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PRESENT TO FAMILIES:

A PRACTICAL WORK ON THE

COVENANT OF GRACE,

AS GIVEN TO ABRAHAM.

DESIGNED TO

PROMOTE FAMILY RELIGION.

BY JOHN RANKIN,

Pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Ripley, and author
of "Letters on American Slavery."

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DEDICATION.

THE following work is respectfully dedicated to families, of all classes and denominations.

It is intended to promote family religion which is the surest means of reforming society, and of securing the best interests of our race, both in time and eternity. It is hoped that even those families that do not accord in sentiment with the author, may derive benefit from reading the work. Such are affectionately invited to read, and examine it, to see if it be not in accordance with the sacred oracles.

The subject of the work is of vital importance to every family, and demands serious and prayerful attention, whether the writer has, or has not, succeeded well in its investigation. In relation to it he has spent much time, in carefully and prayerfully studying

the sacred Scriptures. He has not followed other writers on the subject; but has endeavored to take his views entirely from the Bible. He has aimed to present the views that a careful investigation of the Scriptures presented to his own mind. He has not indulged a controversial spirit. Nothing calculated to offend any pious mind has been written. He has aimed to heal, not to make, division. It is by open and candid discussion that the great christian family must be so brought to unity in sentiment and practice, as to form one grand communion, and stand as a united host against the powers of darkness. When this shall have been accomplished, the shout will soon ascend to heaven—"the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ."

COVENANT OF GRACE.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHURCH HAD HER ORIGIN IN THE FIRST FAMILY.—EXISTED UNDER THE COVENANT OF GRACE BEFORE GIVEN TO ABRAHAM.

THE church is distinguished from all other societies, by the worship of the true God according to a divine revelation, which she adopts as her infallible rule of faith and practice. There is to her, “one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all.” Of all societies organized among men, she claims to be the most ancient and the most important. Faith in the true God, as he has revealed himself to mankind, is her organizing principle. The open profession of this faith by external acts of worship, and by obedience to the revealed will of God, distinguishes her from the world. Such faith, accompanied with external acts of worship and obedience, existed in the family of the first man. Cain and Abel were professors of the true religion, and their profession was founded upon divine revelation. “By faith, Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying

of his gifts, and by it he being dead yet speaketh." Heb. xi. 4. From this, it is clear, that Abel's faith and external acts of worship were founded upon revelation. 'The bloody sacrifice which he offered, pointed to a suffering Savior as the only hope of fallen man. This Savior was indirectly promised in the denunciation against the serpent, Gen. iii. 15: "it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Hence, in the family of the first man we find the beginning of the christian system. Abel's faith is recognized by Paul as the same with that of christians. Consequently, it is reasonable to conclude that the church had her origin in the first family. And the continued succession of such worshipers, from that period to this, confirms this conclusion. The institution of sacrifice was continued from that time to the death of the Messiah, in order to point out to the faithful, the true sacrifice for sin. So soon as the human family began to multiply, the worshipers of God associated together for religious purposes. Hence, it is said, "then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." Gen. iv. 26. These were called "the sons of God." Gen. vi. 2.—a name by which his people have been distinguished in all ages. Thus it appears that they were organized as a religious society, and plainly distinguished from the world by the practice of godliness up to the time they were led to apostasy by marrying the daughters of men,

that is, of those who belonged to the world. They were also favored with inspired teachers. Enoch, the seventh from Adam, was a prophet of great eminence: his predictions extended to the remotest ages, and now form a part of the sacred volume. And his piety has never been excelled. Jude, 14, 15. "By faith, Enoch was translated, that he should not see death—for—he had this testimony, that he pleased God." Heb: xi. 5. After the apostasy, occasioned by improper marriages, religion was propagated by Noah. He was an inspired preacher of righteousness, and some of his predictions are a part of the sacred oracles. With him and his seed God established his covenant, after the deluge. He, by his holy confidence in God, condemned the world, and became the heir of the righteousness which is by faith. The same righteousness that was sealed to Abraham by circumcision. This shows that Noah and Abraham had one common system of faith. They alike offered sacrifices, and were alike guided by divine inspiration. The right of circumcision sealed the righteousness which Abraham had in common with Noah. It was an external sign which did not affect the vitals of religion. Abraham was called for special purposes, and the great charter of privilege, held by the church from her origin up to his time, was given to him with some additional promises, in order to secure, with greater certainty, and more extensively,

