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THE

BIBLE BAPTIST.

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OF NORTH CAROLINA.

WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES.

ALBANY:

PRINTED BY J. MUNSSELL, 58 STATE STREET.

1843.

NOTE TO THE READER.

Those who desire to read further on this subject, should examine the following works:

Sermons on Baptism, by Dr. Joseph Lathrop.

do. " Dr. Samuel Miller.

Essays on the Church, by Dr. John M. Mason.

Lectures on Infant Baptism, by Leonard Wood, D. D.

Dissertation on Scriptural Authority for Infant Baptism, by Ralph Wardlaw, D. D.

Treatise on Baptism, by Prof. Enoch Pond.

Sprinkling the True Mode of Baptism, by Rev. Cornelius Bogardus.

Apology for Infant Baptism, by Dr. Reed.

Edwards' Candid Reasons, (being his reasons for leaving the Baptist church, and becoming a Pædo Baptist.)

Dr. Timothy Dwight's Theology, vol. 4.

Discussion on Christian Baptism, by William McCalla.

Conversations on Baptism, (a tract) by Rev. James Eells.

The Scripture Directory to Baptism, (a tract) by a Layman.



THE BIBLE BAPTIST.

ISAIAH VIII. 20. *To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*

JOHN V. 39. *Search the Scriptures.*

Sprinkler. I understand that the communion of the Lord's Supper is to be administered in your church; and that you have invited the members of sister churches to unite with you on that occasion. I wish to enjoy that privilege.

Immerser. To what church do you belong?

S. As Christ alone, died for me, I would, in remembering him, forget all other names; and rejoice with all who love him to show forth his death. But you may call the church to which I belong, The thorough-going Bible Baptist Church.

I. Then you believe in Baptism?

S. I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. But I regard baptism as a divine command, binding on all who are fit subjects of the kingdom of Heaven.

I. You have then obeyed it?

S. Yes. On a profession of faith and repentance—after I was thirty years old.

I. Brother, I am glad to meet with you; and do most cordially invite you to the table of your Lord. But will you permit me to see your letters?

S. Certainly. Here is my certificate.

I. (After reading.) I am sorry that I cannot recognise you as belonging to the church of Christ.*

* Some time since, a man of acknowledged piety, attended a Baptist Church on a communion occasion. Not aware of their peculiar views, he was among the first to take his seat at the table. A Baptist Deacon, knowing his ecclesiastical

S. Is not my certificate a good one? Is not the Presbyterian church, a church of Christ?

I. Presbyterians do not hold with believer's baptism.

S. Indeed they do. They believe that the promise is to believers, and to their seed. They require that believers and their household should be baptized: according to the practice of the Apostles, in obedience to the command of Jesus, As Lydia and her household,* Acts, 16. 15. The Jailer, and all his: Acts, 16. 33. The household of Stephanus: 1 Cor. 1. 16. You do not require half as much baptism as we do. Therefore, I told you that you might call my church, The thorough-going Bible Baptist Church.

I. You know that there is but one door into the sheep-fold. And he that entereth not in at the door, but climbeth up some other way, is a thief and a robber. Christ is the door and baptism is the way to Christ.

S. I thought you held differently—and required a man to come to Christ first and be converted; and then to be baptized. But do you not believe that some Presbyterians will be saved?

I. Certainly.

S. Then they cannot be thieves and robbers: For none such can enter Heaven. They must, then, have entered in at the right door, and have come in the right way; which is not a *mode* of baptism, but by repentance, faith, and obedience to Christ.

I. I do sincerely believe that there is but one baptism.

tical connection, came to him and said, "Sir, you cannot commune, this is a *Baptist Table*." The man's feelings may be judged when he rose and left his place, exclaiming "I beg pardon, I thought it was *The Lord's Table*!" This is liberality. Thus a wall of separation, is built between Christians, between pious parents and their Baptist children. What other body, except the Roman Catholic, unchurches all else and for forms?

* In the *Syriac* version of the New Testament completed early in the 2d century, if not before, "household" is rendered "children," it is there "Lydia and her *children*," &c. This shows how those early Christians understood these things, and it would be idle to suppose their views, so near the Apostles, were an innovation.

Presbyterians do not believe this. Therefore, I am compelled to reject them.

