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BIBLE BAPTISM.



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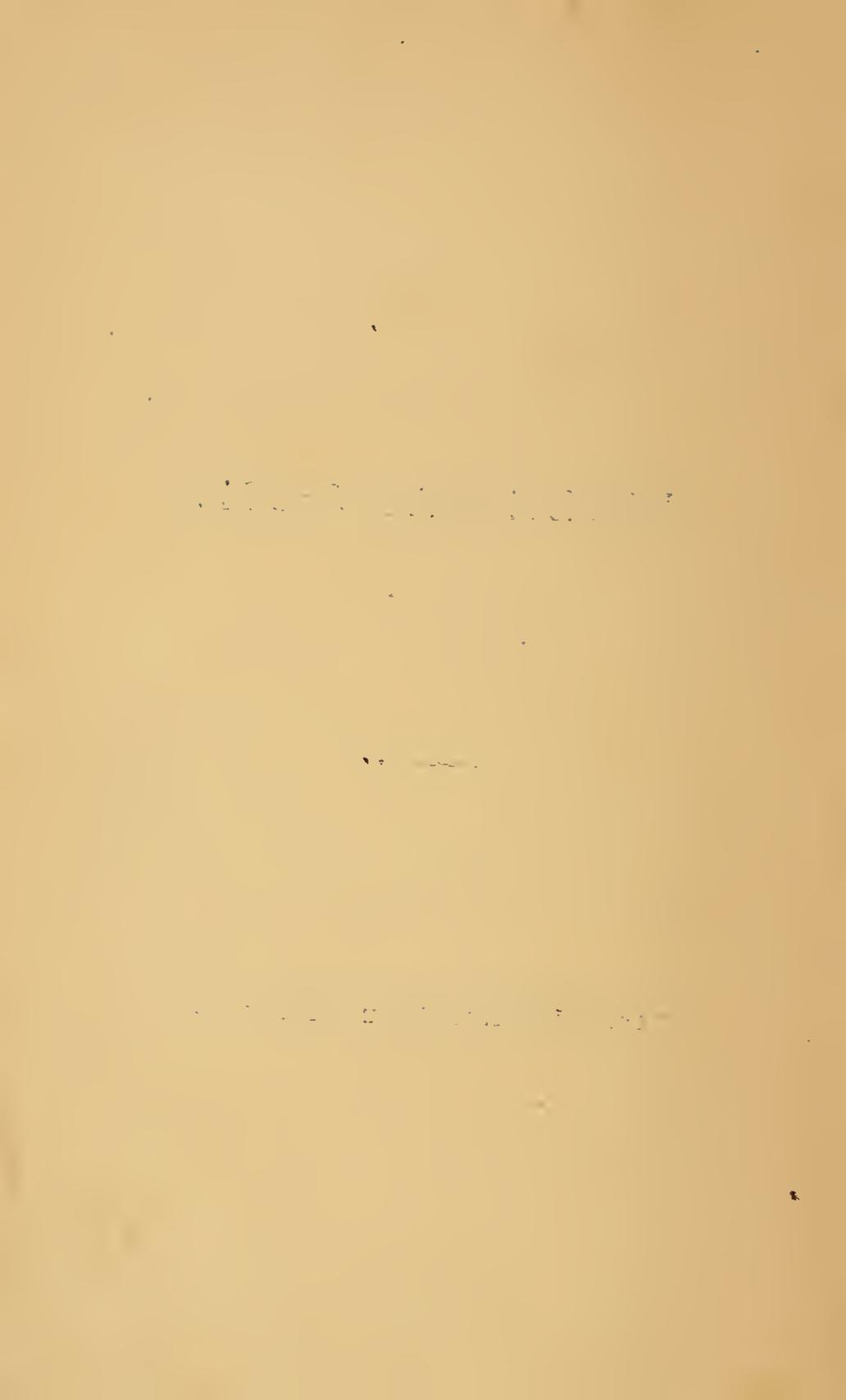
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BIBLE BAPTISM.



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BIBLE BAPTISM.

THE following argument is offered with no purpose of attacking the Baptist faith. That Church has a glorious history. It is filled with noble men and women. Its zeal is undoubted, albeit a zeal that would convince others, if it could, of the contrary of the views, herewith presented. Baptists, of all others, should be willing to hear the other side.