the propagation of religion in the world. But this special call did not separate him from other professors of the true religion. He paid tythes to Melchisedec, and acknowledged his authority as priest of the most high God. In the case of Abraham, there was an extension of privilege which is perfectly consistent with the identity of the church. The church, like a nation, may have her privileges extended, and her external form varied without affecting her identity. She has certain distinctive principles that have been the same in every age. She has ever professed faith in the true God, and has ever been guided by divine revelation. And by sacrifice, she has ever hoped for acceptance with God. Jesus Christ has ever been the chief corner-stone on which she has rested her eternal interests. From her origin up to the hour when he groaned on the tree, she looked to him through types and shadows darkly, but now she looks to him through the light of gospel day, as the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." The covenant made with Abraham, although it varied the external form of the church, did not change her distinctive principles; and of course did not affect her identity. This is confirmed by the fact, that an inspired apostle represents Abel, Enoch, Noah, and Abraham, as having the same kind of faith. The identity of the church before and after Abraham is sufficiently evident; but her identity under the

old and new dispensations, is vastly more important to christian practice, and the evidence to establish it is much more abundant.

CHAPTER II.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THE COVENANT GIVEN TO ABRAHAM.

EVERY thing which tends to promote the salvation of men is of vast importance, and should be deeply interesting to all classes of human beings. Most earnestly should we attend to every thing which may light up the way to endless enjoyment. Man, by nature, lies in the darkness and ruins of apostasy, alike hopeless and helpless in himself; but the Father of the universe has opened a way to heaven, and caused the Sun of righteousness to shine upon it, and impart to the benighted mind the light of life. When the world was sinking rapidly down into hopeless idolatry, he called Abraham, and renewed with him his covenant which had been almost lost and forgotten amidst the ravages of sin. This covenant has been the grand means of preserving in the world, the true knowledge of God, and of securing to man the revelation of his will, as well as the means of restoration to his favor. True religion has prevailed no where on earth but under the reign of this covenant.

It has in all ages been the prominent means of promoting the knowledge of God and the salvation of men. It is the great charter of religious privilege, and fundamental in the christian system. The sacred Scriptures are but a development of its principles. No other constitution is so important as this. No other ever tendered to men blessings so great, or privileges so noble. It confers perfect freedom and boundless happiness. How important then to understand well a covenant so valuable, one that is God's wisest, best, and only plan of saving men, and one that has, in his hand, been the means of gathering millions of our race into the kingdom of glory! Is it the charter of privilege, the treasure of promises great and precious? and shall we not investigate it with unceasing delight? We shall find it a precious key to unlock the sacred volume, and let us into the richest fountains of wisdom and happiness; we shall find it the great standard of christian doctrine and practice, and the surest means of causing the fountain of life to flow down upon future generations. It will be to us the cause of everlasting gratitude to the Father of our spirits for a plan so well adapted to promoting our eternal interests, and it will for ever enrich the song of the redeemed.

CHAPTER III.

THE MEANING OF THE TERM COVENANT.

ANY order or plan laid down according to which any one is bound to act, is a covenant. A common contract between parties is a plan of action by which the contractors are bound, and in that respect is a covenant. And for this reason contracts are in Scripture called covenants. There is a sense in which every contract is a covenant. In every one there is an order laid down according to which the parties are bound to act.

A will is an order or plan laid down according to which executors and heirs are obliged to act, and is a covenant without regard to consent of parties. It is not therefore the consent of parties that constitutes a covenant. Any law or rule of action imposed by authority, is a covenant in the scriptural sense of the term. The command given to the parents of our race was a covenant without respect to their consent. It was a rule or law given by which they were bound. God made a covenant with Noah and his seed, and with the beasts of the earth. Gen. ix. 9, 10, 11, 12: "And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; and with every living creature that is with you, of fowl, of cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you." The fowls and cattle were incapable of making

a contract, nor could they give consent. And the same is true of the unborn posterity of Noah. Hence the covenant made with Noah was simply God's plan of dealing with him, his seed, the fowls and beasts of the earth.

The ten commandments are a covenant. *Exod. xxxiv. 28*: "And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments." These were not a contract, but a law or rule of action imposed by divine authority.

That a covenant is a rule of action, or plan of dealing is also evident from *Jer. xxxi. 31—33*: "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel;—I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." This covenant is God's plan of dealing with the house of Israel.

The obligation of God's covenant arises not from the consent of his creatures; but from his authority. He has a right to lay down his own plan of dealing with his creatures, and enforce it according to his sovereign pleasure. God may deal with his creatures either in mercy, or in judgment, and consequently, a covenant may contain promises or threatenings, or both, as circumstances may require.

