

# Baptism

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We have decided to study this very important topic. It requires that we do more than the usual because it is so controversial. Part of this is because the vast majority of those who profess to know the Lord believe in the practice of a water ceremony. They take it as a given that all who name the name of Christ will be baptized with water. But their beliefs are quite different from each other.

- A) One group sprinkles and says it replaces circumcision—no scripture is given for this at all. In fact, all are baptized by these people but circumcision was male only!
- B) Another immerses and says it is a testimony of salvation—no scripture is given for this at all. Indeed, the only way something can be a testimony is if we do it continually.
- C) There is no way that each can consider the other to be baptized in water. Obviously, something is wrong. The fact that so few are willing to study this subject to a Biblical conclusion is scary. How can believers refuse the scriptures?
  - 1) Step 1—Find all key passages
    - a) First, find the related words (in this case, we should learn how to find where the Greek words occur.
      - i) Therefore, we look up 'baptism', 'baptize', etc. in Strong's Concordance or a similar work (Young's Concordance, NASB exhaustive concordance).
        - 1) Were I limited to have only one book other than my Bible, it would be a Strong's Concordance.
        - 2) It is a must for your library. If you can't afford it, we need to talk. It is that important.
        - 3) You can check on what others say about words in the Greek and Hebrew.
        - 4) You can do your own independent study of words and passages.

Here is a typical entry. I have used the word 'love' primarily because this diagram was already in the computer. All entries are roughly the same. This concordance and Young's are based on the King James Version. That may be a drawback to you. But many of the great and useful works were done in the last century when that was all that they had. Pay attention to the related terms. Since ideas are expressed in a variety of ways, these may be essential. Notice the Hebrew and Greek word numbers. You never need to know the Hebrew and Greek alphabets.

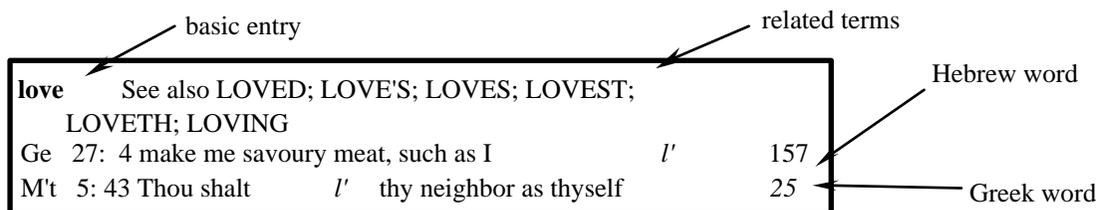


Figure 1:: Typical entry in Strong's Concordance

- ii) We find at least the following words related to our topic
  - 1) #907—baptizo
  - 2) #908—baptisma
  - 3) #909—baptismos
  - 4) #910—baptistes
  - 5) #911—bapto
- iii) Strong's Concordance tends to give literal meanings. The meanings often listed for these words include the word ablution. To find its meaning you will have to consult an English dictionary
  - 1) Webster's New World Dictionary (1984) gives the meaning of ablution as 1. a washing of the body, esp. of a religious ceremony 2. the liquid used for such washing
- iv) A summary of the meanings given by Mr. Baker are
  - 1) baptizo—The verb meaning to baptize. Always so translated except Lk 11:38 where it is 'washed.'
  - 2) baptisma—The ending 'MA' indicates the result of the action performed by the verb.
  - 3) baptismos—The ending 'MOS' indicates the action of the verb.