S. Indeed Presbyterians do hold, that there is but one baptism. They never re-baptize.

I. I believe that the mode is essential to baptism; and can prove that there is but one mode; Ephesians, 4. 5. One Faith, one Lord, one Baptism.

S. The Bible does not say, one *mode* of baptism; but one baptism. Now I believe in but one baptism; The Christian baptism with water, in the name of the Trinity. What more would you require of me?

I. If there is but one baptism, I suppose there can be but one mode.

S. It is not worth while to talk about suppositions. If the Bible is silent about it, have we the right to say, that a man is disobedient, who believes in one baptism, and has obeyed it, because he does not agree with us, about that which neither he, nor we can find in the Bible?

I. Our church has determined that there is but one mode; and I am bound to obey, and not to wound the feelings of my brethren.

S. Are not all our brethren, for whom Christ died? And is there no danger of wounding the feelings of the larger number of them, by unchurching them; denying the validity of their ministry and ordinances; refusing them Christian communion; and, in this respect, treating them as publicans, and sinners; while you cannot show the least authority for it, from the word of God? Do you not believe that God blesses the ministry of Presbyterians, and trains up, in that church, many shining lights, with whom you hope to commune in Heaven?

I. Yes; but we must wait until we get to Heaven, before we can distinguish between that ignorance and disobedience which God may forgive, and that which seems to us to be an open violation of his law on earth.

S. We are taught to pray; Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven. If God will commune with us in Heaven, and does it now on earth, how can you refuse to do it on earth, when you know you will have to do it in Heaven? The mode makes no difference with God, either on earth or in Heaven. Why then should it with man? We must not call that common or unclean, which God the Father hath cleansed: Acts 10. 15.

I. I would be glad to change the subject. I am bound to contend for the faith. And can prove that baptism always means immersion.

S. How will you do it?

I. First, from the meaning of the word in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Dutch and other dictionaries.*

S. I am not acquainted with all those languages. Can you tell me who made these dictionaries? Were they holy men, inspired of God?

I. Some of them were good men—but some were very wicked infidels—and none of them inspired.

S. I have heard good and learned men, on both sides, contend that the dictionaries were on their side. God however, has not commanded me to search the dictionaries but, The Scriptures. They were recorded by holy men, God speaking unto them by the Holy Spirit. Can you take the Scriptures, God's dictionary, and show me, a plain English scholar, what the word baptize means?

I. Yes; it always means, to dip, to plunge—Total immersion. As, when a person holding a weight that is too heavy, lets it fall into the water and it sinks entirely under.

S. I know that is what Cox and Carson say it means. But remember, that they have with much truth, said: "Mere

* Dr. Owen, one of the greatest and best men of his day says—"That *no one* instance can be given in Scripture in which the word we render baptize does *necessarily* signify either to dip or plunge." Carson, the eminent Baptist acknowledges concerning his own opinion of the term that all the lexicographers and commentators are against him in that opinion.

speculation here is of no value—that theories and conjectures with respect to a subject that concerns the faith and obedience of God’s people are of no authority.” We must have a plain proof, that thus Saith, and thus Doeth the Lord, before we admit that it is God’s word. For if he has written it, it is in the Bible, and we can find it.

I. I perfectly agree with you, and I will prove that *Baptize* always means to immerse, and never to pour or sprinkle; and consequently, that there can be but one mode, as there is but one meaning. I will give you a few cases that will settle the question at once.

S. A few cases will not do. You must prove it, by all and every case. I acknowledge that the word baptize may, and possibly does, sometimes mean, immersion. But I deny what you assert, and are bound to prove, that it never means any thing else. If I can prove that it sometimes means, to pour or to sprinkle, you will be defeated.

I. Certainly.

S. I do not believe that God attaches any value to modes or forms. It is not the obedience of the forms—it is the obedience of the heart in the thing done, and not the manner of doing it, that is acceptable to him. Water applied in any way, in the name of the Trinity, by a proper minister, to a proper subject, is valid baptism. I have therefore no wish to deny that you have been baptised—nor to withhold from you Christian fellowship and communion, as though you were disobedient. This is the charge you bring against me: and as it induces you to banish me from my Father’s table, I certainly owe it to myself, before I consent quietly to be treated as disobedient, unworthy, an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, and a stranger to the covenant of promise, to make my defence.

