

#8 FORUM POST ON BEING BORN OF WATER AND SPIRIT

Dear All,

This is John 3:5 NASB

5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless * one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot * enter into the kingdom of God.

Some believe water to be:

The word of God

Baptismal water

Natural birth

There might be other understandings that are not listed.

I tend to go with either natural birth or baptismal water.

Either can seem correct to me.

Please state what you believe and why.

Appreciated...

G

Dear G _____,

Hos 6:3 Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he (Christ) shall come unto us as the Rain, as the Latter and Early Rain unto the earth.

Job 37:6 For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain (Early Rain), and to the great rain (Latter Rain) of his strength.

Deu 32:2 My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small Rain (Early Rain) upon the tender herb, and as the showers (Latter Rain) upon the grass.

The spirit word "water" in Christ's statement in John 3:5 represents the Early Rain of the Spirit.

The Early Rain of the Spirit is a small measure of the Spirit and will give a person their faith and ability to believe that Jesus is the Christ. But since the Early Rain is given in "measure" (**Joel 2:23**), it will leave a new babe in Christ spiritually blind, carnally minded and unconverted. In this condition, a babe will understand the teachings of the New Covenant in an outward & physical way. For that reason, physical water is used to symbolize the Early Rain of the Spirit.

The Early Rain of the Spirit is what Peter received in Mat 16:13-17. Because of the small measure of the Spirit indwelling Peter, Peter was able to recognize that Jesus was the Christ. This is also why Peter accepted Jesus as "Lord":

1Cor 12:3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit.

The same is true of Paul. The Early Rain of the Spirit is what Paul received on the Damascus Road so that Paul could recognize that Jesus is the Christ. This is also why Paul accepted Jesus as "Lord" at that time (**Acts 9:6**).

The spirit word "Spirit" in Christ's statement in John 3:5 represents the Latter Rain of the Spirit. The Latter Rain of the Spirit is also called the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The Latter Rain of the Spirit comes in great measure. It will heal a babe's spiritual blindness and will transform their carnal mind into the mind of Christ. Judgment (Day of the Lord) will then immediately follow which will complete the babe's conversion. At this point, the babe becomes a little child and enters the Kingdom of Heaven where the law of sin & death can no longer accuse them.

Mat 18:3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Peter received the Latter Rain of the Spirit with the other Jewish Elect on the Day of Pentecost.

Paul received the Latter Rain of the Spirit in Damascus after being blind and unable to eat for three days.

James teaches the same truth of what it takes to be "born again" in the scripture below. But instead of using the birthing analogy as Christ did in John 3:5, James uses the farming analogy.

James 5:7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receives the Early (Water) and Latter (Spirit) Rain. 8 Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

Joe

Another member responded:

Dear FaithWillDo,

In principle, what you have said about **the early and latter rain** is not untrue. But it is only a parable version of what is greater, reiterated in that way to carry the matter forward to many generations.

To the contrary, however, **the early and latter rain is rather a parable pointing to God's greater overall salvation plan.** In that plan, the "early" or "former" rain is in the "Fall" season--that season of death--and little compared with the "latter" rain which comes in the "Spring" season--the season of new life, which is more and ultimately greater. The early was the rain from above--from God--upon the lesser nation of Israel, while the latter is the rain of God's spirit being poured out upon "*all flesh*"--meaning upon the greater number of Gentile nations. Which is confirmed in the saying, "*the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual.*"

Many would describe it in this way: "Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the disciples reached the then-known world in a relatively short time. Joel's prediction of the early rain was fulfilled at Pentecost, but the latter rain will fall with greater power to ready earth's final harvest." Which also only eludes to the greater "*first the natural (Israel), but afterward the spiritual (Gentiles)*" description of the overall implementation of God's great salvation plans.

S _____

Dear S _____,

Yes, the Early and Latter Rains concept is a part of the farming analogy. The farming analogy teaches the pathway to salvation. It is one of many analogies that Christ uses in scripture.

The Latter Rain is what makes a person ready for the harvest into the Kingdom of Heaven. It is the baptism.

