

## Three Baptismal Formulas/Authorities

In spite of the fact of Paul's call for unity, including on baptism (**Eph 4:1-6**), baptism w/water is one of the most divisive & controversial subjects in the Bible. Certain cults, religious sects & most of the hundreds of denominations practice one form or another for various debated reasons.

We're going to approach this subject from a different angle than what is normally presented by the denominational system. There are 3 distinct formulas or authorities in the Bible on performing a baptism w/water: A. In the name of the Lord. B. In the name of Jesus Christ. C. In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

### A. In the name of the Lord

**Malachi 3:1** Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Lord Jesus Christ, declared the kingdom of heaven at hand and preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins in preparing Israel for her Messiah in establishment of a new covenant (Cf. **Mt 3:1-6; Mk 1:1-8; Acts 19:4-5**).

### B. In the name of Jesus Christ

After the resurrection, the Apostles were commissioned by the Lord Jesus Christ and once again the kingdom was offered to Israel, along with promise of power from above (Lk 24:49), based on her NATIONAL repentance... "Therefore let ALL THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom YE have crucified, both Lord and Christ. **37** Now when THEY heard *this*, THEY were pricked in THEIR heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall WE do? **38** Then Peter said unto THEM, Repent, and be baptized EVERY ONE OF YOU in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and YE shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." **Acts 2:36-38**

**Acts 3:19-20** Repent YE therefore, and be converted, that YOUR sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; **20** And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto YOU:

It is vital to note here that both of these baptisms' w/water were directed from within and at ISRAEL! Under these authorities, baptism w/water for the remission of sins was mandated (**Lk 7:29-30; Mk 16:14-20; Acts 2:36-38**). Obviously, the Lord Jesus has yet to return in establishing the kingdom back into Israel's hands. Before looking at the 3<sup>rd</sup> authority, a synopsis of Acts is given to show WHY & HOW progression was moved away from Israel toward the Gentile and what affect it has on this subject.

>**Acts 7** – Israel blasphemes the Holy Ghost under the preaching of Stephen (**51-60**).

>**Acts 8** – Philip baptizes Samaritans, BUT only in the 'name of the Lord Jesus'. Not being an Apostle, Peter & John come to lay hands on them to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (**5-17**).

>**Acts 9** – Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, is converted beginning the longsuffering of God (**1Tim 1:15-16; 2Pet 3:15-16**).

>**Acts 10** – Peter’s arm is twisted by the Lord to visit a household of Gentiles living by faith who receive the Holy Ghost BEFORE being baptized w/water, but ONLY in the ‘name of the Lord’ (**1-4, 34-35, 42-48**).

>**Acts 13-14** – The door ‘of faith’ is opened to Gentiles (**14:26-28**). A false prophet, a Jew, named Bar-jesus is blinded not seeing the sun for a season because of interfering with a Gentile receiving the word of God (**13:5-12**). Israel enters into blindness in part till the fulness of Gentiles be come in (**Rom 11:25-27**).

>**Acts 15-18** – Paul continues ministering to both Jew & Gentile affiliated with SYNAGOGUES (**Acts 13:5-42; 14:1; 17:1-17; 18:1-4**). Both Jew & Gentile are being baptized by one Spirit into Jesus Christ (Rom 6:1-6; 1Cor 12:12-13; Gal 3:26-29). Though not sent to baptize w/water, Paul finds justification for performing the few recorded; no authority is indicated... “for Christ sent me not...” (**1Cor 1:13-17**).

>**Acts 17** – First heathen recorded being saved (**17-34**).

>**Acts 19** – Paul’s last recorded ministry within SYNAGOGUES (**8**). Paul’s ministry conducted 2 years to both Jew & Gentile (heathen) from the school of one Tyrannus (**9-41**).

>**Acts 28** – Paul’s final announcement regarding Israel’s blindness and salvation being sent to the Gentiles (**23-29**).

### **C. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost**

**Matthew 28:18-20** And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. **19** Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: **20** Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

Have you ever questioned why this baptismal formula isn’t found in the book of Acts? I was baptized twice under this authority; first as a baby in a Methodist church and other in a Baptist church. Soon after the 2<sup>nd</sup> time, while studying for the ministry at a Baptist University, I asked the question as to why it isn’t found being used. The answer given was that baptizing in the name of Jesus Christ (**Acts 2:38**) was equivalent to being baptized in the name of the Father, Son & Holy Ghost (**Col 2:9**). Though not convinced then, I had no other explanation at that time. Think about it... if Philip, an appointee by the Apostles (**Acts 6:1-6**), didn’t have the authority to baptize in the name of Jesus Christ, then what possible argument do denominations have in baptizing in either the name of Jesus Christ or in the name of the Father, Son & Holy Ghost?

