4: 23; Mark 1: 14; Luke 9: 2; Matt. 24: 14).

THE ONE BAPTISM

Q: Why do you want to be baptized?

A: Because I want to be saved.

Q: What do you mean by being “saved”?

A: To be saved in the Scriptural sense is, first, to have your sins forgiven and admitted into covenant relationship to Yahweh and Christ (born again), and afterwards, at the day of judgement when Christ comes, to be made immortal (born of the spirit) (1 Cor. 15: 53–58).

Q: Can this be done if you are not baptized?

A: No! Christ distinctly said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned.” (Mark 16: 15, 16).

Q: Do you think that after you have been baptized that your salvation is assured and that you only have to await the coming of Christ to receive the reward of eternal life?

A: No; I understand that baptism simply admits me into the race for eternal life. When I am baptized I will become a candidate for the Kingdom of God and will be on probation for eternal life. Under these conditions, and the spirit of Christ now in me and the encouragement of the ecclesia, I know no sincere candidate will have to fail in this race for life.

Q: What leads you to the conclusion that immersion in water is the proper form of baptism?

A: In the first place, this form is in harmony with the meaning of the original word, Baptize, to dip or plunge, to immerse. In the second place, immersion was the form used by the apostles (John 3: 23. Acts 8: 38, Mark 1: 9,10). In the third place, it is spoken of as a burial. “We are buried with Him by baptism into death” (Rom. 6: 3,5; Col. 2: 12), so that it is beyond dispute that a complete burial in water or in other words immersion, is the only true form of baptism.

Q: Suppose that you had been sprinkled as a baby, would that have made your baptism valid?

A: Certainly not; for the commandment says “believe and be baptized”, and, of course, being an infant, I was incapable of believing anything.

Q: Suppose you had been baptized a year ago, would that have made it unnecessary for you to be baptized now?

A: No; the things which I believed at that time were not the things which Yahweh requires us to believe prior to baptism.

Q: Then you think there are definite things to be believed to make baptism effective?

THE ONE TRUE GOSPEL

Q: How many gospels are there?

A: There are lots of gospels, but only one true gospel; the others are false. The Apostle Paul called to heaven for a curse upon either man or angel who should dare to preach any other than the one true gospel (Gal. 1: 6–9).

Q: You say this one true gospel is the glad tidings of the Kingdom of Yahweh; so the next question which naturally arises is, What is the Kingdom of Yahweh?

A: The Kingdom of Yahweh is just like any other kingdom, as far as its form is concerned. It is a real, literal, political kingdom to be set up on the earth at Christ’s return.

Q: Who is to be the king in this kingdom?

A: Yahshua (Luke 1: 32–33; Rev. 11: 15).

Q: What territory is this kingdom to occupy?

A: Eventually the whole earth (Dan. 2: 44 and 7: 27).

Q: Who are to be the subjects of this kingdom?

A: All the inhabitants of the earth who are left after Yahweh's destroying judgments have been poured out upon the nations (Zech. 14: 16).

Q: Then you think Yahweh's Kingdom will be established with bloodshed and destruction?

A: Yes; it is abundantly testified that great and terrible judgments will be poured out upon the nations before they are finally brought into complete subjection to Christ (Dan. 2: 44; Isa. 42: 14; Zeph. 3: 8; Joel 3: 16, etc.).

Q: Is Christ to be alone in ruling the nations?

A: No; He is to be assisted by the saints.

Q: Who are the saints?

A: Those who have been called out by the gospel in every age. They are the faithful, and will be given places in the Kingdom of Yahweh as rulers. (Dan. 7: 18, 22, 27; Matt. 25: 34; Rev. 5: 9; Rev. 2: 26; Psa. 149: 5-9). It is my great ambition to be among their number.

Q: Will this Kingdom have a capital city, like the kingdoms of today?

A: Yes, Jerusalem is to be the capital city, from which the laws will be sent forth. It will be the headquarters of the Great King. (Jer. 3: 17; Zech. 14: 16; Matt. 5: 35; Micah 4: 2).

Q: What will be the effect of the laws to be enforced at that time?

A: Joy, peace, knowledge of Yahweh, righteousness, the disappearance of poverty, oppression and crime, and a return to the worship of the true God (Psa. 72; Isa. 32; Isa. 51: 11 and 65: 19-25).