These views then, are presented by the writer, not to tear down others, but to strengthen those of his own faith, who very seldom, indeed hear the subject discussed. It is not a favorite topic in Methodist and Presbyterian pulpits. There are themes so infi-

nitely more glorious than this one of mere ceremony, that they neglect this lesser theme, more than is meet.

Notice:—This argument *unchurches nobody*. It strikes at nobody. If accepted as irresistible even by Baptists, they can still remain Baptists. One thing only would they lose: The wall of close communion would be broken down and we would all be brethren.

The Bible use of the word Baptize

1 The word “baptize,” with its derivatives, is the translation of the Greek word *Baptizo* and its derivatives

2. The word “baptizo” is a derivative of the greek word *Bapto*.

3. *Bapto* means to dip, to dye, to sprinkle, to plunge, to be imbued, to wet, to moisten.

4. *Baptizo* in Classic Greek, has all the meanings given to *Bapto*.

5. Hellenic Greek is the Greek of the Jews and differs in many respects from Classic Greek. It is found principally in the Version of the Old Testament made by the Jews of Alexandria three centuries before Christ. It was spoken by Christ and His Apostles and the New Testament was written in it.

6. *Bapto* occurs 4 times in the New Testament; used as follows, to “dip the sop,” (twice) “dip the tip of his finger,” “garments dyed with blood”—(new version “sprinkled.”) *Bapto* therefore in the New Testament never, means to immerse the whole body in water, but does mean “slightly to moisten” or to “sprinkle.”

7. *Baptizo* and its derivatives were introduced into Ecclesiastic-

al or Hellenic Greek by the Septuagint Translators. In this version it occurs four times only.

2 Kings 5:14 "Then he went down and baptized himself in Jordan seven times." The context shows that both Naaman and Elisha considered this a religious purification." The result was "cleansing." The Hebrew word translated "dip" or "baptize," does not mean to immerse, but simply to wash.

Ecclesiasticus 24:25. "He that baptizeth himself after the touching of a dead body, if he touch it again what availeth his washing" Numbers 19, tells us that the baptism for this kind of defilement was performed by "sprinkling."

Judith 12:7. "She baptized herself in a fountain of water by the camp." The presence of a military camp, the lack of sufficient water in a fountain, and the

modesty of this pure woman, all conspire to reject the theory of immersion.

Isaiah 21:4. Fearfulness affrighted [baptized] me. As the English version is a correct translation of the hebrew, these Septuagint authors must have used the word here in a figurative sense.

Of these passages, one seems to favor immersion and three affusion. But then that one is claimed by good scholars to be a probable exclusion of immersion. The second instance defines its meaning, as designating the rite administered by the Priest in the temple, to the ceremonially impure.

8. The Priest's part of this religious purification was invariably performed by sprinkling. Lev 14:7, "He shall sprinkle on him that is to be cleansed"—Num. 8:7, "Sprinkle the water

of purifying upon them." &c. &c.

9. Numbers xix, gives direction for the preparation of the Baptismal "water of purification." This was done by mixing the ashes of a red heifer with pure water. This mixture was kept laid away. Whenever any unclean person was to be purified this water was to be used, and in the manner described Num. 20: "The man that shall be unclean and will not purify himself, shall be cut off from among the congregation; the water of separation hath not been *sprinkled upon him*; he is unclean."

10. Paul directly refers to this "water of Separation in which the ashes of a red heifer was mingled, in Heb. 9:13, "The ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean." In verse 10, he classes it as baptism. (N. V.) "washings," Gr. "baptismous". In v.

13, he compares "the ashes of a red heifer sprinkling the unclean" to the purifying power of the blood of Christ. Hence Paul regarded a rite performed by "sprinkling" as Baptism. In Heb. 9:19-21. He tells us just how the "baptism of blood" was performed—"Moses took the blood of calves and of goats with water and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying "This is the blood of the Testament which God hath enjoined upon you." There can be no doubt then as to the manner in which *Jewish* baptisms were performed. All scripture says, "by sprinkling." Paul agrees thereto.