Also, if Peter & Paul came to agreement in Galatians 2:6-10 that Peter’s focus would be on the circumcision, along with our understanding that Paul wasn’t sent to baptize, who then was to kick-start baptizing in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost to all nations? To add to this conundrum, Acts 19:1-6 is often misinterpreted to having Paul both re-baptize & lay hands on John’s disciples. Let’s PRETEND that Paul did re-baptize... the authority, in context, is in the name of the Lord Jesus; John’s baptism!

Here it is demanded that we rightly divide the word of truth in discerning baptismal authorities.

This commission is recorded in the Gospel of Matthew that portrays Jesus’ Kingship. According to prophecy understood and covenant promises, the Apostles anticipated the return of Christ following

tribulation and the nations to be brought under the control of Messiah during a kingdom reign. The Apostles are to accompany Christ judging the 12 tribes of Israel (**Mat 10:22-23; 19:28**). Unlike the 'PREACHING' commission found in Mark 16:14-20, which was inline with offering Israel the kingdom if repented, Matthew's commission is one of 'TEACHING' all nations. Kingdom laws are laid out in Matthew 5-8 and much prophecy is given of the relationship the Gentile nations are to have towards Israel; in particular, Zechariah 14, with special focus on verse 9... "And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one." ONE LORD AND HIS NAME ONE... baptizing in the NAME (singular) of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST. (Also SEE: **Isa 2:1-4; 4:1-6; 52:1-15; 66:19-24; Micah 4:1-4; Zech 8:20-23**) Matthew 28:18-20 will be being fulfilled in the Millennium during Israel's fullness (**Rom 12:12**)!

In Ephesians 4, there's a call for unity... "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech YOU that YE walk worthy of the vocation wherewith YE are called, **2** With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing ONE ANOTHER in love; **3** Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. **4** *There is one body, and one Spirit, even as YE are called in one hope of YOUR calling; 5* One Lord, one faith, one baptism, **6** One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in YOU all."

#### **Ephesians 4:1-6**

...one body

...one Spirit

...one hope of your calling

...one Lord

...one faith

#### **...ONE BAPTISM**

...One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all

It is ESSENTIAL that we understand the scenario surrounding the PEOPLE GROUP Paul is addressing! Important to recognize is that the Scripture foresaw God one day justifying the Gentile & heathen 'through faith', in contrast to the circumcision 'by faith' (**Gen 15:1-6; Rom 3:29-30; Gal 3:8-9; Eph 2:8-9**). However, that this PEOPLE GROUP being saved (non-covenanted Gentiles labeled as heathen (**Rom 1:18-32**)), are saved APART from Israel in a dispensation of the Grace of God via Paul's gospel that's UNSEARCHABLE in prophecy and HID in God (**Eph 3:1-9; Col 1:26-27**)! These Gentiles being addressed were saved Acts 19 & AFTER. In context, the one baptism is obvious... the baptism by the Spirit into Jesus Christ (**Rom 6:1-6; 1Cor 12:12-13; Gal 3:26-29; Col 2:11-3; Eph 2:13-14, 18-22**). In other words, these Gentiles are now of the same household of God, but not through Israel's influence; she is in a state of blindness! The child of God today is represented here as a result of Israel's fall, not her rise. In essence, Ephesians 4:1-6 is the Statement of Faith for today!

Two other baptisms, that the denominational system likes to throw into the mix today, are the baptism w/water and the baptism w/the Holy Ghost that was, at a time... "For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, **5** And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come," **Hebrews 6:4-5**

...and have TASTED of the HEAVENLY GIFT... and the POWERS OF THE WORLD TO COME

Several questions to be asked & answered: Were the commissions on baptizing w/water given to Israel during her rise to then be carried on by the 'church' after her fall? Those who hold to baptism w/water today... do they do so under the authority of: **A.** In the name of the Lord, such as John the Baptist to Israel, Philip with the Samaritans & Peter the household of Cornelius? **B.** In the name of Jesus Christ in promising the baptism w/the Holy Ghost & return of Christ? **C.** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost where we find no evidence of in the book of Acts?

Cults, religious sects & denominations will each have their own take on Bible baptisms. Be a Berean and search the scriptures (**Acts 17:11**). All scriptures searched should be conducted from a King James Bible ONLY.