

still waters

home church studies

Psalm 29

[Worship]

1 Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. 2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory of his name; worship the LORD in holy splendor. 3 The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD, over mighty waters. 4 The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty. 5 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon. 6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox. 7 The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire. 8 The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh. 9 The voice of the LORD causes the oaks to whirl, and strips the forest bare; and in his temple all say, "Glory!" 10 The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD sits enthroned as king forever. 11 May the LORD give strength to his people! May the LORD bless his people with peace!

Consider:

by Peter Price

Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee (Mark 1:9). To those from Judea and Jerusalem, Galilee was a notorious region. It was populated by non-Jews, separated from "true Israel" by another notorious state, Samaria. Galilee was a hiding place for guerrillas, a hotbed of revolution. We should be warned! If Jesus comes from here, he is likely to be trouble! Jesus, of whom John said, "I am not fit to kneel down and undo the

[Think & Pray...]

strap of his sandals," lines up to receive a baptism of repentance.

Did Jesus need to repent? Unless the gesture is an empty one, apparently he did. John had been announcing a coming new order; his baptism prepared people for new ways of living and behaving. Jesus is the focus of that new order. His baptism was a sign of renouncing the old order. His act of repentance signaled a break with the structures and values in society by which people are oppressed, and with the prevailing moral, religious, and political order.

Jesus' baptism is marked by two dramatic events: the alighting of a dove and the voice of God. Both of these confirm the rightness of his action. He will need all the courage and faith available as he faces the drama, conflict, and testing of the desert (Mark 1:12-13).

Reflection and Action

How does your church understand and practice baptism today? Find your baptismal certificate. Look at the date of your baptism. Who were your sponsors? Light a candle and recommit yourself to the promises of baptism, possibly using the words that are part of your church tradition.



[Scripture]

Acts 19.1-7

1 While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. 2 He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?" They replied, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." 3 Then he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They answered, "Into John's baptism." 4 Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus." 5 On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied--7 altogether there were about twelve of them.