- 4) baptistes—Indicates the Agent performing the action. It is the epithet used of John and is used of no other person.
- 5) bapto—Always translated 'dip'. Never refers to either Real or Ritual baptism. Included because a related word.
- v) Let's examine just how Strong's Concordance gives information about Hebrew and Greek Words.
  - 1) Figure 2 gives a typical entry from the Hebrew Dictionary of Strong's Concordance.
    - a) You can ignore the Hebrew characters. Those who note them will see the three letter roots. This may speak of the trinity! It is characteristic of semetic languages.
    - b) The 'transliteration' is 'ahab' with a phonetic style of pronunciation. It is sufficient to write this one in your notes.
    - c) The next thing that follows in the entry is something about the origin of the word. In this case it is a primitive root (a list of abbreviations is in the front of the dictionary).
    - d) Next comes the definition (usually fairly literal)
    - e) Finally, a list of ways in which the word is translated in the KJV.
  - 2) Figure 3 gives a typical entry from the Greek Dictionary of Strong's Concordance.
    - a) You can ignore the Greek characters.
    - b) The 'transliteration' is 'agapao' with a phonetic style of pronunciation. It is sufficient to write this one in your notes.
    - c) The next thing that follows in the entry is something about the origin of the word. In this case, there is the possibility that it comes from 'agan' and word #5689 is given for comparison.
    - d) Next comes the definition (usually fairly literal)
    - e) Finally, a list of ways in which the word is translated in the KJV.
    - f) There is a final annotation to compare this word with #5368.
- vi) 6E. Meanings given by Strong's Concordance
  - 1) #907—baptizo--from a derivative of #911; to make *whelmed* (i.e. *fully wet*); used only (in the NT) of ceremonial *ablution*, especially (technically) of the ordinance of Christian *baptism*.
  - 2) #908—baptisma--from 907; *baptism*
  - 3) #909—baptismos--from 907; *ablution* (ceremonial or Christian)
  - 4) #910—baptistes--from 907; a *baptizer*, as an epithet of Christ's forerunner.
  - 5) #911—bapto-- a primitive verb that means to *whelm*, i.e. cover wholly with a fluid; in the N.T. only in a qualified or special sense, i.e. (literally) to *moisten* (a part of one's person), or (by implication) to *stain* (as with dye)

