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THE DOCTRINES OF BAPTISMS AND THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS
NUMBER 38
HEBREWS 6:2

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Someone called my attention to the fact that I omitted verse 8 of Chapter 5, so before I go on with Chapter 6, let us go back and look at Hebrews 5:8.

HEBREWS 5:8 "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;" The word "Though" is a compound conjunction from "kai per" and when used with a participle it should be translated "although." This refers to the celebrity-ship of Jesus Christ. Next we have "he were" and this is the present, active, participle of "eimi" and means "being" and this refers to a condition which existed from the moment he was born into the human race and the hypostatic union began and will continue forever. Next we have the word "huios" with no definite article with it and this gives special emphasis to his state as a son--so this says "although being Son."

Next we have the aorist, active, indicative of "Manthano" and it means to learn through instruction. This is an ingressive aorist so it looks at all the learning he did in its entirety. Learning obedience to authority. There is no doubt that Jesus was the most perfectly disciplined person that ever lived. (This teaches us to submit to discipline.) "Manthano" means to learn the hard way. Obedience to authority was his very life. He was under authority of his parents, and under the authority of his Heavenly Father, and under the authority of Israel. He was also under the authority of Rome. He said, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's..." The word for "obedience" is "hupakoe" and it connotes obedience to the Father who is the author of the plan. It was obedience to the plan and the message. Remember this--there is no greatness apart from obedience. Jesus Christ learned obedience to The Father and to the Word of God (Naturally this is referring to his humanity, not to his deity.) This means for the church member that he must be under the authority of the Pastor-teacher and under the authority of the Word of God.

Next we have "by the things" and this is from "apo plus hos" and it means the source. So it means "from the source of the things he suffered." There are certain things that can only be learned through suffering. The word for suffering is an aorist, active, indicative of "pascho" and it gathers up into one unit all the suffering he did in 33 years. His toil, the long walking, the privation, the abuse from men, the criticism of the Pharisees and the cruelty of Judas and all the hurt and shame of the cross. But, no suffering, means no salvation. If Christ had not learned obedience to authority, there would have been no salvation. He said in the Garden, "Nevertheless, not my will but thy will be done." Matthew 26:39. His suffering was his perfect obedience to authority.

HEBREWS 5:9 "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;" Next we have "being made perfect" but this is incorrect. He was already perfect and he didn't need to be made perfect. It is an aorist, passive, participle of "teleioo" and really should be translated "Having completed the disciplinary training." He was always perfect, no old sin nature, never committed an act of sin and had no imputed sin from Adam.

Then we have "he became" which is an aorist, active, indicative of "ginomai" and it means he became something that he was not before. He became the source of eternal salvation.

1. Jesus Christ began to learn obedience (in his humanity) and this is an ingressive aorist. He kept learning this all his 33 years on earth.
2. Then he went through a great period of obedience when he learned perfect obedience to his Heavenly Father. This is a constative aorist.
3. Then the "having completed his disciplinary training" is a culminative aorist. He became the source of eternal salvation and this is a dramatic aorist. So these four aorists tell the complete story of his obedience. Christ was the most perfect illustration of obedience in all human history.

Now back to our passage in Hebrews 6:2.

HEBREWS 6:2 "Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment." "The doctrine of baptisms" comes from the accusative singular of "didache" and there is no definite article here. It means "doctrine." The word "baptisms" is in the plural and comes from "baptismos."

THE DOCTRINE OF BAPTISMS

1. LOOK AT THE USAGE OF THESE WORDS PRIOR TO THE KOINE GREEK.
Back in the Songs of Homer which he sang in the 11th Century before Christ, and which songs were reduced to writing in the 9th Century before Christ, in his Odyssey in the 9th book, he described the sticking of a sharp pole in the Eye of Cyclops and it made a hissing sound, like the hissing of a hot sword when it was plunged into water in order to temper it. He called it "baptizing" the sword in the water. In other words, the hot sword was identified with the water. Baptize means to identify with something. The second illustration is from Xenophon's Anabasis when he tells the story of the 10,000 Spartan soldiers. In their initiation they would kill pigs and get a bowl of pig's blood and they would initiate their swords by plunging them into the blood and they called it "baptizing" their swords. Their swords were identified with the blood. They would be asked "What do you have on your shoulder?" They would reply, "I have a warrior's sword that has been baptized in blood." Euripides speaks of a ship being baptized in that the ship was sunk and sank down into the water. Baptism never left the object the same. It signified a change that had taken place.
2. LOOK AT THE ETYMOLOGY OF THESE WORDS.
The verb--"BAPTO". This means to dip, immerse. Used in John 13:26 and Luke 16:24. Used for the dipping of a dish in water. Also used for dying clothes and this is used in Rev. 19:13. The verb--"BAPTIZO" and it means to dip, to immerse, to cleanse by washing.
(Every word that starts with "bapt" connotes identification.)