I. I have often wondered how so many learned and pious men as I believe to be among the Presbyterians, could have any doubt as to the duty of being immersed. And it does really pain me to act as my duty requires, in debarring them

from our communion. I am anxious to hear your defence; especially as you are not disposed to attack the validity of our ordinances.

S. We are willing to be judged by the Bible. We can prove from it, that the word baptize, does mean, to pour out, to sprinkle, even if it also means, to immerse.

In Acts 1. 5. Jesus said, John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. John had before said, Matt. 3. 11, that Jesus should baptize with the Holy Ghost. What language does this prophecy use in relation to the baptism of the Holy Spirit? Does it ever speak of dipping, plunging, immersing, in the Holy Spirit? It speaks plainly and never intimates any thing of the kind. Let us hear, Isaiah 44. 3, I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed. Joel 2. 28, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh. Isaiah 32. 15, Until the Spirit be poured upon us. Ezekiel 39. 29, For I have poured out my Spirit upon &c. Does the New Testament say, that any were ever dipped, plunged, immersed, in the Holy Spirit? Not the darkest hint is given that this was ever done. Matt. 3. 16, John saw the Spirit descending and lighting upon Jesus. John 20. 22, Jesus breathed upon them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. From these prophecies, and their fulfilment, we would not expect a case of immersion in this promised baptism of the Holy Spirit. By whom was it performed?

I. By the Father: John 14. 16. 17. He was to send the Spirit.

S. When was it performed?

I. On the day of Pentecost: Acts 2. 3, and 11. 16. But we were talking of water baptism.

S. No: we were endeavoring to ascertain the meaning of the word, Baptize. You said that it had but one meaning, Total Immersion. And therefore, there could be but one mode. This I am to disprove; and to show, from the Bible, that it means to pour, to sprinkle, descend upon. How did God perform this baptism? Acts 2. 3, There appeared unto

them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and sat upon them, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

I. But it first filled the room.

S. No; the sound of the wind filled the room, but the Spirit sat upon them. Peter says in Acts 11. 15, *It fell upon them*, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the words of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. This baptism was not by letting the body fall into the element, like as a heavy weight into the water. The mode that God used, was according to the prophecy, a *pouring out*. Jesus calls it *Baptize*. You say that there is but one mode and one meaning: Here is a mode and a meaning that is *not immersion*. You must, therefore, give up your one mode and meaning: or contend, that there are two baptisms: the one of water, the other of the Spirit. But this will not alter the case. For even if there were two baptisms, we cannot avoid the conclusion, that the word does not always mean, Total Immersion. I have proved clearly, that it means, to pour out, as used by the great Author of the Bible. And I had rather have his meaning, than that of all the men-made dictionaries in the world. John truly baptized. So did God. John baptized *with water*: John 1. 32, Therefore came I baptizing with water. God baptized *with* the Holy Ghost. We have no reason to suppose that they did it differently. But if they did, there are two modes and meanings, to baptize. The one that John gives—the other given by God. God's is, pouring. Which is the safest for us to take?

I. God's of course.

S. You know there is but one baptism. John said, (John iii. 30.) I must decrease, but he (Jesus) must increase. John's baptism has not only decreased, but ceased long ago. Acts 19. 5. Certain disciples, who had been baptized unto John's baptism, were re-baptized in the name of Jesus. But while he did baptize, it is invariably said, He baptized *with*

water. And it is unaccountable, that no other term is used concerning his mode, if he immersed. But his has given place to Christian baptism. This is the one baptism, and includes that of the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. 12. 13, For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body. It is in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. It embraces the mode of the Three; for they agree in one. The Spirit's mode is, pouring out. The Father's mode is the same. Matt. 3. 11. The Son was to baptize *with* fire. As the mode of the Father and Spirit is clear, and you say that there is but one mode to one baptism, there cannot be a different mode required by the Son. We see that this mode is not by immersion but by a pouring out.

I. Why are you so unwilling to come to water baptism?

S. There is but one baptism. And we were searching for God's meaning of the words Baptize and Baptism. I have proved that they do not always mean immersion; and that if there be but one mode of baptism, it is not by immersion. But I am willing to search for the meaning of the word baptize, as used by the Holy Ghost, in the Bible, in reference to water baptism. Here is a case: 1 Cor. 10. 2. &c. The Apostle says, that the Israelites were baptized unto Moses in the sea and the cloud.