Q: How long are the saints to reign with Christ?

A: One thousand years (Rev. 20: 4-6).

Q: Has Yahweh ever had a Kingdom upon earth before?

A: Yes. The Kingdom of Israel in the land of Palestine was the Kingdom of the Lord, for it is so referred to in the Scriptures, and it could not be otherwise considered, because Yahweh chose the land and the people and the original rulers, and gave them their laws and watched over their destinies, blessing them when they were obedient and punishing them when they were disobedient to him (Joshua 24: 13; 1 Chron. 28: 5; 29: 23).

Q: What became of this Kingdom?

A: The Lord overturned it because of its wickedness and scattered its people, the Jews, among all nations as we see them today (Ezekiel 21: 25-27).

Q: Is this Kingdom and people ever to be restored again?

A: Yes. The setting up of Yahweh's Kingdom that we have just been talking about is simply the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel on a larger scale, with Christ as the King and the dominion extending over the whole earth instead of being confined to Palestine. The Apostles asked the Lord at his first advent: "Wilt thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1: 6). This question showed that this was their hope, though the Lord replied that it will be fulfilled only in Yahweh's appointed time (see Psalm 102: 13, 16).

YAHWEH'S PROMISE TO ABRAHAM

Q: What great promise was made to Abraham?

A: Abraham was promised by Yahweh that he and his seed should possess the Land of Canaan forever, and that in him and his seed all families of the earth should be blessed. (Genesis 12: 2-7; 13: 14; 15: 17; 22: 17, 18).

Q: Was this promise fulfilled?

A: No; Abraham never possessed a foot of the land (Acts 7: 5), and besides he is now dead and the land is in Gentile hands.

Q: Who was the seed mentioned in the promise of Genesis 22: 17?

A: There are two kinds of seeds referred to: a multitudinous seed for Yahweh said, 'In multiplying I will multiply thy seed,' and a singular seed, for He also said 'thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies.'

Q: Who is the singular seed?

A: Yahshua: Paul plainly tell us so in Galatians 3: 16.

Q: Who comprises the multitudinous seed?

A: Those who embrace Christ. Paul tells us that "if we be Christ's then are we Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3: 29).

Q: How do we become Christ's?

A: The same Apostle in the same chapter tells us that it is by being baptised into Him (Gal. 3: 27,28).

The conclusion is then, that Abraham and Christ and they that are Christ's, are to possess the land for an everlasting inheritance and are to bring a blessing to all the families of the earth. This the glorious theme of the Scriptures, the foundation of hope.

THE RESURRECTION

Q: Where are Abraham and his seed at the present time?

A: Abraham and a great multitude of his seed are asleep in the dust, that is, the grave. Christ is in heaven at his Father's right hand, while we are alive and awaiting the return of Christ to fulfill the promise.

Q: What will have to take place in the case of Abraham and those who, like him, are now dead and silent in the dust, before the promise can be fulfilled to them?

A: A resurrection from the dead.

Q: When is this to take place?

A: At the return of Christ to the earth.

Q: Do you believe in the second coming of Christ?

A: Yes. The New Testament is full of the promise of His coming.

Q: After the resurrection, what is the next great event?

A: The Judgement.

Q: What takes place there?

A: The righteous are rewarded with immortality, eternal life, and a place of power in Yahweh's Kingdom, while those who have been unfaithful are punished and eventually destroyed (Matt. 25: 46; 2 Thess. 1: 8,9).

Q: After the resurrection and judgement, those of the seed of Abraham who are found worthy shall receive places of power in the Kingdom of Yahweh. It is the saints who will receive this authority. How is this?

A: The saints and the seed of Abraham are one and the same people.

Q: When and how do they receive the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham?

A: When Yahweh's Kingdom is set up and given into their hand, because then they come into possession of the land and of the whole earth, and by means of this divine political kingdom Christ and the saints, who are the seed of Abraham, will dispense blessings before undreamed of, to all the families of the earth.

THE PROMISE TO DAVID

Q: What great promise was made to David?

A: Yahweh promised that He would have a son in whose hands His Kingdom and throne would be established forever before Him. (2 Sam. 7: 12-16).

