

# SPRINKLING IS SCRIPTURAL

## Presbyterian baptism in Noah's Flood



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It is interesting to see how the Neo-Catastrophist Henry Morris perceived Noah's Flood -- through his own spectacles of baptistic immersionism. There, he forgot it was only the unbaptized wicked who were totally submersed -- and that it was only Noah's family that was baptized, precisely by sprinkling from above.

In his book *The Beginning of the World*, Morris pushed his immersionistic theology. He called<sup>1</sup> the Noachic Flood "this first great baptism" -- and even "**Earth's** great baptism." By this, Morris meant total submersion by a global flood -- rather than the Biblical rain-sprinkling of the baptized human persons as taught in First Peter 3:20f.

Yet it was not the "Earth" but only Noah's family that was then baptized! The Apostle Peter knew the correct mode of baptism was not total submersion. For baptism was not like the submersion of the unbaptized ungodly, during Noah's flood.

To the contrary. Peter knew that baptism was like the rainwater which **poured down** on the roof of the ark over the heads of Noah's faithful family. Peter knew that only such a pouring -- as a rainlike representation -- signifies the "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus."<sup>2</sup>

That Noachic prefiguration of **baptism** -- was the **downpour** on the roof of the ark, during the Great Flood before 2300 B.C. By **sprinkling**, that downpour right then and there preserved the godly Noah's entire family. Total submersion was then experienced only by the unbaptized ungodly -- outside the ark.<sup>3</sup>

Peter assured Christians of their eternal security by faith in Christ. He did so, by reminding them that their election was manifested precisely "unto obedience and **sprinkling** of the blood of Jesus" (First Epistle 1:2).

Peter's First Epistle (3:18f) went on to remind Christians that Christ has suffered for sins once and for all, so that He might bring us to God. The longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared -- in which eight persons were delivered through water. Baptism, the antitype of this, delivers us now.

The saving of Noah's family took place not by the floodwater, but by God alone -- and quite before the advent of that water. As Calvin stated:<sup>4</sup> "Peter teaches that Noah's deliverance **from** the universal deluge, was a figure of **baptism** (First Peter 3:21).... By God's secret closing up of the ark, the waters were **restrained** from penetrating it."

He insisted:<sup>5</sup> "Sins are effaced by the mere remembrance of **baptism**...conjoined with faith and repentance.... We **ought** to turn our thoughts...to the **sprinkling of water**.... The **Spirit** of God...**sprinkles** our soul with the blood of Christ. First Peter 1:2" *cf.* 3:20f.

Peter soon went on to describe the **baptizing of the whole household** of Noah. This occurred by the **downpour** of the **rainwater** during the great flood. First Peter 1:2,23f & 3:15-21.

Commented Calvin:<sup>6</sup> "The dead, who in the time of Noah were [then still alive yet] unbelieving...were drowned by the deluge.... Peter ascribes **salvation** only to the [undrowned] **family** of Noah...**within** the ark.... In the common ruin of mankind, the **family** of Noah alone escaped.... Our **baptism** is an antitype of the 'baptism' of Noah.... He was preserved, together with his small **family**."

Thus, we entirely agree with the *Westminster Confession of Faith*.<sup>7</sup> This states that in baptism, "the children of God have His Name **put upon** them.... Baptism is **rightly** administered by **pouring or sprinkling** water upon the person. Hebrews 9:19-22; Acts [1:5 & 2:1-2,17 & *cf.* **First Peter 3:20f with Genesis 7:4f** and First Corinthians 10:1f with Psalms 77:15f & 78:12f]."

1) H.M. Morris: *The Beginning of the World*, 1978, pp. 99 & 107.

2) I Pet 1:1-2 & 3:20f.

3) I Pet 3:20-21 & 1:2 *cf.* Gen 6:7-10,17-18 & 7:4-23.

4) J. Calvin: *Comm. on Gen.*, Gen. 7:12 & 7:17 & 8:1 & 8:3.

5) J. Calvin's *Comm. on Acts* 8:38; and *Tracts & Treatises*, III pp. 182 & 253.

6) *Comm. on I Pet.* 3:21.

7) *Westminster Confession of Faith*, 12:1 & 28:3.