The Early Rain is what makes an unbeliever into a believer. It will give the person their faith and certain spiritual gifts - but it is given in a small measure as Joel pointed (Joel 2:23). It is not the baptism. When a person has only the Early Rain, they will remain a babe who can only draw milk. The Latter Rain is what will heal the babe's spiritual blindness so that they finally understand the spiritual teachings of Christ.

To be saved, an Elect person begins with the Early Rain and then after a time of waiting, they will receive the Latter Rain. After they receive the Latter Rain, Christ will spiritually appear and begin the Day of the Lord within the person. Christ teaches this judgment in Mat 24:37-41 and in Rev 19:11-21.

Also, the Early Rain was not fulfilled at Pentecost - that was the Latter Rain that made the Jewish Elect ready for harvest into the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Gentile churches that Paul began received only the Early Rain. Look closely at 1 Corinthians - Paul is talking to carnally minded babes who can only understand "Christ and Him crucified" (Christ's physical work). They could not understand the spiritual work that Christ was presently doing under the New Covenant.

Here is what Paul said to them about the Early and Latter Rains though he did not use those terms:

1Cor 1:6 Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: 7 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

A person will make a confession of faith (their testimony) and receive spiritual gifts when they receive the Early Rain. After a person receives the Early Rain, they begin a time of waiting for Christ to return with the Latter Rain. Paul refers to the Latter Rain in verse 8:

8 Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Being confirmed to the end (same as end of the ages) is a person's moment of salvation when they become a child of God who enters the Kingdom of Heaven.

Paul mentions the end of the ages here:

1Cor 10:11 Now all these things happened to them as types, and have been written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come.

Paul mentions the time of waiting for the Latter Rain in this verse:

Heb 9:28 So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

The first time Christ appears to a person is after they are given the Early Rain. This is when they see Christ in the flesh (Christ and Him crucified). That is when the person becomes a babe in Christ who can only draw milk. When Christ returns with the Latter Rain to bring the babe their salvation, He will appear spiritually to them. That is when the spiritual teachings of the New Covenant will open up to the person's understanding - that's what the scales falling from Paul's eyes represented when he was converted. Paul blindness was healed when he received the Latter Rain. Paul received the Early Rain on the Damascus Road and that is why scripture says Paul remained blind and unable to eat for three days. The food Paul could not consume was the bread and wine of the New Covenant. The number three represents a spiritual process. The spiritual

process that Paul went through during those three day was being made "worse than the first" (Mat 12:43-45) and becoming a man of sin. For that reason, Paul lodged in Judas' house. After the three days were complete, Paul prayed and Christ (typed by Ananias) came to Paul on a street named "straight" - this represents that Christ's way was made straight (faith alone, no mixing of works).

Here is what James says about the Early and Latter Rains:

James 5:7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receives the EARLY and LATTER RAIN. 8 Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

James is writing to babes who have only received the Early Rain. James is encouraging them to have patience while they wait for the Lord to return with the Latter Rain. James even tells them that the Lord's return to them "draweth nigh". In the farming analogy, the Elect are the "precious fruit of the earth" (wheat). As James says, the wheat is not ready for harvest until it has received both the Early and Latter Rains.

Here are four other verses that use the Early and Latter Rains:

Job 37:6 For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain (Early Rain), and to the great rain (Latter Rain) of his strength.

1Sam 12:17 Is it not wheat harvest to day? (day of salvation/conversion) I will call unto the LORD, and he shall send thunder (voice of God) and Rain (Latter Rain); that ye may perceive and see (spiritual blindness healed) that your wickedness is great (have become apostate/man of sin), which ye have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king.

Jer 3:3 Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no Latter Rain; and thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed (time of being an apostate babe/man of sin).

Psa 68:9 Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful Rain (Latter Rain), whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary (in an apostate condition).

The Early and Latter Rains concept is taught in many of Christ spiritual teachings but since it is taught in His spiritual language, babes cannot see it being taught.

Joe

Dear FaithWillDo,

That is all well and good to a point, but should not overshadow the greater meaning of "*first to the Jew, and also to the Greek* (gentile, afterward), including also that early rain specifically given to Israel, lest *we become self-important in our own eyes, as if it refers only to those born after Christ sent the Holy Spirit*, the fulfilment of Joel's prophecy of God pouring out His spirit upon all flesh. It is a mistake to receive only that part that pertains to us personally.