Q: Who was the son?

A: Yahshua the Christ, without any doubt. (Luke 1: 31, 33; Acts 2: 30-31).

Q: How and when will this be fulfilled?

A: At the same time and by the same great event by which all Yahweh's promised blessings are fulfilled: the establishment in the earth of the Kingdom of Yahweh is the Kingdom of David restored on a larger scale in the hands of Christ and the saints.

YAHSHUA'S DEATH AND SACRIFICE

Q: What was the purpose of Christ's appearing on earth 2000 years ago?

A: To put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (Hebrews 9: 26).

Q: How did He sacrifice Himself?

A: By a life of daily self-denial, in which He sacrificed his own comforts and pleasures and gave himself up unreservedly to the doing of his Father's will, and by submitting to death on the cross according to the Scriptures.

Q: How did Christ "put away sin" by the sacrifice of Himself?

A: Yahshua was of our nature to accomplish what Yahweh had determined the destruction of sin and death, and the evil works thereof. By the life He lived, Christ overcame the evil impulses of this nature as well as the temptations from without, and showed men "the way of life." By the death He died, He "by the grace of Yahweh did taste death for every man," that through death He may destroy sin, which has the power of death. This He did, obtaining through a resurrection from the dead "eternal redemption"; death hath no more dominion over Him, and Yahweh hath set forth Yahshua as a mercy-seat, that we through faith in His shed blood, as the divinely appointed system of means for salvation, may obtain the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of Yahweh (Rom. 3: 23-26).

Q: Why was it necessary for Christ to undergo such a death?

A: In order to emphasize the great lesson that Yahweh has been trying to impress upon His children since the world began, namely the lesson of "obedience" as the way into his favor. He demonstrated what we are called upon to do figuratively; crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof that are contrary to the way of Yahweh (Gal. 5: 24).

Q: How did Christ's death on the cross emphasize this lesson?

A: Christ's death on the cross was an act of obedience. Although absolutely innocent of wrongdoing, yet he silently submitted to the indignities that were heaped upon Him: and because the Scriptures required that He be led as a lamb to the slaughter, therefore he opened not His mouth in His own defense. As Paul says, "he humbled Himself and was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. 2: 8).

Q: What was the result of this “obedience unto death” as far as Christ Himself was concerned?

A: Paul says that by it He obtained eternal redemption (Hebrews 9: 12) and that because He loved righteousness and hated iniquity, Yahweh hath anointed Him with the oil of gladness above His fellows (Hebrews 1: 9), and for the same reason we are told that Yahweh hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Yahshua every knee should bow (Phil. 2: 9).

Q: Then His offering of Himself in obedience unto death was to some extent, for Himself?

A: Yes, it was for Himself that He might be redeemed from death, and for us, that we also through him might be redeemed from death (Hebrews 7: 27; 5: 7; 13: 20).

Q: In what way do we benefit by the sacrifice of Christ?

A: Through Christ’s obedient sacrifice, He has been raised to the right hand of Yahweh, where the apostle tells us, “He ever liveth to make intercession for us.” (Hebrews 7: 25).

Q: In what particular way do we need help?

A: To have our sins forgiven.

Q: When is this done?

A: First of all, at baptism our past sins are forgiven and we start a new life; the sins of the past are blotted out. And then after baptism we often find ourselves overcome by sin, and at each of these occasions, if we confess and forsake our sins, we can obtain forgiveness (Acts 2: 38; 1 John 2: 1–2).

FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT

Q: Do you believe the doctrine of the Trinity?

A: No; I believe “there is but one true God, the Father of whom are all things,” (1 Cor. 8: 6; Deut. 6: 4).

Q: Do you consider Christ to be equal with the Father?

A: No; Yahshua expressly stated that His Father was greater than He. (John 14: 28). Christ is the Son of Yahweh.

Q: Did Yahshua exist prior to His birth at Bethlehem?

A: No; except in the mind and purpose of the Father.

Q: In what way did he become the Son of Yahweh?

A: He was conceived by the Holy Spirit operating upon the virgin Mary so that Yahweh was his Father (Luke 1: 34–35). After His resurrection He was declared to be the Son of Yahweh with power (Romans 1: 4).

Q: Was he different from us in nature?

