

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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THERE IS SPRINKLING IN BAPTISM

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The sprinkling of blood has a prominent place in the Bible. The old covenant was consecrated by the sprinkling of blood. The altar, the book of the covenant and the people were sprinkled with blood when the people of God promised to do all the words of the covenant (Exodus 24:6-8). The High Priest would sprinkle the blood of a red heifer toward the tent of meeting for purification of the people from uncleanness (Numbers 19:4).

These actions foreshadowed the consecration of the new covenant and purification from sin by the blood of Jesus. When the Christian partakes of the fruit of the vine, he or she understands that it is the blood of Christ that ratifies the new covenant (I Corinthians 11:25). Under the new covenant, men are saved by the blood of Christ, having their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience (I Peter 1:18-19, Hebrews 10:22).

The sprinkling of the blood of Jesus takes place when one obeys the Gospel in baptism. Peter writes to Christians, identifying the background of their elec-

tion: “according to the foreknowledge of God the father, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ...” (I Peter 1:2). The inspired writer of Hebrews encourages Christians to draw near in fullness of faith “having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience: and having our body washed with pure water” (Hebrews 10:22). When one “obeys” the conditions of the gospel, his sins are “washed” away at baptism (Acts 22:16).

It is Scriptural to say that there is sprinkling in baptism. But what is sprinkled? When our body is washed with pure water, our evil conscience is cleansed from dead works by the sprinkling of the blood of Christ. Notice that it is the sprinkling of the blood, not the sprinkling of water.

While it is scriptural to say there is sprinkling **in** baptism, we are not saying that God authorizes sprinkling **for** baptism. The Greek word translated “baptize” always refers to the action of “immersing”. The Holy Spirit uses a different Greek word for sprinkling: “RANTIZO” The two actions are different and the Holy

Spirit uses two distinct words to convey these actions.

Sprinkling people with water, and calling it baptism originated with man, not God. The Catholic Church, authorized this practice in A.D.1215. Denominational protestant churches practice sprinkling of water for baptism today. But as we have seen from Scripture, it is the blood of Christ that is sprinkled, not water.

This understanding further emphasizes the necessity of baptism for salvation. No one can be saved apart from the blood of Christ. But God sprinkles the blood of Christ to cleanse our conscience when we are baptized for the remission of our sins.

The charge that those who teach the necessity of baptism for remission of sins believe in “water salvation” is an ignorant charge. We know that it is the blood of Christ that saves us, not water. But it is when we are baptized in water we have our conscience cleansed by the sprinkling of the blood of Christ.