S_____

Dear S_____,

The Early and Latter Rain concept is a teaching on the pathway that Christ causes His Elect to travel to their salvation. Why would you believe that it applies also to "first the Jew and afterward the Greek"? That is an outward understanding of a spiritual teaching. Spiritual teachings apply "within" a person. Do you have any scripture to support your belief?

Joe

Dear FaithWillDo,

First, I was not and am not speaking out of my own "beliefs." It is important to understand that while there is an immense sea of such activity for the sake of discussion and perhaps debate, God still delivers what is true directly. For which we are commanded, "*He who has an ear, let him hear.*"

But to answer your question: Because, as it is written, "*the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual*" (1 Corinthians 15:46).

S_____

Dear S_____,

Yes, the natural is the Early Rain which leaves a new babe in Christ carnally minded and spiritually blind. All believers start off following Christ in this way. The Latter Rain (the baptism) is the spiritual and is when a person's spiritual blindness is healed. After it is healed, they become a spiritual man who has the mind of Christ and not a carnal mind.

Paul shows the natural man and the spiritual man in the verse below. Both are Christians but one is unconverted (natural/babe) and one is converted (spiritual/saint).

Gal 6:1 Brethren, if a man (a babe/Early Rain only) be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual (converted/both Early & Latter Rains), restore such an one in the spirit of

meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

My question to you was to show scripture that supports your belief that the Early Rain also carries an outward meaning which represents the baptism of the Holy Spirit that the Jewish Elect received on the Day of Pentecost. I can answer the question for you because I know that there are zero scriptures that support this understanding. In fact, there are numerous scriptures which contradict your understanding.

The Early and Latter Rain concept applies to an individual who is following Christ. Christ gives the person the Early Rain when He calls them to be saint. Christ gives "many" people the Early Rain. For those who are chosen to actually become saints, Christ will return to them later (after a time of waiting) and will pour out the Latter Rain. The Latter Rain is what the Jewish Elect received on the Day of Pentecost and not the Early Rain.

This same pattern of the Early and Latter Rain is also true for Gentiles. They receive the Early Rain first. It is the Early Rain that gives the Gentile person their faith and desire to follow Christ. This is when they enter the church as a babe who remains carnally minded, spiritually blind and unconverted. The churches of the world are full of these type of believers. Next, if the Gentile is one of the Elect, Christ will return to them with the Latter Rain to convert them. Both the Early and Latter Rains are required for any person to be saved. It's not one or the other - it's both the Early and Latter Rains.

James 5:7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receives the EARLY and LATTER RAIN. 8 Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

The Elect are the precious fruit of the earth that can only be harvested into the Kingdom of Heaven (the barn) after they have received both the Early and Latter Rains of the Spirit.

1Sam 12:17 Is it not wheat harvest to day? (day of salvation/conversion) I will call unto the LORD, and he shall send thunder and Rain (Latter Rain); that ye may perceive and see (spiritual blindness healed) that your wickedness is great (have become apostate/man of sin), which ye have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king.

Joe

Dear FaithWillDo,

You are stuck, and you are not listening or hearing. I am not telling you what I "believe", but what is true from God.

Take it or leave it, but the former, early rain was unto Israel (the natural by example), while with the coming of Christ the kingdom of heaven came upon Israel, whom Christ "*finished*" with, and then sent the Holy Spirit, for the most part, to the church and the gentiles, fulfilling Joel's prophecy of God *pouring out His spirit upon all flesh* beginning at Pentecost, which was and is the latter, spring rain, which is the greater downpour.

To the contrary, what you (and many) have outlined, is but a shadow and reminder of the smaller beginning that was before, of the greater outpouring from God which was to come *afterward* in spirit. Without which we are a house without a firm foundation--*like a foolish man who built his house on the sand*.

S _____

Dear S _____,

I have asked you for scripture to support your contention. However, you have provided none. The reason you have provided none is because there is not any. Your belief is nothing more than conjecture and does not come from scripture.

