

1 Pet. 1:1-2 (WCF 28:3) “Contact with Water”

For the Children: Sometimes when you enter an exhibition or attend a school performance, you have to give a gold coin donation to get in. It doesn't matter how much gold you pay. Any amount will do, as long as it is gold. With baptism, the amount of water used does not matter – as long as there is contact with water and the words, “I baptize you in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.” The same was true with the OT sacrifices – with the sprinkling of blood; and the OT ceremony of washing hands. It all symbolized the removal of sins by Jesus' blood. **Questions:** Did the Lord Jesus need to spill a certain amount of blood to remove our sins? How has God made us “aliens” and what does that mean? Why has He done this?

Introduction:

First Point: What Made You an Alien?

- Sojourners of the Dispersion: The language here reminds us of Abraham's sojourn in Canaan (Gen. 23:4), of Ps. 39:12 and Israel's Exile. After the Exile, the Jews were dispersed among the nations – the “Diaspora.” Now Christians were also being dispersed by persecution e.g. in Asia Minor. But as the Jews still regarded Israel as home, were loyal to her and longed for her, so Christians are “resident aliens” in the world, loyal to the heavenly Kingdom and longing for it. We therefore take care to avoid loving this world too much. We see ourselves as “passing through.” The differences this creates, along with our connection to Christ, bring hostility from the world
- Who Are the Chosen: That often creates difficulties for us, but it has come about because we are “chosen” (elect aliens!). That is what makes us more blessed than those of the world. It is a great and undeserved privilege
- According to the Foreknowledge of God: It is “according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.” This does not mean mere prediction of the future, but that God chose us for a close, personal relationship – to “know” implies affection and personal knowledge. “Foreknowledge” is really “fore-love,” as also in Rom. 8:29
- By the Sanctifying Work of the Spirit: This choice by God is effected “by the sanctifying work of the Spirit.” He creates a new heart in us, enables us to repent and exercise faith, and progressively sanctifies us. This is what sets us apart and keeps us apart as aliens

Second Point: Why Were You Made an Alien?

- To Obey Jesus Christ: The purpose of this election as aliens is that we would obey Jesus Christ. Obedience was already in view in the covenant in Ex. 24:3, 7. It is what Christ deserves as the Son of God and our Lord (Ps. 2)
- To Be Sprinkled with His Blood: We have also been chosen to be aliens so that we would be sprinkled with Christ's blood. Peter follows the pattern of Ex. 24, where the people first pledge their obedience, then are sprinkled with sacrificial blood (vss. 3-8). This is relevant to the argument about the mode of baptism (WCF 28:3) – by immersion only, or are sprinkling, dipping, pouring etc allowed? The point is that baptism signifies the cleansing by Christ's blood, but that cleansing is also called “*sprinkling*” in 1 Pet. 1:2, Heb. 9:13, 14, 22, 10:22, and 12:24. For the efficacy of Christ's blood is so great, the amount is not an issue! Other arguments in the debate about mode: The words for “baptize” are used to describe other forms of contact with water, not just immersion (Lev. 14:6, 51; Ruth 2:14; Josh. 3:13, 15,16; Dan. 4:30, 5:21; Mt. 15:7; Mk. 7:2-5; Lk. 11:38; It is hard to imagine immersion in Acts 2:41 and 16:27-33; Heb. 9:10-23 describes OT “sprinklings” as “baptism.”; The “baptism of the Spirit” is a pouring (Acts 1:8, 2:17, 33; 10:44, 11:15) and a “sprinkling” (Ezk. 36:25-27). We therefore allow sprinkling or pouring as well as immersion with baptisms
- To Receive His Blessing: Peter ends his introductory greeting with a prayer for grace and peace in the fullest measure. This is not a mere polite greeting, but is the consequence of being sprinkled with Jesus' blood. It is part of God's purpose to bless us by choosing us to be aliens

Conclusion: