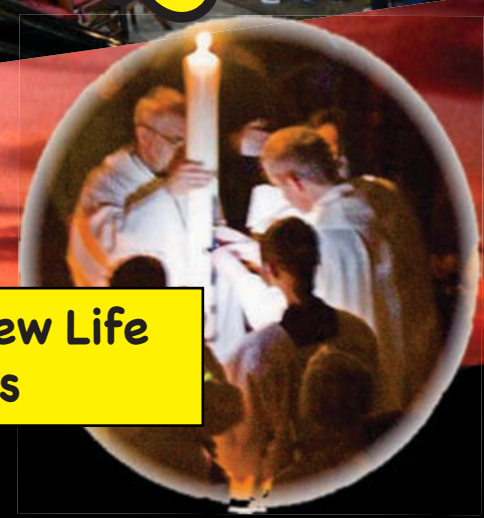


**3. Baptism and the New Life
Jesus gives us**



BAPTISM ... Passing Over



Exodus 14:5-31

God's people are set free from being slaves in Egypt. As they pass through the Red Sea, they are cut off from the old life and begin their new life.



Jesus Christ our Lord passes over from death to new life.

Good Friday

Easter Day

Slaves of sin turn to Jesus and pass through the waters of Baptism. The old life is buried.

Set free as the children of God, living a new life.



The kingdom of Satan

The kingdom of Jesus

WE COME INTO THE NEW LIFE OF JESUS

AND HIS SPECIAL FAMILY, THE CHURCH

We become
 * members of the body of Christ
 "the People of God"
 * children of God
 * citizens of heaven



Baptism gives us:
 * a new King
 * a new life
 * a new family

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"He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son."

(Colossians 1:13)

When they got to the other shore ...

They were so happy to be free that they sang, danced and praised God for his goodness.

But they had just begun. Now they set out on their long journey to "the Promised Land".

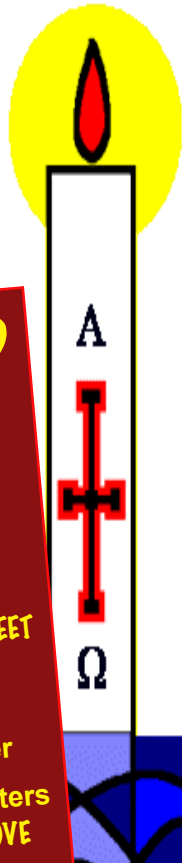
WHAT DID GOD DO FOR HIS PEOPLE?

1. He **LED THEM** on their journey (the "pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night")
2. He **MET WITH THEM** in their praise and worship (the "tabernacle" or "tent of meeting")
3. He **FED THEM** supernaturally with what looked like "bread from heaven"
4. He **PROTECTED THEM** when they were attacked by enemies
5. He **GAVE THEM RULES** to live by so that their community would be safe and happy

WE ARE THE NEW PEOPLE OF GOD

God does the same things for us

1. He **LEADS US** by the Holy Spirit
2. Jesus is the **LAMB OF GOD** who died for us
3. Through the **WATERS OF BAPTISM** we were set free from slavery to sin
4. When we gather to praise and worship God we **MEET WITH HIM** and he **FEEDS US SUPERNATURALLY** in Holy Communion
5. We are **PROTECTED** in our faith journey by his power
6. With his help and the help of our brothers and sisters we seek to live according to **HIS PERFECT LAW OF LOVE**



Baptism and the New Life Jesus gives us

We have already learned that

sacraments

are

outward signs celebrated by the church family in which we meet God and receive his grace.

This is easy to understand, because in everyday life there are many **OUTWARD SIGNS** that make it possible for us to receive something **INVISIBLE**.

When parents hug their children, what we see (the **VISIBLE** thing) is the hug. But hugging is mysterious. We experience something we cannot see, or really put into words (the **INVISIBLE** thing) - the love our parents have for us.

And when people shake hands with each other after a fight, the **VISIBLE** thing is the handshake. But it is a sign of something **INVISIBLE** - the friendship that has been fixed up.



A boy being baptized in Siberia by a Russian Orthodox priest (Time Magazine 27.7.2003)

EVERY SACRAMENT HAS TWO PARTS:

1. An **OUTWARD SIGN** (i.e. the "visible" part)
Something we can **SEE** (and hear)
2. The **INWARD and SPIRITUAL GRACE** (i.e. the "invisible" part)
In other words, the help that God gives us through the particular sacrament.

The OUTWARD SIGN in BAPTISM

... what THE PRIEST does

* Water

We are either put into the water,
or
water is poured over us



* Words

“N, I baptize you
in the name of
the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the
Holy Spirit.”

The INWARD GRACE in BAPTISM

... what GOD does

Thinking about WATER helps us to understand what God does for us when we are baptized.