A: No; He was made in all points like we are, mortal, of the same death stricken nature (Hebrews 2: 14; 4: 15; 5: 8).

Q: What do you understand about the Holy Spirit?

A: It is Yahweh’s spirit or power by which He fills all space and by which He performs His will.

Q: Is it not a person?

A: No, that could not be, for it is said that Yahweh anointed Yahshua of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power (Acts 10: 38). The Father could not anoint the Son with another person.

THE NATURE OF MAN

Q: What do you understand about the nature of man?

A: Man is mortal and sentenced to death and decay.

Q: Does man have an immortal soul?

A: There is no mention of such a thing in the Scriptures and no evidence anywhere of its existence.

Q: What is man’s condition in death?

A: Complete unconsciousness (Eccles. 9: 5, 6, 10; Psalm 146: 3, 4).

Q: What is the soul?

A: The word soul is used in the Scriptures to express a variety of aspects of life; sometimes it is applied to the lower animals, sometimes to man; it is used to express a person, a body, or simply life itself but never expresses immortality.

Q: What do you understand about the spirit of man?

A: The word spirit as applied to man in the Scriptures expresses first the primary meaning of the word “wind” or breath, but it is also used in the sense of mind, state of mind, disposition, understanding, natural strength, and in other ways. (1 Kings 10: 5; Matthew 5: 3; Romans 8: 16; 1 Corinthians 2: 11; 4: 21).

Q: If the dead are unconscious are we to understand that death ends all?

A: No; there is to be a resurrection from the dead.

Q: Will all the dead that have ever lived be raised again?

A: No; only the responsible dead.

Q: Who do you mean by the responsible dead?

A: All those who have known what Yahweh requires of them and have either obeyed or disobeyed the commandments.

Q: Suppose they refuse or neglect to be baptized after they have learned the Truth?

A: That would be a clear act of rebellion, and no one can rebel against Yahweh with impunity; they would be raised and brought to judgement (Daniel 12: 2; John 5: 28–29; Acts 24: 15).

Q: What becomes of the irresponsible dead?

A: The irresponsible dead, or those who have never known Yahweh's truth, "will remain in the congregation of the dead, they shall never see light" (Psalm 49: 19-20; Proverbs 21: 16; Isaiah 26: 13-14).

HELL AND THE DEVIL

Q: Do you believe in the eternal torment of the wicked?

A: No; that doctrine is a vile slander on the name of a just God.

Q: What do you understand by the word "Hell"?

A: In most cases where the word "Hell" occurs in the Scriptures, the word "grave" would much better express its meaning. But sometimes where the original word is Gehenna it means "the valley of the son of Hinnom." This was a place on the outskirts of Jerusalem where garbage was destroyed, and criminals were sometimes of Jerusalem where garbage was destroyed, and criminals were sometimes cremated. The term was sometimes used by Yahshua to symbolize the complete destruction of the wicked, for the wicked will be destroyed and not preserved in torture (2 Thess. 1: 9; Malachi 4: 1).

Q: Do you believe in a personal devil or satan?

A: No; I have been delivered from that delusion. There are lots of devils that are persons (e.g. John 6: 70-71; Matthew 16: 23) but no such monster as an immortal personal Devil or Satan. The devil is sin in the flesh; most of us see him in the form we should fear most... when we look in the mirror (see Mark 7: 18-23; Romans 7: 23-25).

THE BIBLE'S AUTHORITY

Q: Do you believe the Bible to be wholly inspired? I refer, of course, to the original writings, not to translations.

A: I believe the Scriptures are wholly inspired and infallible.

Q: What do you understand the position of the believer to be as regards association with the world?

A: While in the world, he is not to be of it. He is required to keep himself unspotted from the world. He must not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers (2 Cor. 6: 14).

Q: Do you consider marriage with an unbeliever an unequal yoking?

A: I certainly do, and it is therefore forbidden.

Q: What if one accepts Christ after marriage, and his partner does not do so?

A: He is to remain in the same state of marriage as before (1 Corinthians 7: 24), except that in loyalty to Christ and in love to his partner, he will become more understanding and co-operative than previously (cp. 1 Peter 3: 1-4).

Q: What is the law by which a believer's life should be governed?

A: The commandments of Christ.

NOTES