When you look at the Early and Latter Rain teachings in scripture, both the Early and Latter Rains apply to the Jews and Gentiles alike. To be converted and saved, Christ must give a person (Jew or Gentile) both the Early and Latter Rain of the Spirit. There is not even one exception shown in scripture.

Consider the marriage analogy. It (like many of Christ's teachings) teaches the pathway to salvation that includes a person receiving both the Early and Latter Rains of the Spirit.

In the marriage analogy, a person becomes espoused to Christ and is made into a virgin after Christ gives the person the Early Rain. Christ (Bridegroom) then goes away to prepare a place for His new bride. His absence is the time of waiting that a virgin endures between receiving the Early and Latter Rains.

The Bridegroom's return is commonly called the second coming of Christ. It is an individual coming to each of His Elect and is therefore a reoccurring return just as these verses state:

Rev 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne...

Rev 1:8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

Rev 4:8 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

Before Christ appears to His virgin (who has become unfaithful while He was away), He will pour out the Latter Rain upon them which will cause them to repent and be restored to faith. This is shown by the extra flask of oil the wise virgins use in the Ten Virgins parable. Now that the virgin is made ready for Christ's return, Christ will appear (spiritual blindness healed) gather His virgin to heaven for the marriage ceremony. Following the ceremony is the marriage supper where Christ will feed His new Bride the bread and Wine of the New Covenant (Rev 19). After the bride has been sufficient nourished, the Day of the Lord will commence to remove and destroy all the spiritual things within His Bride to purify her. This judgment is also shown in Mat 24:37-41. After this judgment is complete, the person will be converted.

Here is a very short verse that teaches the Early and Latter Rain concept:

Mat 21:44 And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

The "many" who are given the Early Rain and are called to be saints will fall on the stone (Christ) and be broken (become unfaithful). From that group of many though, a few will have the stone fall on them and grind them to powder. This is the Latter Rain that leads to conversion.

Another teaching that shows the Early and Latter Rain is the story of the woman taken in adultery. The woman represents the Elect. The first time Christ writes in the earth represents the Early Rain when He writes the law in the woman's heart. After the Early Rain, the Pharisees still accuse the woman of sin. Christ writes in the earth a second time which represents the Latter Rain. After the Latter Rain, the law can no longer accuse the woman so the Pharisees drop their stones and leave.

Another example is in Mark 8:15-25. It teaches how and when Christ heals a person's spiritual blindness. In the story, Christ takes a blind man out of the city and places spit on his eyes. This is the Early Rain. At that time, the blind man is looking down which represents the carnal aspect of his healing (the natural). When the man looks up, he sees men walking as trees. A tree is an unconverted believer (a babe) which he is now one. Christ then has the man look up (the spiritual) and places spit on his eyes a second time. This is the Latter Rain. After the man opens his eyes, he sees every man clearly. His spiritual blindness is now healed.

There are many other examples of the Early and Latter Rain concept in Christ's teachings. They

apply within each of His Elect.

Also, Christ is not "finished with" the Nation of Israel as you stated. All Israel will be saved but they will be last (after all the Gentiles are saved).

Rom 11:25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. 26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

Joel 2:1-27 presents in detail the salvation of the Nation of Israel in the final age. Christ's army represents the Elect/Bride. As the Elect are judging the Nation of Israel (v. 1-17), Christ will have pity upon them and show them mercy (v. 18). Because of His mercy, He will give them the Early and Latter Rains:

Joel 2:23 Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

If the Early Rain only applies to the Nation of Israel as you content, then this scripture is in error. But it is not. It is your belief that is in error. Also, notice that the verse says that the Early and Latter Rains will both come in the first month. The time an Israelite will spend between receiving the Early and Latter Rains will be greatly shortened compared to the waiting time that occurs in this age for the Elect.

Joe

Dear FaithWillDo,

That's far enough.

If you actually knew the scriptures, you would have known that I was quoting them nearly verbatim, much of which I even gave in quotations or italicized.

You are in no position to say.

S

Dear S _____,

I was aware of the scriptures you were paraphrasing but they do not apply to the Early and Latter Rain concept. That is probably why you did not post those scriptures.