11. *But how did Christ baptize?*

It was prophesied of him that he should do it by "sprinkling."—Isaiah, 52:15, "So shall he sprinkle many nations." In Ezekiel, 36:25. speaking of the new dis-

pensation God says, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean." This refers to the fact that in new Testament Baptism the ashes of the red heifer should be omitted.

How did John baptize? John was a Jew. He baptized at Jordan and *in* the wilderness and at Bethabara, (Bethany, N. V.) before Christ announced the New Testament Church. His baptism therefore must have been the only baptism he knew anything about, which was Jewish Baptism. Had he introduced immersion, the matter would have created comment. But it made none. Therefore John baptized by sprinkling.

12. *Jesus himself*, calls the Old Testament sprinkling, "baptism." In Mark 7, the Pharisees complained that Christ ate with *defiled* hands. They did not mean "soiled hands" but hands

not ceremonially baptized according to their traditions, and it is explained, "When they come from the market (i. e. the public square) unless they wash (v. 3 says "their hands") [the Gr. word for wash here used is *baptise*,] they eat not, and many other traditions they receive and hold as the washing (Greek, baptisms) of cups and pots, brazen vessels and tables." If this refers only to ordinary washing, then Christ was justly blamed and these Pharisees were right to wash these things. — But it refers to a religious sprinkling with holy water as the Catholics still do, and Jesus was right to rebuke them. Here we have Christ our Lord calling "sprinkling, baptism." (v. 8 ;

In Luke, 11 :38 a Pharisee marvelled that Christ had not baptized (our version, washed) himself, before dinner. Did Christ at this dinner party *immerse* himself?—

Impossible! If this be not a ceremonial Jewish washing, it must have been a pouring of water, on the hands, after the manner of oriental hand-washing. No subterfuge can get in immersion here.—The prejudice of the translators of our version very thoughtfully omitted “baptize” from their translation!

13. We may now with much confidence assert.

1. That baptizo means to “*baptize*” and not to sprinkle or immerse.

2. *That it never anywhere and not one single time in the whole Bible means immerse, and hence absolutely nothing as to the mode can be proven from the meaning of the word itself:*

3. That Paul and our Lord in the New Testament speak of an act of sprinkling as baptism. While no act of immersion is ever so referred to.

II.

Examples of Baptism.

Baptist divines are accustomed to say that the word *Baptizo* itself gives us the mode of Baptism. In the preceding argument this is shown to be "not proven."—Hence all arguments from that point of view drop out of sight. Now in the New Testament, there are eight recorded instances of Baptism given us.

1. That of Christ himself. We find no evidence of immersion here. Ancient pictures dated as far back as the year A. D. 200, found in the catacombs at Rome, represent Christ as standing in the water, up to his ankles and John upon the bank *pouring* water upon his head. This fulfills all the conditions of going down into and coming up out of the water. We do not see any reason

to believe, however, that Christ stood in the water at all. It might be, but the Greek words do not indubitably prove it, as the New Testament nowhere says that Christ ever went down *into* the water.

2. The baptism of three thousand in the streets of Jerusalem. These could not have been immersed. At least, it is not usual to immerse in the streets.

3. The Baptism of Cornelius by Peter. This was done in a house. It is stated that water was brought to do it. [Can any man forbid water that these should be baptized.] It could not have been an immersion.

Notice: The Baptism of Christ could not be the rite of admission to the Church, that it is with us. Else it would infallibly follow: 1st, that John instituted the ordinance of Baptism, and so the Christian Church: 2nd, that not

till the age of 30 years should one enter the Church. Per contra, the theory that he was admitted to the Church in infancy and made his own profession at 12 years of age is infinitely preferable and more consistent with the divine plan. The baptism into the priest-hood is more probable as that which Christ suffered, a priesthood which he alone enjoys in the christian Church, and which was entered at about the age of thirty by those intended for it.

4. The Baptism of Paul by Ananias. Paul was sick and blind, and in his sick chamber. Ananias came to him and said, "Standing up, be baptized" and "he standing up, was baptized." (The Greek sustains this translation) And there is not much immersion, there either.