The covenant which God gave to Abraham, is his plan of dealing with him and his posterity. *I. Chron. xvi. 15--18*: "Be mindful

always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations; *even of the covenant* which he made with Abraham, of his oath unto Isaac; and hath confirmed the same to Jacob, for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, saying, unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance." This covenant is a word commanded to a thousand generations, a law to Jacob of perpetual obligation, and to Israel an everlasting covenant. It is imposed by divine authority upon Abraham and his seed to a thousand generations, even for ever, without respect to their consent. The obligation to obey it arises from God's authority, and not from the consent of those on whom it is imposed. It is as the rightful constitution of a state, which binds posterity equally with those who made it, because civil government is an ordinance of God, and derives its authority from him, and not from the consent of those governed. The covenant given to Abraham is properly a constitution of perpetual obligation, and not a contract between parties. No doubt Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all their believing posterity, consented to it most cheerfully; but their consent was no part of the covenant. It was a covenant previous to their consent. And their consenting to it was but the taking hold of God's covenant, which already existed. Let it then be understood, that the covenant given to Abraham is a constitution of perpetual

obligation, binding upon posterity, as does the rightful constitution of a state, and that no one can excuse himself for disobedience to its requisitions, upon the ground that he never gave to it his consent.

CHAPTER IV.

THERE WAS BUT ONE COVENANT MADE WITH ABRAHAM.

As the opinion has prevailed, that two distinct covenants were made with Abraham, it is deemed necessary to show that such opinion is not well founded. In the fifteenth of Genesis it is said that God made a covenant with Abraham, and in the seventeenth it is said—"I will make my covenant between me and thee." Upon these statements the opinion is founded, that two distinct covenants were made with Abraham. The language in the latter place, it should be noticed, is different from that used in the former, and seems to imply the extending and confirming a covenant already in existence. It is not said, I will make a covenant, or I will make another covenant between me and thee; but, I will make "*my covenant.*" And as for me, "*my covenant is with thee.*" Such expressions plainly imply the previous existence of the covenant. This is confirmed by the fact that the same things are promised in both places.

In the fifteenth chapter it is said,—“He that shall come forth out of thine own bowels, shall be thine heir. Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars if thou be able to number them—so shall thy seed be. I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. In that same day, the Lord made a covenant with Abraham saying, unto thy seed have I given this land.” In the seventeenth it is said,—“Sarah thy wife shall bear a son indeed.—She shall be a mother of nations.—I will make thee exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of thee.—Thou shalt be a father of many nations. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession.” It is obvious that in both places the same things are promised. Consequently, the seventeenth is but a repetition and confirmation of the covenant made in the fifteenth. It is unreasonable to suppose that two distinct covenants were made with the same individual, each promising the same things.

As additional evidences, it can be shown that God himself recognizes but one covenant made with Abraham. The phrase “my covenant” occurs nine times in the seventeenth of Genesis. He confirmed but one with Isaac and Jacob. “But my covenant will I establish with Isaac.”—Gen. xvii. 21. “And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob. And

I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan; and I have remembered my covenant with them." Exod. vi. 3, 4, 5.

Thus, in every instance, God speaks of but one covenant made with Abraham, and confirmed with Isaac and Jacob.

Again, the Old and New Testament writers and speakers mention but one covenant made with Abraham. Deut. viii. 18: "But shalt remember the Lord thy God.—That he may establish his covenant which he swore unto thy fathers." Neh. ix. 7, 8: "Thou art the Lord the God who didst choose Abraham, and madest a covenant with him." Psal. cv. 8, 9, 10: "He hath remembered his covenant forever—which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac, and he confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law; and to Israel for an everlasting covenant." Luke, i. 72, 73: "To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant, the oath which he sware to our father Abraham." Acts, iii. 25: "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." Acts, vii. 8: "And he gave him the covenant of circumcision." Gal. iii. 15, 16, 17: "Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed

were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, That the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." Gal. iv. 24: "For these are the two covenants; the one from Mount Sinai,"—the other must have been the one made with Abraham.

From all these passages, it appears that but one covenant made with Abraham was known among his descendants. This covenant is repeatedly represented as containing the promises, and securing the inheritance of believers. It is the one which Daniel calls "the Holy Covenant."—Dan. xi. 28. And the one of which the Messiah is the messenger. Mal. iii. 1: "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant."

Thus it is abundantly evident that but one covenant was made with Abraham, that but one descended to his posterity, and that, of course, was the covenant of circumcision.

This point is of some considerable importance, because, if there were but one covenant made with Abraham, there can be no doubt but that it is still in force. There is a covenant made with Abraham, recognized in the New Testament as securing to christians a spiritual inheritance. And if that be the covenant of

circumcision, it must have an important bearing on christian privilege and practice. If but one covenant descended from Abraham, that was the covenant of circumcision. Consequently, the privileges it formerly conferred on believing parents, are still to be enjoyed; and the practice founded on the existence of these privileges, is correct.

CHAPTER V.

