

BOOK OF MORMON VERSUS BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In a previous lesson we studied the Mormon teaching and present-day practice of the living being baptized on the behalf of others already dead, or for the dead, or vicarious baptism, or what is known as proxy baptism, a practice which they presently contend is authorized by 1Cor.15:29.
2. In that earlier lesson we established what is meant by vicarious or proxy baptism, offered scriptural reasons why the doctrine and practice is wrong, and can't be the proper interpretation of 1Cor.15:29.
3. We also studied 1Cor.15:29 in context in order to determine its true meaning, which is simply a reference to baptism in the name of Christ for the remission of sins.
4. In this the second lesson on baptism for the dead, we shall offer proof that the present-day teaching and practice of Mormonism of proxy baptism not only contradicts the Bible, but also is contrary to and contradicts their own so-called inspired Book of Mormon.
5. This is a fact because the Book of Mormon not only does not teach or authorize the practice of the living being baptized on the behalf of others already dead, it does not even mention the practice. However, it does condemn the practice in principle!

II. DISCUSSION

A. THE BOOK OF MORMON IN ALMA 34:32-35, WHICH READS AS FOLLOWS, CONTRADICTS AND EVEN CONDEMNS IN PRINCIPLE THEIR PRESENT-DAY PRACTICE OF PROXY BAPTISM.

“For behold, this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God; yea, behold the day of this life is the day for men to perform their labors. And, now as I said unto you before, as ye have had so many witnesses, therefore, I beseech you that you do not procrastinate the day of your repentance, unto the end; for after this day of life, which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein

there can be no labor performed. Ye can not say, when ye are brought to that awful crisis, that I will repent, that I will return to my God. Nay, ye can not say this; for that same spirit which doth possess your bodies at the time that ye go out of this life, that same spirit will have power to possess your body in that eternal world. For behold, if ye have procrastinated the day of your repentance even until death, behold, ye have become subjected to the spirit of the devil, and he doth seal you his; therefore the Spirit of the Lord hath withdrawn from you, and hath no place in you, and the devil hath all power over you; and this is the final state of the wicked.”

(A careful analysis of this quote reveals the following, as we examine individual statements from this quotation from Alma 34:32-35 : --

1. “This life is the time for men to prepare to meet God.”
 - a. If this life is THE time, we must conclude that the next life , after death, is not the time to prepare.
 - b. If it is not the time to prepare, it must follow that no preparation can there and then be made.
2. “If ye do not improve your time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labor performed.”
 - a. What kind of labor? Certainly it means labor of preparation .
 - b. Hence our conclusion from No. 1 is correct, and, according to the Book of Mormon no labor of preparation to meet God can be made “after this day of life.”
 - c. Faith and repentance are labors of preparation which the departed are to perform, according to L.D.S. doctrine, and baptism to be done by the living for the dead, but since no labor of preparation can be performed “after this day of life,” no one can believe and repent after death, hence baptism performed by the living will do them no good.
3. “Ye can not say, when ye are brought to that awful crisis, that I will repent, that I will return to my God.”
 - a. This is a labor of preparation to meet God which should have been done in the day of life, and which cannot be done “after this day of life.”
 - b. So after death it is too late to repent and return to God; and the dead will not be allowed to say it, or do it.

- c. And the reason stated is, “for that same spirit which doth possess your bodies at the time that ye go out of this life... have power to possess your body in that eternal world.”
 - d. If it is disobedient here, it will be disobedient there; if holy here, it will be holy there.
4. “If ye have procrastinated the day of your repentance even until death...ye have become subjected to the spirit of the devil, and he doth seal you his ... and the devil hath all power over you.”
- a. There not only can not be any preparation made after the final judgment, but according to this there can not be any preparation made by the unsaved between death and the judgment.
 - b. As soon as one who has put off repentance does he becomes “subjected to the spirit of the devil,” the devil “doth seal you his,” and “the devil hath all power over you.”
 - c. If the devil hath “all power” over one, why be baptized for that one? Has the devil promised to release “all power” and turn loose everyone for whom the living are baptized?
 - d. According to the Book of Mormon, at death the unsaved become the property of the devil and he has “all power” over them, so if they are ever saved they, or their friends, must do something to please the devil so he will turn them loose.
 - e. Is baptism an act to please the devil and induce him to release our friends who have died without repentance?
 - f. And if we should be baptized to please the devil and get him to turn them loose, they still would not be saved, for we have learned that they cannot repent and turn to God according to this quote from the Book of Mormon.
5. “The Spirit of the Lord hath withdrawn from you, and hath no place in you.”
- a. The devil has taken complete charge and possession of the dead who have “procrastinated the day of repentance,” and the “Spirit of the Lord hath withdrawn.”
 - b. No wonder they cannot repent and return to God “after this day of life” is over!
6. “And this is the final state of the wicked.”