I. Thanks to you for this case. It fairly proves immersion. The sea was on either hand. The cloud was before, over and behind them, so that they were completely surrounded by water.

S. But they did not fall into it like a heavy weight. However the account given in Exodus 14, is somewhat different from yours. The sea was as a wall on either side. The cloud went before. The Israelites became alarmed at the close pursuit of the Egyptians. God caused the pillar of cloud to go from before their face, and to stand behind them. Would you call wetting a side at a time, total immersion?

I. By no means. The whole body must be sunk entirely under.

S. There were upwards of 620,000 Israelites in this company. How did those in the middle get under the water? Remember our object is to ascertain the meaning of the word Baptize as God uses it.

I. I do.

S. You said that unless the whole body was sunk entirely under water, it could not be baptism. How did the Israelites get under? Can you immerse a man on dry ground?

I. No; the thing is impossible.

S. Then, in this baptism there was no immersion; for it is said expressly, Exodus 14. 16: The children of Israel shall go on dry ground: 21, The sea was made dry land: 29, The children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea. How do you get out of this difficulty? It is none with the Presbyterians; they can baptize upon dry land; and do it. They say it rained while the cloud was passing over.

I. Stick to the Bible account. Guess-work and assertion will not answer. I see no account of the rain in Exodus.

S. I only give what the Bible expressly states. David says in Ps. 77. 17, while speaking of this very event: the clouds poured out rain. The only kind of rain that does not wet the ground is what we call a sprinkle. Here then God's mode of baptising with water, is, by sprinkling. You said, there is but one mode. It really seems so; for whether God baptises with the Spirit or with water, he pours out, sprinkles, and does not immerse. His is baptism on dry ground, which you say is impossible, according to your meaning and mode.

I. I do not think that Old Testament cases have any thing to do with Christian baptism.

S. Yes you thanked me for this case a little while ago. But it is the New Testament that calls it baptize. Paul was directed to call it so (for the express purpose of showing that

the sacraments of the Jews were types of ours) by the same Spirit that directed Moses and David to record the events. We are seeking for the Bible meaning of the word, Baptize. And we see inspired Moses and David—Peter and Paul, and the prophets, explaining it, as a pouring, a sprinkling.

I. Why do you not come to plain New Testament times and cases. There you will find the word never means any thing else than the total immersion of the whole body.

S. I have been to the New Testament as well as the Old. From both I have proved that the word means to pour out, to sprinkle. All scripture is given by inspiration; and is profitable for doctrine and instruction. And as it has decided that the word does not always mean total immersion, you ought to give up your assertion that it does.

I. I confess that there is a greater appearance of truth on your side than I had supposed. But the allusion to immersion in our being buried with Christ in baptism, is so pointed; the example of Christ is so powerful; and the case of the Eunuch so plain, that I cannot give up that immersion is not the only mode of baptism.

S. Even if these cases proved immersion, they have not settled the question. For they do not prove that there is but one mode to Christian baptism, but rather the contrary. For, certainly, I have proved that pouring out, sprinkling, is one mode. And there may be many modes of doing a thing, and yet the thing done, be but one. But I am willing to continue the examination. While I would not contend for modes, I am persuaded that the more we search the scriptures, the stronger will be the proof, that the word baptize, and the mode of baptism, as used in the sacred writings, has reference to the applying of the element to the body by pouring, or sprinkling—and not the applying of the body to the element by plunging or immersing. Do you know of any prophecy, that immersion under water should exist, or be practised in the church of Christ?

I. No; I remember none.

S. But there certainly are prophecies concerning the use of water in the Redeemer's kingdom. You say that there are none in reference to immersion. Indeed neither the word, or anything like it ever occurs as connected with the ordinances of the gospel. But the word sprinkle, is frequently used in types referring to the dispensation of grace. And direct prophecies are made of the use of water. Is. 44. 3, I will pour water upon him that is thirsty. Is. 52. 15, So shall he sprinkle many nations. Ezek. 36. 25, Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you. All of these passages refer to the blessings of the gospel. That there should be some allusion to so important an ordinance as that of baptism, was to be expected. The only way in which water is used in the Christian ordinances, is in baptism. The prophecy of its use, is, pouring, sprinkling; not immersion. They lead us to expect that the mode and meaning which, as I have proved, God affixes to baptism, would be continued in the gospel dispensation. It is pouring—*sprinkling*, not plunging, sinking, dipping.

