

Series #22: Epiphanies, Theophanies, and the Incarnation
Session 3 – The Baptism of Our Lord
Tuesday, January 26, 2021

Schedule

January 26 – The Baptism of Our Lord

February 2 – The Presentation of Jesus Christ in the Temple

February 9 – The Wedding at Cana

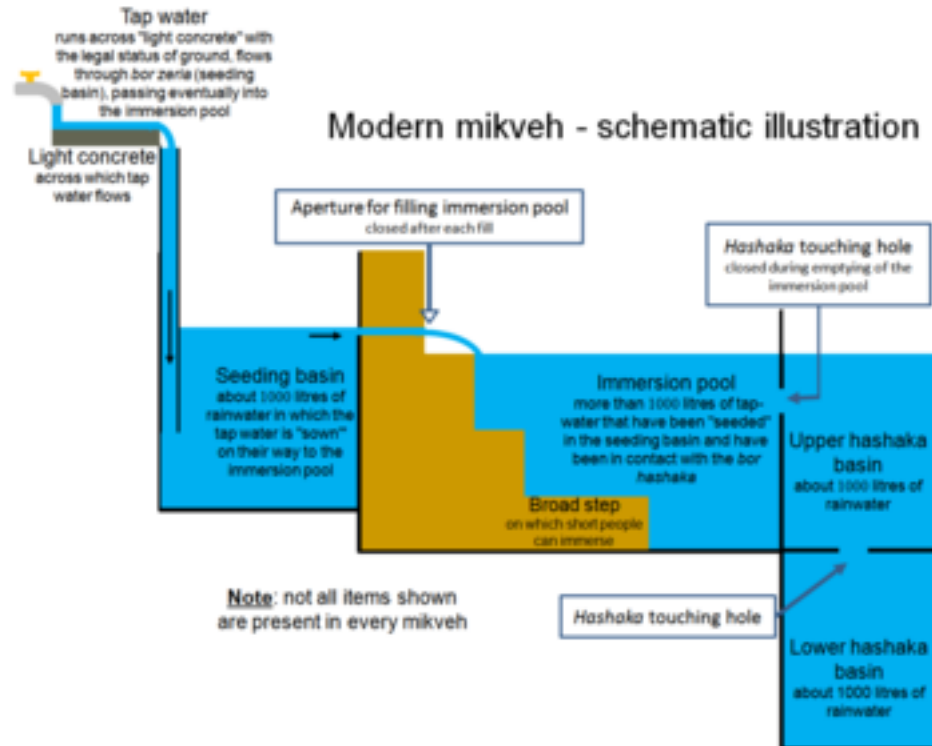
February 16 – The Transfiguration

Gospel Accounts of the Baptism of Jesus

- The story of Jesus's baptism is found in all four gospels.
 - Matthew 3:(1-12) 13-17
 - Mark 1:(4-8) 9-11
 - Luke 3:(1-20) 21-22
 - John 1:(19-28) 29-34

How & why was John baptizing before Jesus?

- Baptism by John was for the sake of repentance, pardoning of sins.
- Baptism existed prior to Christianity. It was part of a Jewish purification ritual.
 - But in first-century Judaism, baptism had a different meaning. In the book of Leviticus, God instructs Jews to cleanse themselves from ritual impurities, contracted through such acts as touching a corpse or a leper. Washing primarily fulfilled the legal requirements of ritual purity so that Jews could sacrifice at the Temple. Later, as "God-fearers" or "righteous" Gentiles expressed their desire to convert to Judaism, priests broadened the rite's meaning, and along with circumcision, performed baptism as a sign of the covenant given to Abraham. (Christianity Today, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/2008/august/what-is-pre-christian-history-of-baptismal-ceremony.html>)
 - Before the beginning of the first century BCE, neither written sources, nor archaeology gives any indication about the existence of specific installations used for ritual cleansing. Mikvoth appear at the beginning of the first century BCE, and from then on, ancient mikvoth can be found throughout the land of Israel, as well as in historic communities of the Jewish diaspora.
 - In October 2020, a 2,000-year-old mikveh was found near Hannaton in northern Israel.^[12]
 - Requirements



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- The traditional rules regarding the construction of a mikveh are based on those specified in classical rabbinical literature. According to these rules, a mikveh must be connected to a natural spring or well of naturally occurring water, and thus can be supplied by rivers and lakes which have natural springs as their source. A cistern filled by the rainwater is also permitted to act as a mikveh's water supply so long as the water is never collected in a vessel. Similarly snow, ice and hail are allowed to act as the supply of water to a mikveh no matter how they were transferred to the mikveh. A river that dries up upon occasion cannot be used because it is presumed to be rainwater and not spring water, which cannot purify while in a flowing state. Oceans and seas for the most part have the status of natural springs.

Why did Jesus need to be baptized?

- Did not need to repent for sins, but for the fulfillment of righteousness.
- It was a theophany: manifestation of God to humanity.
 - The fullness of God in the Trinity.