5. Philip baptizes the Eunuch—they went down both (eis) *into*

the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him. All of the question turns here upon the word *eis* translated into, for to get water enough only to sprinkle with, they would have both been compelled to have "gone down" *to* "the water" and "come up *from* the water." Well this same word is used elsewhere as follows: Mary "went *into* the sepulchre" of Lazarus, to weep there." (Jno 11:31.) She certainly did not go in. (Jno. 20:4-8) "the other disciple did outrun Peter and came first to (*eis*) the sepulchre, and stooping down he saw the linen clothes lying, yet *went he not in.*" It is this same particle (*eis*) that is translated *into*, here. It is now clear that *to* would have been as correct a translation and that we can read of Philip or the Eunuch "that he came down *to* the water *yet went he not in.*"

This same passage tells us that Simon Peter did enter in the sepulchre. In the Greek the *eis* is doubled (eiselthein eis.) It is not so in Acts 8:38, (the Eunuch descends) but *katebesan eis* “*they descended to,*” while in the next chapter (v. 6.) this preposition is doubled (as in the case of Simon Peter) to signify entrance *into* Damascus, and again in v. 9.—A Greek scholar, unbiassed by prejudice, will admit that the evidence here is against these two men getting *into* the water. In this same chapter “*eis*” occurs thirteen times and is translated “*into*” only in this one instance.—While the translators of King James’ Version were not Baptists they were largely tinged with immersionist views, as is the Church of England, to-day, of which they were members.

The use of this particle is therefore not at all conclusive of im-

mersion. when there is so much positive truth elsewhere to be overcome.

6. The Baptism of the Jailer, Acts 16:32-34. This was done in a house, at dead of night. Immersion seems to be almost absolutely excluded.

7. Other instances, as those of Crispus and Gaius; Lydia the purple dealer at Philippi, the re-baptised disciples of John, convey no suggestion of the method in which the rite was performed.

The 8th instance, which should have been second in order of time, and to which is devoted a division of this article is

III.

The Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

1. In Luke 3:16 John the Baptist says "I, indeed baptize you with water, but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to unloose he shall baptize you with the Ho-

the Ghost and with fire.” From this it appears 1st. That *water* baptism is a type of *spirit* baptism. 2d The Lord’s supper is symbolic of *Christ’s death* for believers and of their union with him by faith. 3rd. That the visible manifestation of the Spirit’s baptism is fire.

2. In Acts 1:5 Jesus himself says “John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” In which Jesus sustains John’s view of baptism.

3. In Acts 2:1-4 this baptism comes. “Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty Breath, and it (the sound) filled all the room where they were sitting and there appeared cloven tongues like as of fire and sat on each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.”

4. Here then the "resting of a visible tongue of fire on the head" is called a *baptism*. No immersion here, but a pouring forth.

5. What then is the method of the Spirit's coming? Many times in the old Testament as in Joel 2:28. Prov. 1:23 it is said "I will *pour* out my spirit unto you."

Acts 10:44-45 "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost *fell* on all them which heard, and they were astonished, because on the gentiles was *poured out* the gift of the Holy Ghost." Then answered Peter "Can any man forbid water that these should be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we."

Acts 2:33. This baptism of the Holy Ghost is specially described as being "shed forth."

6. As the Baptism of the Holy Ghost is the reality of which water Baptism is only the type, and

as the Holy Ghost was “poured” forth in this baptism, it must be that the water should be applied to the believer by pouring or sprinkling and not the believer applied to the water.

7. Indubitably, the baptism of the Holy Ghost was *not by immersion*.

8. Old Testament Baptism “*sprinkled* the conscience of the believer from *dead works*.” This is regeneration, the Spirit’s work.

9 Hence Old Testament and New Testament baptism being identical in meaning, were the same in form.

10. To immerse is to destroy the symbol.

11. To regard baptism as typical of Christ’s death and burial, destroys the symbol. Those passages that speak of being “buried with Christ by baptism unto death,” therefore do not refer to *Christ’s* death, but to the *believ-*

er's spiritual death, burial and resurrection, and what is this but the Spirit's work and hence there is not in them the remotest reference to immersion. Read Col. 2:13.

13. It is thus conclusively shown that the word Baptize does mean something else beside immerse, and that meaning is the only one it has in the Bible, viz: to ceremonially purify or consecrate, and as applied to the Spirit, to really purify and consecrate.

