

Sermon Notes

Resurrection & the Baptism of the Dead

1 Corinthians 15:29

July 10, 2016

Introduction: *Curious, odd...or what?*

This mention (15:29) about the baptism for the dead is fascinating...it is also curious, and for many it seems out of place or just plain odd. What is this?

Suggestions & Proposals & Wonderings...

What we should avoid

We should avoid any idea that Paul is just straining for something, desperate to make his case about the resurrection from the dead. It is unlikely that Paul would just mention something like this without any connection to what he has been dealing with. It's all connected with what has gone before: "*Otherwise...*" is how he begins these comments.

What we should keep in mind

Paul's points are all connected. We will see that Paul is continuing his points (argument) about the bodily resurrection from the dead *as the defeat of death*. This defeat of death is something which has been hinted at, pointed to, hoped for, spoken of, displayed, demonstrated, and shown forth in the shadows and types and figures and pictures of the biblical story.

Paul will present one of the most masterful arguments for the resurrection of the dead here, and he will do so by referring to this "baptism for the dead" as something which has been around throughout the Old Covenant; something which is pointing forward to the resurrection.

Not Random, but Rooted in Scripture

Paul is referring to the Old Testament procedure for cleansing—for washing—after contact with the dead. He is referring to the ritual practice of cleansing—or baptism!—which is found in the Law, and it is a distinctive practice, making this a tremendous point.

Numbers 19—The Statute of the Red Heifer

Death is all over the place; it affects and infects everyone. Death is a reality, a 'master' of sorts, with a long winning streak. This is nothing new, nor is this some kind of surprise. According to the Law of God, to come into contact with the dead, even touching a bone or a grave, would make someone unclean for 7 days; not in sin, but unclean. To be unclean prohibited one from worship, and it is this uncleanness which is dealt with in Numbers 19.

Here, the Lord gives an ordinance for dealing with death...

Similarities...

While this is *not* a sacrificial animal, there are a few similarities with other offerings.

Differences... & a Distinct Washing

In Numbers 19:1-10, we will find that some of the unique aspects of this statute include that the animal is red and not a male; it is a heifer. It is *not* given to Aaron, the high priest, but to Eleazar. It is taken *outside the camp*, and someone else slaughters it. Eleazar does sprinkle some of the blood (7 x) toward the tabernacle, but they are away from the tabernacle. This animal is offered entire, and there are no reserved portions at all. After this, all of those who are involved must wash their clothes and be unclean until evening. The ashes are collected and preserved, in a clean place, *outside the camp*, and when used in the future, will have (living) water added and be used for the cleansing of those who come in contact with the dead. Numbers 19:11-19 explains the procedure for this cleansing.

All of this is fine and good, but what does this have to do with what Paul has mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15:29?

Hebrews 9

After summarizing some of the particulars of Old Covenant worship, various "baptisms" () are mentioned (9:10). These Old Covenant baptisms included the ashes of a heifer being sprinkled for cleansing (Heb. 9:13). All of this is pointing to the person and work of Christ and the cleansing He has provided.

Resurrection & the Baptism of the Dead

The Old Testament washing for the dead is a provision which shows that our Lord has always _____ for those infected with death.

Death is dealt with through/by _____ .

This is another way in which our Lord shows us that death will not have the _____ .

Seeing Christ in Scripture—in all of this

Our provision.

He submitted to.

Outside the gate (Heb. 13:12).

3rd & 7th days.