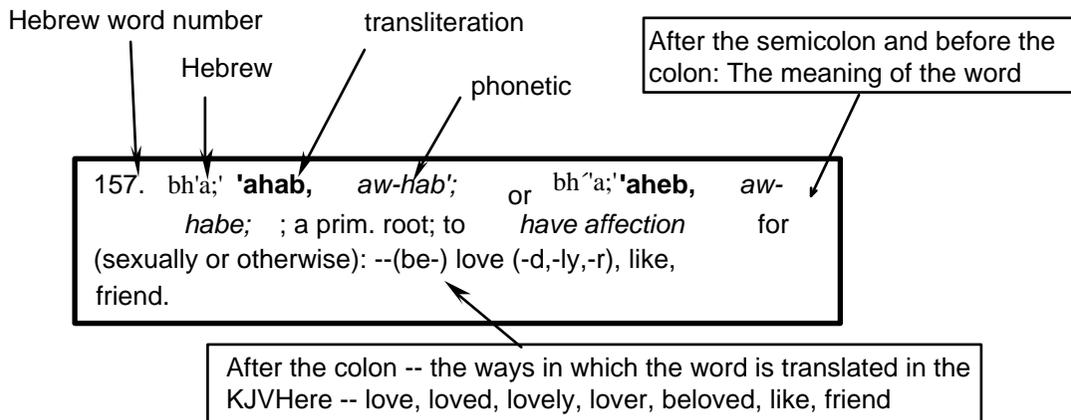


Figure 2: Annotated Hebrew Entry

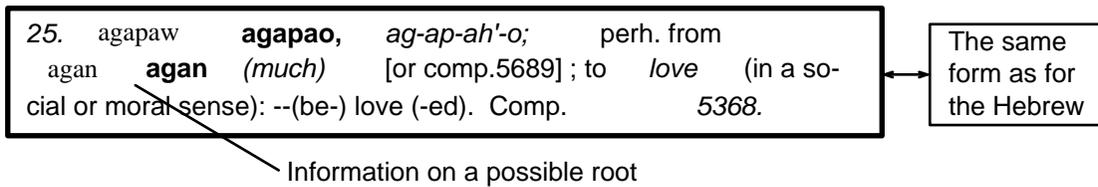


Figure 3: Annotated Greek entry

- b) All passages are listed in C. F. Baker, Real Baptism
- c) Key passages (contexts should be included)
  - i) Matt 3:1-17; 20:20-23; 21:23-26; 28:18-20
  - ii) Mark 1:1-9; 7:1-9; 10:35-40; 11:29-33; 16:14-20
  - iii) Lk 3:1-22; 7:24-35; 11:37-39; 12:49-53; 20:1-8
  - iv) John 1:24-34; 3:22-4:2; 10:39-42
  - v) Acts 1:4-8; 1:21-26; 2:38-41; 8:12-17; 8:35-39; 9:18-19; 10:34-48; 11:16-17; 13:24-25; 16:14-15, 29-34; 18:7-8; 18:24-26; 19:1-8; 22:12-16
  - vi) Rom 6:1-7; 1 Cor 1:11-17; 10:1-4; 12:12-13; 15:29-32; Gal 3:26-28; Eph 4:1-6; Col 2:10-15
  - vii) Heb 6:1-3; 9:8-14
  - viii) Peter 3:18-22
- 2) Inventory
  - a) Application—we're not ready yet
  - b) Basic Passages—all of them are collected
  - c) Cross References—more may be needed as we get into the study
  - d) Difficulties—not fully ready yet. But,
    - i) Practice—ceremonial
      - 1) Should I be baptized in water?—scripture?
      - 2) If so, by whom?—scripture?
      - 3) If so, how?—scripture?
      - 4) If so, to what purpose?—scripture?
      - 5) Is it enough that everyone does it?—scripture?
    - ii) Practice—charismatic
      - 1) Should I seek the 'baptism'?—scripture?
      - 2) If so, when will I know I've had it?—scripture?
      - 3) Is it enough that everyone does it?—scripture?
    - iii) Am I willing to pay the price?
  - e) Eminent Truth(s)—not fully ready yet.
    - i) How many baptisms are there in the N.T.?
      - 1) Which ones, if any, are for us?—scripture?
    - ii) Separation
      - 1) With whom may I fellowship?—scripture?
      - 2) What doctrines are creedal?—scripture?
  - f) Final Study—we do need an outline and summary
- 3) A brief outline of 'baptisms'. There is nothing wrong with giving credit to and using good books. We have made generous use of Charles Baker's book, Real Baptism. If you feel that the scriptures do not support these items then you should note where that is.
  - a) Those connected with the Holy Spirit.
    - i) Verses using 'baptism' and the name of the Holy Spirit
      - 1) John said, "He shall baptise you with the Holy Spirit..."—Mt 3:11; Mk 1:8; Lk 3:16; Jn 1:33
      - 2) Christ said, "ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit"—At 1:4,5
      - 3) Peter said, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit"—At 11:15-16
      - 4) Paul said, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one boy..."—1Cor 12:13
    - ii) Notes:

#### COMPARISONS AND CONTRASTS

	John, Peter, and Christ say	Paul says
Baptizer with/into	Christ Holy Spirit	The Holy Spirit Body of Christ
Body of Christ	not mentioned	Baptized into the Body of Christ
Prophecy	a fulfillment of prophecy—Acts 2:16	Body is a secret—Eph 3:1-9; Col 1:24-28