I. But the prophecies are to be taken figuratively, not literally.

S. How do you prove this? Does the Bible say so? If the prophecy had said, then will I immerse you in clean water, instead of sprinkle you; would you have allowed me to say that it must be taken figuratively? But grant that they are figurative: it puts immersion still further out of the question. Figurative language is used, because it is stronger than the literal. Now immersion is a stronger term than pouring out, and requires more water than sprinkling.

I. Let us go to facts.

S. I have been to them—and produced plain unanswerable facts to prove that *Baptize* means, to pour, to sprinkle. You affirmed that it had only one meaning, and therefore

there could be but one mode: Now if other facts were to prove that it also means immersion, as I have said before, it would only prove that you were wrong—and that there were two meanings, two modes. I have no objection that you should prove that immersion is one of the modes. But that you can prove it is the only mode, you yourself must confess is hopeless. Besides—the prophecies are as much facts, truths, as any other part of the Bible.

I. The Apostle says in Romans 6. 4: We are buried with him by baptism. Col. 2. 12: Buried with him in baptism. I cannot see how any one can avoid the pointed allusions to immersion in these passages. We must be buried in our baptism. There is nothing like a burial in sprinkling. But the whole figure of our being buried and rising again, is most solemnly set forth in immersion, in conformity to the death and resurrection of our Saviour.

S. I do not believe that the Apostle had any reference to the mode of baptism in these places. He does not say, we are buried with Christ in the likeness or mode of baptism: but that we are, by baptism buried into the likeness of his death: not his burial. The Apostle uses the word, planted, as well as buried, in reference to the likeness of his death, and crucifixion. He shows plainly that he did not refer to the burial, but to the death of Christ. Knowing, says he, that our old man is crucified with him, that our body of sin may be destroyed. The death of Christ, was the accursed death of the cross. There certainly is no resemblance between immersion and crucifixion. Yet if baptism is to represent the death of Christ, and not his burial, the mode should resemble crucifixion, not interring under ground. But, really, if it were intended to represent the mode of baptism, it is more in favor of sprinkling than of immersion. Will you give me an account of the mode of burying in this country.

I. We dig out a grave by removing the earth. We then deposit the body, and pour the dirt back upon it.

S. This is what the Presbyterians do when they baptize. The element is first removed. The body is presented—and the water is poured upon it. We always apply the element to the body, but never thrust the body through the element. This is never done in burying.

I. But is not being entirely covered with water, like being entirely covered with earth.

S. Somewhat; but the mode of doing it is very different. You say, that baptism means, the plunging of the body, as when a weight falls into the water, and it sinks entirely under. And that to be correctly done, the body must be applied in and under the water. Now this is not the mode of burying. As the words, Dust to dust, Earth to earth, Ashes to ashes, are pronounced, it is usual to pour or sprinkle the earth upon the body. So that your definition does not hold good in burying. You cannot even speak of the mode of burying nor perform the act, without using the term pour or sprinkle, or some word equivalent and acting in the very way that God does, when he baptizes: apply the element to the body, and not let the body fall through the element. But there is no kind of resemblance in our mode of burying, and the way in which Christ was buried. He was deposited in a sepulchre, cut out of a solid rock, large enough to sit and stand in. And his body was not covered with the element.

I. Why did the Apostle then, say, we are buried with him in baptism, if baptism has no reference to a mode of burial?

S. The apostle said, We are buried, planted in the likeness of his death, crucifixion, by baptism. Those who made a profession of faith in his name look to his death for atonement, and to his resurrection for justification: Rom. 4. 25, If we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised for our justification, our hopes are confirmed by his resurrection. 1 Cor. 15, If Christ be not risen your faith is vain—ye are

yet in your sins. They professed also, 2 Cor. 5. 15, to live unto him which died for them, and rose again. See also Rom. 14. 8, 9, The Jew, and in many cases, the Gentile who became a follower of Christ, was considered and treated by his friends as dead—and looked upon as one who had died an accursed death. This profession was made in baptism. And it drew upon the person making it all the odium of the death of their Saviour: to the world they were crucified, and the world was crucified to them. The Saviour calls the hatred and persecution of his followers by the world, a baptism: Luke 12. 50, &c. He confirms this by his remarks to the two sons of Zebedee: Mark 10. 39, 45.

