

Where Should We Be Baptized?

By Frank Brown

Is there one special place on earth where the Scriptures require us to be immersed? If so, where is it?

All religions have many and varied doctrines. Most come out of the “Holy Book” used by whatever faith the particular sect, denomination, or religion accepts as being inspired by a higher power.

In our case, it is the Set-Apart Scriptures, which we believe and teach were originally inspired by the Creator and Sustainer, Yahweh. Although they have been tampered with down through the ages to a degree, Yahweh has maintained their integrity sufficiently that we can trust them to guide us into eternal life.

What we have to watch out for are those who would wrest, misinterpret, and distort the Scriptures for their own personal benefit, or because they themselves are deceived. The Scriptures themselves warn us of this, over and over again.

If we see a thing proven in Scripture, then we can rely on it. If we cannot prove it by Scripture, or if it is someone’s interpretation that goes against other Scriptures, then we must reject it as heretical.

Such is the subject of this essay. I have been told that there is a teaching that we must be members of a certain organization, and that we must travel to their headquarters (Abilene, Texas) to be properly immersed, in order to be saved. If this is true, it should be easily found in Scripture, so let’s “search the Scriptures, whether these things be so.”

The only mention of “Abilene” in Scripture is in Luke 1, and it refers to the ruler of this region, whose name was Lysanias or Lusaias. This region of Abilene was located in Syria, in the middle East, and not in Texas. There is, of course, no mention of Texas in Scripture.

Both the “Assembly of Yahweh” and the “House of Yahweh” are spoken of in Scripture. The “House of Yahweh” is mentioned 90 times in both the old and new testaments, and refers to a number of things, including the place of Jacob’s vision (Gen. 28:17), Shiloh, a place in Palestine (Judges 18:31), the Temple in Jerusalem (many places, Ezra 3:8 for example), the Assembly (2 Tim. 3:15, Heb. 10:21, 1 Pet. 4:17).

The “Assembly of Yahweh,” erroneously called the “Church of God” in most versions of the Scriptures, occurs 8 times in the New Testament. All of these various usages refer to the organism, the living, Spirit-filled Assembly in all its various locations around the world, wherever repentant, converted, Spirit-filled people reside. It does NOT refer in any way to one particular sect, cult, denomination, or group.

There is no question that the headquarters of Yahweh’s Work was centered at the Temple in Jerusalem from the time of its construction in Solomon’s time until its complete destruction in 70 CE by the Roman army, except for the periods of exile imposed on the nation of Judah for their sins.

So, what about immersion (baptism)? Where can it legally and Scripturally be done? It seems that **if** it should be done at a religious “headquarters,” the Temple should have been the place during the times of John the Baptist and Yahshua Ha Maschiah. Let’s examine the Scriptures for the answer. John baptized in the Jordan River (Mat 3:5-7 and Mark 1:4-5), those people who came out FROM Jerusalem and other places. Yahshua was baptized there (Mark 1:9).

John 3:22 depicts Yahshua’s disciples baptizing in Judea; in John 3:23, John was baptizing in Aenon “because there was much water there.”

In Acts 8:5-12, Philip went down to Samaria and preached. Then he baptized those who repented. In Acts 8:26-38 is the account of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch. The eunuch was returning to Ethiopia

from Jerusalem where he had kept the Feast of Pentecost. He was baptized in a stream or lake by the side of the road.

Shaul (Paul) was baptized at Damascus, a city in Syria, a pagan nation. Cornelius and his household were baptized in Caesarea (Acts 10:1-48). Lydia of Thyatira and her household were baptized in a river near Philippi, a city of Macedonia (Acts 16:12-15). The jailer and his family were baptized in or near the same city (Acts 16:33). Acts 18:8 records baptisms in Corinth, another pagan city; Acts 19 reports baptisms in Ephesus.

Nowhere in Scripture is any certain place mentioned or even hinted that it is the only place to be immersed. Such a belief is totally and irrevocably false and a demonic heresy. In Mark 16:16, Yahshua stated that those who believe and are baptized shall be saved. Nothing said about WHERE to be immersed.

Paul wrote: (1 Cor 12:13 KJV) *"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."*

If you have repented of your sins, are converted, and accept Yahshua's shed blood as payment for those past sins, then you should be baptized by a representative of Yahshua; then have hands laid on you with prayer for you to receive the Holy (Set Apart) Spirit. The place where this is done is totally irrelevant to your salvation. Anyone who teaches such is not of Yahweh. He or she is a false prophet, plain and simple.

Remember that we are commanded to "Search the Scriptures daily, whether these things be so." Take no man's word for any doctrine unless you see it proven in Scripture. Yahshua said to one sect of his day: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures."

It behooves us to "know the Scriptures." We are to grow in grace and knowledge. We do this by diligently studying Scripture daily, not by reading the writings of possible false prophets. If we are firmly grounded in the Scriptures, then we will recognize false teachings and not be deceived into following them.

A word to the wise should be sufficient. Are you wise?~