You are violating this concept:

1Cor 4:6 Now, brothers and sisters, I have applied these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, so that you may learn from us the meaning of the saying, “Do not go beyond what is written.” Then you will not be puffed up in being a follower of one of us over against the other.

Look at the importance Paul placed on receiving truth from scripture:

Rom 4:3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

Rom 10:11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Gal 4:30 Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.

1Tim 5:18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer *is* worthy of his reward.

Evidently a teacher that you respect has taught you that the Early Rain applies to the Jewish Elect and the Latter Rain applies to the Gentiles because you could not have learned it from scripture. As I have said, there is no scripture that teaches the Early and Latter Rain concept as you are contending. And not only that, there are many scriptures which contradict it. Your understanding is pure conjecture and goes beyond what is written.

Joe

Dear FaithWillDo,

You quote the scriptures, but you do not understand what you are quoting, and in your ignorance you judge me.

You quoted:

Joel 2:23 Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

But you do not understand. How is the Fall rain also the Spring rain? How is David's Lord also his Son? How did Jesus save--both Israel and the Church, who came in their own times--in one day? You have not answered correctly, but you yourself who accuse me of conjecture and going

beyond the scriptures, only have your own confused and cloudy ideas. You have not even considered that my "teacher" is God, and what I have told you is not only written, was also sealed--but given to me as foretold.

You are an offense.

S_____

Dear S_____,

Yes, I judge you because we are commanded to judge those within the church who contradict the teachings of Christ. For those who are outside the church, we are not to judge them at this time.

1Cor 5:12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?

1Cor 6:2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

1Cor 6:5 I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?

Tit 2:15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

You asked:

You do not understand. How is the Fall rain also the Spring rain?

Joel 2:23 Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

Joel 2:23 does not say that the Latter Rain is the same as the Early Rain. It only says that the time between them is shortened so that they will both fall in the same month. This shortening of time applies only to the salvation of the Nation of Israel in the final age as they are being judged in the Lake of Fire by the Elect.

Is Joel 2:23 the only scripture that you have to support your understanding? You are reading into that verse things that are not there.

You said:

You have not even considered that my "teacher" is God, and what I have told you is not

only written, was also sealed--but given to me as foretold.

So I should just take your word for it that what you teach comes from God? Again, where is your scripture to support what you are saying?

You have not provided even one verse that supports your understanding and you will not address all the many, many verses that I have provided that contradict your teaching. Why should anyone believe what you are saying when you are going beyond what is written?

Paul would say to you "what saith the scripture?" Where is your scripture?

Consider this scripture:

Acts 17:10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

Paul says that the Bereans were more noble because they searched the scriptures daily to make sure that what he told them was true. You are not doing as the Bereans did.

Also, scripture says that a person will only have the ability to learn the New Covenant teachings of Christ AFTER they have been given the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Spirit of Truth/Latter Rain).

John 16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

It is the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Latter Rain) that heals a believer's spiritual blindness (Mark 8:15-25). After a believer has received the Spirit of Truth within themselves, it will guide them in their understanding. If you look for truth outside of scripture, you will not find it. God's Word is our source of truth and the Spirit of Truth is what guides us to find it.

When Christ made His statement in John 16:13 to the disciples, they had only been given the Early Rain at that time. With the Early Rain, they received a measure of faith and could accept Jesus as their Lord. How do I know this? Because of what this verse says:

1Cor 12:3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit.

If the disciples did not already have the Early Rain of the Spirit, they could not have called Jesus "Lord". And from what Christ said in John 16:13, we can know that they did not have the baptism of the Holy Spirit yet. The Latter Rain had not yet fallen on them.

When the disciples were converted on the Day of Pentecost, they had BOTH the Early and Latter Rains just as James said they needed.

All believers (both Jews and Gentiles) start off following Christ because they are given the Early Rain of the Spirit. It is this small measure of the Spirit that gives a person the ability & desire to call Jesus "Lord". Without that small measure of the Spirit, a person will remain an unbeliever. For those who are given the Early Rain, they must do as the disciples did and wait for Christ's return to give them the Latter Rain. Only then will a person be converted and saved.

Since you are not receptive to what scripture is teaching on the Early and Latter Rain concept, it is time to end our discussion.

Joe