Research: Matthew 3:16,17 Baptism of Jesus

16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

S&H 584:26

DOVE. A symbol of divine Science; purity and peace; hope and faith.

“The dove in the OT tradition as interpreted in first-century Judaism was the symbol of God’s

Spirit, hovering over the creation (Gen. 1:2) and caring for his people in the days of their wilderness wanderings (Deut 32:11)” (ICB 613).

“The dove, among the Jews, was the symbol of purity or harmlessness (Matt X. 16) and of softness, (Ps lv.7). The form chosen here was doubtless an emblem of the innocence, meekness, and tenderness of the Saviour. The gift of the Holy Spirit, in this manner, was the public approbation of Jesus, (John 1:33,) and a sign of his being set apart to the office of the Messiah. We are not to suppose that there was any change wrought in the moral character of Jesus, but only that he was publicly set apart to his work, and solemnly approved by God in the office to which he was appointed” (Barnes 15).

17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

“In the middle of this great event, ‘A voice is heard that says, This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.’ That message has a certain significance . . . The voice is coming to Jesus in prophetic terms. So that the Jewish hearer, if he thought about it sufficiently, if he knew the Scriptures well enough, would have seen that the voice was really pinpointing a prophetic reference.

“In Psalm 2, which was one of the foremost psalms known to the Jews that predicted the Messiah, verse 7, ’I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee.’ That relationship of the Messiah to sonship with God, becomes more important to Jesus than any human relationship as the son of David” (Crisler, Gospels Vol. 1, 18).

“My beloved Son. This is the title which God himself gave to Jesus. It denotes the nearness of his relation to God, and the love of God for him . . . Am well pleased. Am ever delighted” (Barnes 15).