I. Were the sons of Zebedee baptized with his baptism according to his prophecy?

S. Certainly. James was beheaded by Herod. John was much persecuted. And all who live godly, shall suffer persecution. The odium of his death, the cross, is upon them all. The apostle says, Gal. 6. 14, God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world. 1 Cor. 15. 31, I die daily. 2 Cor. 4. 10, Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. Rom. 6. 3, 6, Know ye not that, as many of us as were baptized unto Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed. Gal. 2. 20, I am crucified with Christ. This language is true of every one that professes Christ. And thus it is, that they are baptized into the likeness of his death. They voluntarily take upon themselves all the sorrows, trials, persecutions and afflictions, as well as all the hopes and glories of the death of Christ. How forcibly is set forth, in the figure, of our being baptized into the likeness of his death! Bearing the cross, wearing the crown!

I. Do you not believe, however, that there is a reference to a particular mode of burial, in the text under consideration?

S. No: The Bible is intended to be understood alike by all nations. All do not bury alike. Some burn, some embalm, some inter. Some deposit in vaults, some hang up the body until the flesh decays. But not one buries by forcing the body through the element—not one resembles the mode, the way of immersion—not one the death of Christ—it was a death lifted up, on a mount, on a cross—and our baptism is unto the likeness of his death. A death for and unto sin.

I. Your views would be satisfactory, were it not for the fact, that Jesus himself was immersed. He was baptized in Jordan, and has commanded us to follow him.

S. Has Jesus commanded what part of the body, and how much of it shall be baptized? Has he ordered how it shall be done; by immersion, or pouring, or sprinkling? I will cheerfully obey the precise command he has given, when you show it to me in the Bible. What is his command?

I. Go teach all nations, baptizing them, &c. Matt. 28. 19.

S. How then can you undertake to call me disobedient to his command? What words of it have I disobeyed? I have obeyed according to the mode prophesied—practised by our heavenly Father and Holy Spirit, both with the spirit and with water; and the mode that Paul calls, baptism. I have studied the meaning of the word, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, 1 Cor. 2. 13, And have obeyed as I have been shown of God. Has Christ given a new meaning to the word? Has he commanded us to be immersed under water?

I. I believe that he was immersed.

S. I have no doubt that you are sincere in that belief. And I as sincerely believe that he was not. But our belief is not the word of God. I asked you, does the Bible say that Jesus was immersed?

I. It says; when he was baptized, he went up, straight-way out of the water.

S. Can we not correctly say, a thing came up out of the water that had not been entirely under it.

I. Yes; as of a horse, a boat, &c.

S. How do you know that this was not the case in this instance? Does the Bible say, how deep he had been?

I. No, but I suppose—

S. Unless we can prove our suppositions from the Bible, we agreed not to give them. The law of liberty will not permit us to condemn our brother, for an act, against which we can produce no law from God. Does the Bible say that Jesus went entirely under?

I. I cannot see why he should go in unless he went under.

S. Our not being able to tell why he did not go under, is no proof that he did.

I. I think that any common reader of the Bible would believe as I do.

S. A common reader of the Bible is one who, unacquainted with the learned languages, takes the common English Bible, compares scripture with scripture, by a diligent search; and is able and ready, from the Bible of itself, to give an answer of the reason of the hope that is in him. 1 Peter 3. 15.

I. That is what I would call a common reader.

S. Would such a reader conclude from the prophecies, that Christ was immersed? There is no such prophecy. Would he not expect that water would be used, in the Redeemer's kingdom, by pouring and sprinkling? There are many such prophecies. Would he be able to discover from the mode in which God baptizes, that Jesus was immersed? God's mode is, pouring out. Could he find out from the meaning of the word, as used by Paul and Peter and explained by Moses and David that immersion was the way? Could he tell from the words, go, baptize, what part of the body, and in what way it was to be baptized? You have owned

that this cannot be shown. How, then, would he conclude that Jesus was immersed, or that baptism means nothing but, total immersion?