* Water is a sign of DEATH

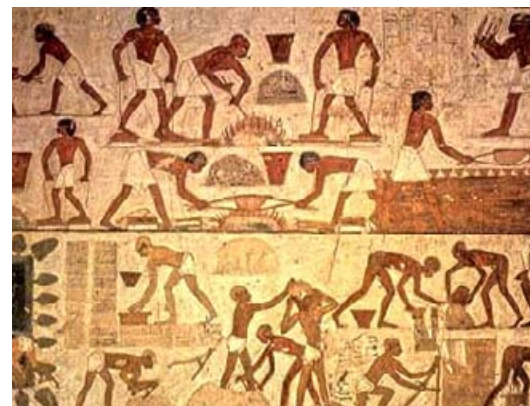
The Bible says:

“all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.” *(Romans 6:3-4)*

Go back to the start of this section and look at the picture of the boy being baptized in the river.

THE PEOPLE OF GOD

In the second book of the Bible we read about God helping his people escape from Egypt. It is a really important story, because it teaches us lots of things about being **THE PEOPLE OF GOD**.

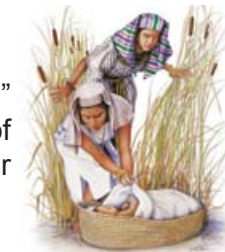


Slaves ...

For just over 400 years the Israelite people had lived in Egypt. During this time they become slaves. They lost their freedom and had to work very hard. The Egyptians were cruel to them. The Israelites longed to be free and to go back to their own land.

Moses ...

The word **exodus** means “departure” or “exit.” The book called **Exodus** tells the exciting story of how God called Moses to lead his people to their freedom.



The blood of the Lamb ...

When the time came for the people to leave Egypt a lamb was killed and its blood was painted on the door posts of the Israelites' houses. They then ate the lamb. God told them to repeat this meal every year as a “memorial” of their new freedom.

The Water ...

This crowd (maybe as many as two million people!) escaped from the land of slavery through the waters of the sea, which separated them from their old life.



* Water is a sign of **CLEANSING**

We all wash our hands, have a bath or a shower to get clean on the **OUTSIDE**.

But it is much more important to be clean on the **INSIDE** - in other words to be washed clean of **SIN**.



SIN is when we say “NO” to God and push him out of our lives. It leaves a dirty stain on our hearts and minds. Humanity as a whole has pushed God away, and we are all born with that stain. We **NEED** to be cleansed.

The outward washing of our bodies with water is a sign that our sin is being washed away.

As the water of baptism touches our bodies, God makes us clean from sin in our hearts. He can do this because Jesus took the whole punishment for our sins when he died on the cross.

In the Bible God says:

“I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean . . .”
(Ezekiel 36:25)

This reminds us of the Apostle Paul when, just after he decided to follow Jesus, he was told,

“Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.”
(Acts 22:16)

In Baptism our **SIN IS WASHED AWAY** and we are made clean.



That’s the oldest way of baptizing. The person being baptized had a real dunking!



He was put right under the water three times - a sign that his **OLD** life and everything he has ever done wrong, is gone forever . . . drowned . . . dead! Some churches still baptize like that today.

In the first part of the Bible we see that the ancient Jewish people were really afraid of the sea.

They called it the “raging of the deep.”

It made them think about death.



Two special stories in that part of the Bible help us to think about being baptized:



the GREAT FLOOD when the old sinful world was drowned in the water, and God made a new start with Noah and his family.

the EXODUS, when God set his people free from Egypt where they had been slaves. He led them through the Red Sea and they began their long journey to the Promised Land.

**In BAPTISM we are joined to the DYING of Jesus.
We leave our old life behind in the watery grave.
We are set free from slavery to sin,
and begin our journey to the Promised Land of heaven.**

* Water is a sign of NEW LIFE

In the Middle East where Jesus lived and taught, it is often dusty and dry - just like most of Australia! Sometimes there is a drought when everything seems to die. But then the rain comes and the water soaks deep into the dry ground. Soon the grass grows and everything is green. The flowers come out, the animals have feed, and the whole community is filled with joy.



Before ...

This photo was taken on a farm in Australia during a long drought.



After ...

This photo was taken from exactly the same place a short time after the rain came.

When the drought ends, the land itself seems to be risen from the dead.

When we are baptized we are joined to the rising of Jesus. HIS new life is in us. Water bringing new life to the desert is used in the Bible as a picture of the new life that Jesus gives us.

He said that he came to give us "life in all its fulness" (*John 10:10*) This is so amazing that Jesus called it . . .

being "BORN AGAIN"

He said: "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God . . . unless one is born of WATER and the SPIRIT, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." (*John 3:3,5*)



**In Baptism we are joined to the RISING of Jesus.
We are BORN AGAIN into his new life**