

WATER BAPTISM ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 28:19

It is strong overwhelming evidence that the Apostle Matthew, one of the twelve disciples of Jesus' inner circle, during His earthly ministry, is the author of the Gospel we call, "The Book of Matthew." When he wrote verse 28:19 in his Gospel, it must be pointed out that he didn't go against any Old Testament revelation and/or teachings about the existence of One God, holistically and ontologically. He was also a monotheistic Jew who held to the belief in One God. In verse 19, he writes "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (KJV). It is no indication on Matthew's part to imply a trinity of persons in the god-head, or suggest a new revelation of God evolving into three distinct persons or beings; in contrast to the ancient Hebrew Shema of Deuteronomy 6:4.

In contrast to English, ancient Hebrew is written and read from right to left. As indicated below, I arranged the letters and words of the text to read from left to right for our clarity. The Hebrew rendering, following the English rendering, of Deuteronomy 6:4 are as follows:

- In English - Hear Israel Yahweh our God Yahweh is One
- In Hebrew - Shema Israel Yahweh Elohenu Yahweh Echad

An Apostolic (i.e. Apostles who wrote the New Testament) hermeneutic (i.e. The way of interpreting Scriptures) challenges us to understand Matthew 28:19 the way the author intended it to mean when he wrote it, thus recording the Words of Christ. The plainest way to properly interpret Scriptures is to consider the context, which is one of our oldest Hermeneutical principles of Biblical interpretation. A failure to do so will often lead to misinterpreting what the Biblical author meant in a given passage(s). The context of Matthew 28:19 was not meant to be a theological discussion on the ontological make-up on the essence of God. Matthew simply records the words of Jesus as a command to make disciples by going out into the world teaching and baptizing

converts in the name of the one God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He said, "...*baptize them in the Name* (singular not plural).

Jesus is therefore clearly seen as the one God revealed in the flesh throughout the New Testament writings. When interpreting Scripture, we also have to consider everything the Bible has to say on a given passage, and avoid interpreting one verse in isolation of itself. This practice is identified as proof-texting, and should be avoided. Scripture interprets Scripture! For example, let's consider Matthew 28:19 again. Jesus' command to make disciples by going, teaching, and baptizing in the "Name" of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is first fulfilled in Acts 2:38. When the Apostle Peter gave this command, Matthew, John, James and all the other Apostles were present to correct him if he was wrong. Peter however wasn't wrong, but fully and completely obeyed Jesus' command. The Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is the Name of Jesus. And all instances of Christian water baptism done by the Apostles in the New Testament were all done in the Name of Jesus Christ (see Acts 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; 22:16), as fulfillment of Jesus' command in Matthew 28:19, for water baptism. Now, and for us to do otherwise, would not be in harmony with the teachings of the Holy Scriptures.

REFERENCES

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 (KJV).

Excerpt from the new book entitled, "The Story of Redemption: In the Power of the Gospel of Christ." Powell, John M. (Covenant Books, Murrells Inlet, S.C., 2019)

Matthew 28:19 - Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (KJV).

Segraves, Daniel L. "You Can Understand the Bible, (Go Teach Ministry, USA, 1998)

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