IV.

RELATIVE PROOFS

1 If New Testament Baptism were by immersion, the N. T. should have so defined it. The Old Testament does expressly define Old Testament Baptism as to be done by sprinkling. Num. 19. Unrepealed, this rules. Instead of being repealed, it was confirmed by the form observed.

by the Holy Ghost. (Acts 2.)

2. The tendency in the N. T. is to simplify O. T. rites. But immersion is a much more complicated rite than sprinkling.

3. True baptism requires the preacher to *dip* his hand in the water and then baptize the convert. The immersion theory puts the cart before the horse. It makes the preacher dip the convert in the water.

4. The use of over much bread and wine in the other Sacrament—the “Lord’s Supper”—is sharply rebuked, (1 Cor. 11 :20 et seq.)—If this question of “over much water” had arisen in Paul’s day, he would equally have rebuked it.

5. Baptism represents a gift—the new birth—that comes from heaven. The waters of Baptism, thus appropriately descend from heaven.

6. Before the candidate was baptized by the Jewish priest, he

was required to wash himself thoroughly. He was then taken before the priest and sprinkled.— It was this previous washing, still kept up in the Abyssinian church that has assumed the place of Baptism. This view is sustained not only by the practice of the Abyssinians but by the early paintings and pictures of Baptism, that have come down to our time. It is this washing (*louo*) that is referred to in Heb. 10:22. “Having our bodies washed with pure water.” Jesus rebukes the idea that this washing has to be of the whole body, (Jno. 13:10,) “He that is washed, needeth not save to wash his feet.”

V.

EXPLANATION.

1. It is apparent, now why the whole list of Greek dictionaries, and all Presbyterian divines ad-

mit that one meaning of Baptizo is "immerse." It undoubtedly has that meaning in Classic Greek. But as it has a much less definite meaning than bapto, louo, nipto, ekcheo &c, it was selected by the Jewish writers to be used as the best they could get, to represent the ceremonial washings and sprinklings of their church, the Jewish. The word became fixed in that language with that meaning, its primitive meaning being altogether lost sight of. And thus, in the Septuagint, the writings of Philo and Josephus and the new Testament, (which constitute Hellenic Greek Literature) it comes to mean the ceremonial act, called Baptism. It is never used in any other sense. It does not hint at either "immersion" or "sprinkling." How the act of baptism was performed we have already found out from the Bible. How unjust it is, to quote the

views of leading divines on the meaning of Baptizo, without giving their entire views. These Presbyterian scholars certainly taught that Baptism is to be performed by sprinkling or pouring. They were thus baptized themselves. Either the whole world of Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran and Episcopal scholars are dishonest hypocrites who will not stand up to their convictions, or else they are scholars enough to see a little deeper into the truth, than that which lies upon the surface.

2. Baptists love to say that if you substitute "pour" in such phrases, as "I baptize you with water" it makes nonsense. Of course it does. Better let the word stay as the Bible has it. It makes equal nonsense to say "I immerse you with fire and the Holy Ghost." All such plays upon words are trifles. We ob-

ject as much to giving Baptizo, the meaning of sprinkle or pour, as the Baptists do.

3. Some Baptists cannot understand why other denominations like the Methodists and the Presbyterians can assert that "immersion is not even so much as hinted at" in the Bible, and yet they welcome them to the communion. As if God's grace depended on the number of drops of water to be used in Baptism! To administer baptism rightly, two things are essential, that the element used should be water, und that it be administered in the name of the "Father, Son and Holy Ghost," that is with an orthodox faith in the Trinity. Baptist baptism fulfills these conditions, and though they vary from the only forms of administering the rite given us in the Bible in a non-essential particular, yet is their baptism a real baptism, and acceptable. Hence

Presbyterians, Methodists &c, do not re-baptize Baptists, coming to their fold. The excess of water does not, in their view, invalidate the rite. The New Testament is full of the severest rebuke against ceremonial formalism; we could not exclude our Baptist brethren from the Lord's table without feeling ourselves, indicted for that offense.

4. This argument is not full; nor is it a complete statement of the reasons for the belief of those who hold to Baptism by pouring. It is simply a specimen.