I. Because he would read that John baptized in Jordan and at Enon, because there was much water there. John 3. 23.

S. He would also read that he baptized at Bethabara; and in the wilderness where there was not much water. Is it not reasonable to conclude, that John would require much water to sprinkle the immense multitudes who came to be baptized; and that they also would require much water to drink? It does not follow that he immersed them because there was water enough to do it.

I. But he would read that John baptized in Jordan.

S. True; but the depth of his baptism, is what the common reader would have to discover. All that is said about his baptism may be true, even if he baptized on dry ground; as God did the Israelites, and the Presbyterians did me.

I. How could that be possible?

S. John might have gone a little way from the shore, as the Saviour did, Matt. 13. 2, to avoid the press, and to give the people on the bank an opportunity of hearing and of seeing. They might have waded in; and, after he had sprinkled them, returned out of the water. We might believe all this, without finding a meaning to baptism, for which there is no prophecy—which is contrary to prophecy, and to the meaning which God gives of the word. And no man can prove from the Bible that it was not so. Does the Bible give any reason, why Jesus was to be immersed?

I. I cannot show any particular reason.

S. I do not believe that a common reader would think that to be in the Bible, for which he could show no reason. I believe that he would conclude that Jesus was sprinkled.

I. That is strange! I would like to hear your reasons for such a declaration.

S. They are taken from the Bible. Why was Jesus baptized?

I. To set us an example.

S. He did not say so; but, thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness; Matt. 3. 15. What does that mean?

I. To do whatever the law required.

S. What law required Jesus to be baptized? Not the moral law—for it says not a word about it. Not John's law, for John forbade him, Matt. 3. 14, which he would not have done, if his baptism unto repentance and the remission of sins, had required it. We find the term, the law, used in the Bible, only in reference to the moral, and the Levitical law. Jesus was about to commence his great work of atonement. This he was to do in the character of priest, Heb. 5. &c. The law required that every priest should be washed, purified with water. Jesus must fulfil that law. None was so proper to baptize him as John—his forerunner—a prophet—the greatest among those born of woman—of the tribe of Levi himself, according to the law, a priest. In Exodus 29. 4, we have the general direction about this washing: Thou shalt wash their bodies. But it is not said what part of their body shall be washed, nor in what way it shall be done. Exodus 30. 19, 20. A laver is provided, too small to immerse the whole body, and in it the hands and feet were to be washed. The mode of washing is not yet mentioned. In Numbers 8. 7, the mode is fixed: Thou shalt sprinkle water of purification upon them. The Bible speaks of no other law that required Jesus to be baptized. If he were fulfilling this law, and he came to fulfil, not to destroy it, he certainly was not immersed, but sprinkled. Jesus has commanded us to search, not the dictionaries, nor human opinions, but the scriptures, for they testify of him. I have done so. And the only testimony they

give, is, that he was sprinkled. If I am wrong, it is because the Bible gives me no other answer for the reason of my hope. The law required Jesus to be sprinkled—and it accords with the prophecies, and God's mode of baptizing, both with the spirit and with water.

I. Really, you have made it out better than I expected. But do you not suppose that the Apostles baptized as Jesus was baptized? If so, he certainly was immersed.

S. I suppose they did. But our suppositions have nothing to do with the question.

I. As Philip immersed the Eunuch, and the Apostles baptized as Jesus was baptized, certainly he was immersed.

S. Does the Bible say that Philip immersed the Eunuch?

I. No—but it says, Acts 8. 38, 39, And they went down both into the water—and when they were come up out of the water, &c.

S. You agree that Philip did not go under—yet he went down into the water—and came up out of the water. How do you know then that the same is not true of the Eunuch—that he did not go under? Does the Bible tell you how deep he went in?

I. No.

S. Is it right, then, for us to say that Jesus and the Eunuch were immersed, merely because it is said, they went in and came out—when we know the same thing is said of Philip, who did not go under? Especially, as the Bible does not say how deep they had been in? Now I have a reason from the Bible which induces me to believe that the Eunuch was sprinkled.

I. If you can prove that, and remove one other difficulty, I will give up that sprinkling is valid.

S. When Philip joined himself to the Eunuch he was reading Isaiah 53. 7. Philip asked him if he understood what

he was reading? He told him he did not, and inquired of whom the prophet was speaking. Now supposing I were reading a letter, in which the words, he, him, his, were frequently used, and when you inquired of me whom I meant, I handed you the letter to find out for yourself; or, suppose your child were reading: He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, &c. and were to ask you how he could find out to whom he referred, what would you do?

