

## In You I Am Well-Pleased

Luke 3:21-22

There is no greater feeling than being a person in whom someone else is 'well-pleased.' Our text tells us that when Jesus was baptized, the heavens opened, and the God's voice said "In you I am well-pleased." When you come to faith in Jesus Christ, you are considered 'in Him.' To be 'in Christ' means that all Jesus experienced in life is mine. His death (I died), His resurrection (I live), His baptism (I am pleasing to God).

### I. Christ finishes for me where I fall short - the location of His baptism.

There is reliable data from the first four centuries of Christianity that the location of Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist was at a spot on the Jordan River just five miles north of the Dead Sea. This spot, near the city of Jericho, is called by the Jews Bethabara" or "The Crossing." (See notes: back page).

What is the significance of Jesus being baptized in the same spot that Joshua led the children of Israel into the Promised Land? Well, simply put, the type (Israel) is fulfilled in the anti-type (Jesus). Israel (and we) fail in our obedience to God, but Jesus the Anointed one finishes for me where I fall short.

*"When Israel was a child, I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. The prophets called them, and they went from them: they sacrificed unto Baal, and burned incense to graven images" (Hos. 11:1,2).*

(Jesus) was there (Egypt) until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 'Out of Egypt have I called my son' (Matthew 2:15). His Son; My Savior. All the blessings of that Jesus Christ earned ("In you I am well-pleased") I receive by my faith in Him.

### II. Christ is faithful for me where I am sometimes faithless - the language of His baptism.

In the parallel gospel of Matthew, the writer describes John resisting Jesus requested for baptism. Jesus responds, *"It is fitting for this to happen so we can fulfill all righteousness"* (Matthew 2:15). The Greek word translated "fulfill," is the word "plero-o," which has two primary and chief meanings: **(1)**. To make full, or to fill up, or **(2)**. To render perfect, that is, to make whole, complete, and perfect.

Until a person sees **complete and perfect righteousness** is 'in Christ,' there will always be the temptation to imitate the rigors of Law keeping. Do I constantly turn to Law, looking to myself for performance, or do I trust Him who has *fulfilled all righteousness* for God's *"I am pleased with you."*

Luke organizes his genealogy of Jesus backward, so that it ends with *"Adam, the son of God"* (3:38). Adam and Eve sinned by eating the forbidden fruit in a garden where they had plenty. Jesus resisted turning the stone into bread in a barren wilderness where He was very hungry. Jesus had no food in the wilderness for forty days, but was satisfied doing God's will. Israel had manna supplied by God for forty years, but constantly grumbled for the fleshpots of Egypt. Christ's faithful where we're faithless.

### III. Christ fulfills all righteousness for me so I faith it in Him - the lesson of His baptism.

Those who confess, *"I am the righteousness of God in Christ,"* are always pleasing to God the Father. This is *"the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe"* (Rom. 3:22). Or, in short, it is called *"the righteousness of faith"* (Rom. 10:6). Faith in His righteousness, brings to you the same righteousness, for to be 'in Him' is to be made the righteousness of God forever. In essence, because you are whole, complete and perfect 'in Christ,' the heavens open and God says:

**"In You I Am Well-Pleased"**

## Notes on References to the Location of Jesus Baptism

The evidence of **Betharaba** being the site of the Jesus' baptism begins with Origen. He writes

"It is said that on the heights of the Jordan there is **Bethabara** where, it is affirmed, John baptized Jesus." (Works of Origen, Commentary on Matthew).

The ancient historian Eusebius of Cesarea says **Betharaba** is the place is known to *"many believing brothers who, wishing to be reborn, are baptised there in the living current"*.

Eusebius also wrote that Constantine confided to the bishops gathered at Nicomedia that he desired to be baptized at **Betharaba** by saying:

"Finally time is ripe the salvific seal which I once thought I could receive in the waters of the Jordan, where, we are reminded, the Saviour was baptized as an example for us."

(Vita Costantini IV, 62, 1-2)

One of the early Christian pilgrims to the Holy Land, an anonymous traveller from Bordeaux, France, identified the site Christ's baptism five miles from the Dead Sea, also wrote about the site and connected it to the Ascension of Elijah

"(From the Dead Sea) to the Jordan, where the Lord was baptized by John - there are five miles. There is a place by the river, a little hill upon the further bank, from which Elijah was taken up into heaven".

In the fourth century Jerome, while studying in Bethlehem, writes that **Betharaba** on the Jordan River was a regular stop of the Christian Pilgrims to the Holy Land. He recounts the pilgrimage of his friend Paola whom he had accompanied to **Betharaba** ("the crossing") and "she stood on the river bank at dawn... she remembered the sun of justice (Jesus)..."