Outward experience	Very important—Lk 24:49; At 1:8	Not apparent to the senses
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- iii) Conclusion—these are two separate and distinct baptisms.
  - iv) More verses on the baptism by the Spirit into the Body of Christ
    - 1) Ro 6:3-4
      - a) can't be water
        - 1) If it is, then this verse clearly teaches baptismal regeneration
        - 2) Paul never preached water in connection with salvation—comp Eph 2:8-9
      - b) this baptism makes one to have died, have been buried, and have been resurrected WITH Christ. These events occurred about 2000 years ago.
      - c) Note: Christ referred to his death as a baptism in Lk 12:50.
    - 2) Col 2:11,12
      - a) Christ was circumcised twice
        - 1) eight days—cutting off some flesh
        - 2) on the cross—He was cut off in death. This was entirely the operation of God WITHOUT HANDS.
      - b) Christ was baptized twice
        - 1) by John the baptist
        - 2) on the cross—also the operation of God WITHOUT HANDS.
    - 3) Gal 3:27—again, into Christ
    - 4) Eph 4:5—ONE baptism. This verse has strong implications in the present dispensation. If we teach more than one baptism, then how do we handle this verse. Compare with Hebrews 6:1-3
- b) Some Figurative Baptisms (Compare Baker's book. We have added some alternate explanations.)
  - i) Death Baptism—Matt 20:22-23; Mk 10:38-39; Lk 12:50
    - 1) Christ's death on the cross
  - ii) Baptism of Fire—Matt 3:11; Lk 3:16
    - 1) judgment—comp 2 Thess 1:7-8
  - iii) Peter 3:18-21
  - iv) Note: It is interesting to note that though water is involved in the experience of Noah, Noah did not get wet. Those who got wet were judged.
    - 1) Possibility #1 (favored by Baker)—Saving baptism is the antitype of Noah's experience. Compare Ps 42:7 where waves and billows are used of the judgment which fell on Christ.
    - 2) Possibility #2—The water ceremony for Israel. It is called a baptism of repentance for salvation in Acts 2:38.
  - v) Cor 15:29—there are many meanings given to this verse
    - 1) Possibility #1 (favored by Baker)—a baptism of death in martyrdom.
    - 2) Possibility #2—That the Jews had a practice which only made sense to one who believes in a future life. Paul did not advocate this but used their practice to show that they had to believe in the resurrection.
  - vi) Cor 10:2—The Jews were identified with Moses as their leader in they crossed over the Red Sea. Note that they were dry yet were said to be baptized into Moses by this experience.
- c) Baptisms of the Law—John 1:25—The Jews were not puzzled by the fact that men were baptizing. Their inquiry showed that they expected that ceremony with the coming of Christ or Elijah. (If you use Baker's book, notice the differences here.)
  - i) Baptisms commanded in the law—Heb 9:10
    - 1) Recall that 'baptism' is a Greek word.
  - ii) Miscellaneous traditional cleansings—Mark 7:1-9. In this passage, baptizo is used interchangeably with nipto to denote washed hands, feet, etc.
  - iii) John's baptism for the remission of sins
    - 1) There are many passages that deal with the ministry of John. This baptism was not voluntary.
    - 2) It is called a baptism of repentance unto remission of sins—Lk 3:3; Mk 1:4
    - 3) Purpose was the manifestation of Christ to Israel—John 1:31
    - 4) Note: Lk 7:29-30
  - iv) Christ's baptism by John
    - 1) John's protest—Matt 3:14, (John's was for sin!)
    - 2) Christ's answer—Matt 3:15
  - v) Pentecostal water baptism—commanded by Christ to the twelve

- 1) They were under a law-related commission—Matt 23:1-3. At no time did Christ say differently for them.
- 2) Our reason for listing it here is that Acts 2:38 proves it was essentially identical with John's baptism. Indeed, except for tradition, we would not have listed it separately.
  - a) It never says that it is a witness to others.
  - b) It never says that it replaced circumcision.
- 3) Baptism occurs in two of the records of their commission—Matt 28:19 and Mk 16:16
- 4) The practice is given in Acts 2:38, 41; 8:12, 13, 16, 36, 38; 9:18; 10:47-48; 22:16
- d) Paul's practice of the water ceremony(ies).
  - i) Paul never commands it anywhere in his epistles. If it is important, why didn't he give instruction? Especially is this interesting when we look at the record of Paul's salvation—Acts 22:16
  - ii) Now, 1 Cor 1:14-17 comp Matt 28:19-20
    - 1) Not delegated since delegator takes credit—John 4:1-2
    - 2) He thanks God he baptized so few of the Corinthians—1 Cor 1:14
  - iii) In the Acts period, Paul did
    - 1) circumcize—16:3
    - 2) animal sacrifices—18:18; 21:26
  - iv) Lydia and jailor were baptized by Paul or Silas—Acts 16:15,33
  - v) Acts 19:5—"When they heard this"
    - 1) Refers to John's message—then no rebaptizing
    - 2) Refers to Paul's message
      - a) The only record of a rebaptizing
      - b) The issue was the coming of spiritual power (the Spirit manifestly)
- 4) The mode
  - a) Heb 9:10 comp Lev 14:5,6,50-52; 15:2,13; 22:4; 11:36
  - b) Never is the water ceremony called a burial. It is called a cleansing.

Baptism affects your practice, and fellowship. Though the practices of most professing believers has no support in scripture, they hold it dogmatically and emotionally. Though they do not agree among themselves, they will literally shun you if you don't baptize.