I. In both cases I would begin at the beginning of the writings.

S. This is the very thing that Philip did, Acts 8. 35, then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus. From the Eunuch's remark about baptism, it is evident that Philip had said something to him on that subject. If there is any thing in that scripture which naturally leads to the subject of baptism, we can find it, by doing as Philip did; beginning at the same. The prophecy begins at Isaiah 52. 13, Behold my righteous servant, &c. In the 15th verse, we read: So shall he sprinkle many nations. Now would Philip have attempted to immerse him, after they both had read that sprinkling was baptism, or the way in which water was to be used in the Redeemer's church? And where is this prophecy fulfilled, if sprinkling is not a mode of baptism? All things written in the scriptures concerning Jesus must be fulfilled. And these prophecies must be fulfilled too. But if sprinkling is not a mode of baptism, if there is no pouring, sprinkling of water in his church, they are not fulfilled. Be this as it may, I have given you my reason from the Bible why I believe Jesus and the Eunuch were sprinkled. You can give me no reason from the Bible why they were immersed.

I. It is evident that baptism is a washing of the body. Acts 22. 16;* Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.

* The terms are in the original, "stand up and be baptized." Every circumstance here is against immersion. Saul had been three days in Damascus,

Hebrews 10. 22, Having our bodies washed with pure water, &c. I do not see how sprinkling can make any thing clean.

S. I have proved from the case of the priests, Exodus 29. and Numbers 8., that sprinkling the body was washing it. Now the Apostle himself has pointed out the way in which the body is purified: Heb. 9. 13, For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer *sprinkling* the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ purge your consciences from dead works, &c. Heb. 10. 22, Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Now, here sprinkling purifies the flesh and the conscience, and is the washing required. For baptism does not save us by the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good (a sprinkled) conscience towards God. Sprinkling does purify the flesh, and we are saved by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he *shed* upon us abundantly: Titus 3. 6. Indeed it is in vain to search the scriptures about baptism, unless we are willing to see the word *sprinkle* in connection with it.

I. But the original word—

S. Is as much in favor of sprinkling as of immersion. But while I set a proper value upon human learning and attainments, I always prefer that God's word should be its own interpreter. We agreed that it should be. We have searched it. From it I have proved that the word baptize, means, to pour, to sprinkle; that God performs baptism by pouring and sprinkling—that there is but one baptism—the Christian baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. That

“without sight, and had neither ate nor drank.” Annanias comes in and salutes him as a Christian brother. In Saul's exceedingly exhausted and feeble state, nothing is said about going out and dipping in cold water—but “stand up and be baptized.” And there, without going from his place, only altering his position, he “stood up and was baptized.” Acts 9. 18. Will a common English reader say, this looks like immersion?

these three agree in one—that what is done in the name of the Three, must be in the mode of the Three. 1 John 5. 8, there are three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood : and these three agree in one. The Spirit is poured upon those baptized by it. The prophecy is, I will pour, will sprinkle, water upon him. The blood is, sprinkled : 1 Peter 1. 2, Through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. 1 John 1. 7, The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. Heb. 12. 24, The blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. Truly, they agree in one mode as well as in one object. The prophecies lead us to expect water, and by pouring, sprinkling—in the gospel days—and not by immersion. I can get a reason from the Bible, why Jesus was sprinkled; none why he was immersed. I have searched the Scriptures for the meaning of the word, baptize. In every case it brings me to the word sprinkle. You can give me no prophecy—no thus Saith, thus Doeth the Lord—no answer from the Bible why I should believe, that the word never means any thing but total immersion.

I. Brother, forgive me, I have had hard thoughts about your sincerity—I have sometimes spoken lightly about your “baby sprinkling;” and having treated you cruelly in acting towards you as an alien from the commonwealth of Israel. Hereafter, I will try to do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven. And the only way in which I can make reparation for the evil I have done, is to own that you are not disobedient, that like ourselves, Presbyterians believe and obey one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism; that their mode is valued, accepted and blessed of God, and shall not be questioned by me. I may be persecuted, and cast out as evil for so doing. But it is better to obey God than man. He will bless, while man persecutes. And in following that truth which embraces the love and charity of the gospel, I know that I am following Christ.

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