- a. And who are the wicked? Those who have “procrastinated the day of your repentance even until death.”
- b. And who needs to repent? And who should not procrastinate the day of their repentance? All who have sinned; hence, all responsible people.
- c. So to be in the possession of the devil, to be in his power, to be forsaken by the Spirit of the Lord so that one can not repent and return to the Lord, to be unable to do any labor of preparation to meet the Lord, “this is the final state of the wicked,” of those who have put off the day of their repentance until death.
- d. If this is the **final state** of those who die without repentance, why be baptized for them?
- e. If by baptism we can bring them out of that state, it is not the **final state**, and the Book of Mormon is not true.
- f. So if the Book of Mormon is true, the L.D.S. are wrong in baptizing the living for the dead.
- g. But if they are right in baptizing the living for the dead, the Book of Mormon is false. From this conclusion there is no escape!

B. AGAIN, THE BOOK OF MORMON IN ALMA 42:10-13, WHICH READS AS FOLLOWS, ALSO CONTRADICTS AND CONDEMNS THEIR PRESENT-DAY PRACTICE OF PROXY BAPTISM.

“Therefore as they had become carnal, sensual, and devilish, by nature, this probationary state became a state for them to prepare; it became a preparatory state...Therefore, according to justice, the plan of redemption could not be brought about, only on conditions of repentance of men in this probationary state, yea, this preparatory state; for except it were for these conditions, mercy could not take effect except it should destroy the work of justice. Now the work of justice could not be destroyed; if so God would cease to be God.”

(A careful analysis of this quote reveals the following, as we examine individual statements from this quotation from Alma 42:10-13: --

1. “This probationary state became a state for them to prepare.”

- a. This “probationary state” is “the day of this life” (Alma 34:33), and it is the time to prepare.
- b. And those who need to prepare are “mankind,” for in V.9 we read, “the fall had brought upon all mankind a spiritual death as well as a temporal...it was expedient that mankind should be reclaimed from this spiritual death.”
2. “The plan of redemption could not be brought about, only on conditions of repentance of men in this probationary state, yea, this preparatory state.”
 - a. This simply means that the plan of redemption applies to, and works in behalf of, those only who repent in this probationary state, in this life.
 - b. The plan of redemption will not work in behalf of, nor apply to, those who repent in the state following this probationary state.
 - c. So regardless of the faith or the penitence of the souls in torment, the plan of redemption will not reach them, even though a friend here is baptized in the temple for them.
 - d. People can be saved “only on conditions of repentance” while they live in this preparatory state.
3. “For except it were for these conditions, mercy could not take effect except it destroy the work of justice. Now justice can not be destroyed; if so God would cease to be God.”
 - a. Except it were for these conditions, that is, “conditions of repentance of men in this probationary state,” mercy could not take effect without destroying the justice of God.
 - b. So if people are saved on any conditions except repentance in this probationary state the justice of God would be destroyed.
 - c. But if justice is destroyed, God will cease to be God.
 - d. So it follows that if one individual is saved who did not repent in this probationary state, justice will be destroyed, and God will cease to be God.

- e. Need I make the application? If one person who does not repent in this life, but repents when he gets into torment, is saved by some “saint” being baptized for him, justice will be destroyed, and God will cease to be God!
- f. Such is the teaching of the Book of Mormon. Truly few L.D.S. know anything about their own inspired (?) book. It is so dry, tedious, and poorly constructed that few people can stay with it until they read it through.

III. CONCLUSION

1. Obviously the Book of Mormon does not mention, teach, nor authorize Mormonism’s present-day practice of proxy baptism. Rather, it condemns it!
2. So it is according to our subject: The Book of Mormon Versus Baptism For The Dead.
3. Therefore, neither the Book of Mormon nor the Bible in 1Cor.15:29 teach proxy baptism! Rather, both books condemn the practice!
4. Remember what Jesus says in Mt.15:9!

-- Credit to Roy H. Lanier tract: “Mormon Doctrine”