

WRITTEN TEACHING

Dead to Egypt, Alive to God

What it means to be baptized into Christ's death — traced through Israel's crossing of the Red Sea, where an old life drowned behind them and a new one rose on the far shore.

Romans 6 • Exodus 14 • 1 Corinthians 10 • Hebrews 11

There is a moment every believer passes through that Scripture calls baptism — not merely a ritual with water, but a real death and a real rising. Paul tells the church at Rome that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death. To understand what that means, he sends us all the way back to the edge of the Red Sea, to a people fleeing an empire, walking through walls of water, with an old life drowning behind them.

Dead to Sin, Alive to God

Paul begins with a question that answers itself. Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we who are dead to sin live any longer in it? The logic is simple once you see it: sin can no longer rule a person who has already died. Something that is dead has no more claim, no more pull, no more appeal.

But how does a person actually become dead to sin? Paul answers immediately: as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death. Notice how carefully that is worded. He does not simply say we were baptized into Christ. He tells us exactly what that baptism means — it means being baptized into His death. Therefore we are buried with Him in baptism, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

A Shadow at the Red Sea

To help us feel the weight of this, Paul later points the Corinthians to something that happened long before the cross. Their fathers, he says, were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. This is history, but it is

also more than history. Paul is showing us that the exodus itself was a shadow, cast backward, of the very baptism he describes in Romans — a dying to one world and a rising alive into another.

The Cloud That Led, Then Defended

Go back to Exodus and the picture becomes vivid. By day the Lord went before Israel in a pillar of cloud to lead them; by night, in a pillar of fire to give them light. That pillar never left them. But when Pharaoh's army drew near at the sea, the cloud did something new: it moved from before the people to behind them, standing between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel. To the Egyptians, that same cloud became darkness. To Israel, it remained light. Two camps, one cloud, two entirely different experiences of it — depending on which side of it you stood.

This is the cloud Paul has in mind when he says Israel was baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. When Moses lifted his rod and the sea divided, that was not simply a rescue. It was, for the whole nation, the moment of the cross — a moment where they died to Egypt and rose alive to God, all through the mediating figure of Moses.

Moses Had Already Died to Egypt

None of this was arbitrary. Moses himself had already walked this path. Hebrews tells us he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming reproach greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. Moses had every reason to stay — wealth, position, comfort — and he walked away from all of it. In doing so, he died to Egypt. And whatever you are truly dead to no longer holds any appeal over you.

That is why what happened afterward at the burning bush, and later at the sea, was not coincidence. A man who had already died to one foundation was now standing on another, and the supernatural naturally followed. This is the same principle Israel would walk into at the sea: to be baptized into Moses was to die where Moses had died, so that they might live where Moses now lived — alive to the same God who had met him in the fire. It was here, at the water's edge, that the purification of Israel truly began.

Egypt Dies From Following You

What happened next at the shore is the clearest picture of all. As Israel walked through on dry ground, Pharaoh's whole army followed them into the same sea. But when Moses stretched out his hand again, the waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, the whole host of Pharaoh — until not one of them remained. Israel stood on the far shore and watched Egypt die in the very waters they themselves had just walked through alive.

This is what happens when you have truly died to something: it does not simply lose its grip on you, it dies from following you altogether. Egypt could pursue Israel right up to the water's edge, but it could not survive the crossing. The very waters that became life and safety for the ones walking in newness of life became judgment for the old life still chasing after them.

This is the pattern behind every true baptism: not a symbol only, but a real crossing. An old life goes under and does not come up again. A new life rises on the other side, walking where Christ walks, alive to the very God who raised Him from the dead. Whatever your Egypt has been, the sea has already been divided. The question is only whether you are still standing on its shore, or walking through it into newness of life.

In the name of Jesus.

✦ Branch of Righteousness

“I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one.” — John 17:23

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