The noun--"BAPTISMA" means ritual baptism. Matthew 3:7, 21:25. Used for the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Romans 6:4. It is used as a figure of martyrdom in Matthew 10:38 and Luke 12:50. The noun--"BAPTISTES" and it always means the one who does the baptizing. Like "John the baptizer." Matthew 3:1 and 11:11 and Mark 6:25. We have no record that John the Baptist was ever baptized.

Last we have "BAPTISMOS" and it means to wash dishes. Mark 7:4.

3. THERE ARE FOUR REAL BAPTISMS. (These have nothing to do with water.)
 - a. 1 Cor. 10:2 The baptism of Moses. Moses was actually identified with the Sea, yet he got not a drop of water on him. The children of Israel were identified with him and they didn't get wet either. The only ones who got wet were the Egyptians and they called it slaughter.
 - b. The baptism of the cross. Matthew 20:2 refers to Christ being identified with our sins and judged for them. Our sins were judged on the cross. The cross is a real baptism. Our sins were there identified with Christ.
 - c. The baptism of the Spirit.
We have a prophecy of this in Acts 1:5. 1 Cor. 12:13 gives the mechanics of this act. Ephesians 4:5 gives the principle also Galatians 3:26-28. (This is the only equality in the human race. Those who are baptized by the Holy Spirit.) Then we have Romans 6:1-14 which is the longest Scripture on this subject.
 - d. The baptism of fire. Matthew 3:11 and Luke 3:16. All unbelievers will experience this baptism along with Satan and all unbelieving angels. This is where we get the parable of the wheat and the tares. Baptism of the Holy Spirit identified winners. The baptism of fire identifies losers.

4. THERE ARE THREE RITUAL BAPTISMS.
 - a. The baptism of Jesus Christ. Matthew 3:13-17. The water represents the Father's authority and plan for Christ's incarnation. In his baptism Jesus was saying, "I'll go to the cross according to the Father's plan." That's what his baptism meant.
(So, don't say, "I'll follow the Lord in baptism. You can't do this for you can't go to the cross and die for sins.)
 - b. The baptism of John. Matthew 3:1-10, John 1:25-33. This was the ritual by which John's converts were identified with the Kingdom of God. The Levitical priesthood had become apostate and John's baptism replaced it and showed its weakness.
 - c. Christian baptism. Acts 2:38, 8:36-38, 6:15-16, 16:33
The water represents Christ in his death. We are identified with him in his death (put under the water) and in his resurrection (brought up out of the water in the air again). Baptism shows we are identified with Christ in his death and burial and resurrection.

Now we have one more item before we close this study. "The laying on of hands."

Instead of the words "and of" we have the little word "te" and it means "as well as." This shows that the laying on of hands is related to baptisms. These are parallel things and both represent identification. "Laying on" is a descriptive genitive of "epithesis" and means the act of placing the hands on something. The word for hands is "kcheir." We have three illustrations of this in the Bible.

1. The laying on of hands in the Levitical offerings.

Making a sacrifice as in Lev. 1:4. The priest would put his hand on the head of the guilty man and on the head of the animal being sacrificed and the man would name his sins. It was a picture of the sins of the guilty man being placed on the innocent animal. (Doesn't mean the priest was wired up and the sins actually went through him to the animal, it is just the picture of a principle.

2. The laying on of hands in expressing a blessing.

As in Acts 8:18 or Acts 19:13. It resulted in blessing. For a time, Paul had healing power and anyone he touched was healed.

3. The laying on of hands in ordination to the ministry.

1 Timothy 4:14

It is a picture to say, "We recommend him as a pastor-teacher." They had seen that God had given him this gift and they simply make a gesture of their approval of what God had done.