THE COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION IS THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

1. THE covenant of grace is the one, according to which God bestowed all temporal and eternal favors on those that are saved, or, in other words, that by which he confers on them eternal life, and all the means necessary to it. Of all covenants ever made with men, this is the most important, and therefore ought, above all others, to be clearly distinguished in the sacred oracles. Now if the one made with Abraham be not the covenant of grace, where is it to be found distinctly described in the sacred volume? There has but one covenant descended from Abraham to us, and that, we know, is the covenant of circumcision. This has, in the Scriptures, a prominence beyond all others. Is it not, then, reasonable to conclude that it is the covenant of grace?

2. In the covenant of circumcision the Messiah was promised. He is one of the numerous posterity promised to Abraham. Isaac was a type of Christ, and as such was offered as a sacrifice on the altar, and "in a figure received from the dead." As Christ was actually raised from the dead "for our justification."

In Isaac, as a type, was Abraham's seed called. The event has proved that they are called in Christ. "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs" according to promise: Gal. iii. 29. They are called christians.

To this it may be added, that Christ is the seed to whom the promises were made. Gal. iii. 16, 19: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed which is Christ." The law "was added, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." Thus it appears that Christ was promised as the seed that should be the primary heir of the whole inheritance. And it is evident that Abraham understood that the Savior was promised. He desired to see Christ's day. "He saw it and was glad." John viii. 56. He "died in the faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off." Heb. xi. 13.

Must not the covenant in which Christ, the richest favor ever bestowed upon man, was promised, be the covenant of grace?

3. Christ was the surety of the covenant of circumcision. The blessings promised in this covenant were such as could not, consistently with divine justice, be bestowed upon fallen man, but upon the credit of one who could answer the demands of the covenant broken by the parents of our race, and all their descendants. The flaming sword that turned every way to guard the tree of life, was an emblem of that justice which closed up, against fallen man, every avenue to the favor of God, and the happiness of heaven. Consequently, when the covenant was first given to Abraham, it was through the blood of innocent animals as types of the suffering Messiah.—Gen. xv. 2, 18. In this way it was “confirmed of God in Christ.” Gal. iii. 17. This leads to the conclusion that the blessings of the covenant were promised through the sufferings of Christ, and that he, of course, was the surety.

The confirming of the covenant by circumcision teaches us the same truth. From the Scriptures, it is evident that this rite was an emblem of spiritual cleansing. Hence it is said, “I will circumcise your hearts;” the same as to say, I will regenerate your hearts. Circumcision as a sign of regeneration was “a seal of the righteousness of faith,” which is Christ’s righteousness. “For he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” Rom. x. 4. And “who of God is made unto us—righteousness” “even as David

also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works: 1 Cor. i. 30.—Rom. iv. 6. Hence it appears that circumcision was a seal of Christ's righteousness. As a painful and bloody rite it taught that the blessings of regeneration of which it was the sign, and the righteousness of faith of which it was the seal, must come to fallen man through suffering and blood. This shows that the blessings of the covenant were bestowed on the credit of Christ. Circumcision was the pledge that his righteousness should stand for the justification of the true believer, and thus by it the covenant "was confirmed of God in Christ" as the surety on the part of man.

In support of this point I shall also adduce the confirmation of the covenant by oath.—Gen. xxii. 16, 17, 18: "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord; for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." All of these promises are contained in the covenant of circumcision, though not precisely in the same language. The offering up of Isaac was typical of God's offering up his only son for the salvation of sinners. Abraham, in a figure of Christ's resurrection, "re-

ceived" Isaac "from the dead." The result was, God confirmed his covenant by oath, and in terms more explicit than he had previously used. It is plainly stated that all nations shall be blessed in Abraham's seed. The New Testament shows that Christ is the seed through which the nations shall be blessed. Thus it appears that the confirming oath was founded upon the sacrifice of Christ. Confirmation was added to confirmation in order to give the highest possible assurance. Hence, it is said, "God, willing more abundantly, to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it with an oath." Heb. vi. 17. Now, as the covenant was thus "confirmed in Christ" by oath, and that with direct reference to his death, it is evident that he was the surety.

To all that has been said upon this point, it may be added that Christ has fulfilled the meritorious conditions of the covenant. By meritorious conditions I mean whatever was necessary to be done in order to make it consistent with divine justice to bestow upon sinful creatures the blessings promised in the covenant.

That he did perform this, is evident from Heb. ii. 10-17: "For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, *are* all of one; for which cause

he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren.—And again, behold, I, and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on *him the nature of* angels; but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren: that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.” From this it is evident that the sufferings of Christ were indispensable to bringing many sons to glory. And it is undeniable that this glory is the promised inheritance of the true children of Abraham. It is equally evident that the “many sons” are the brethren of Christ. He and they are all of Abraham. By regeneration they are also children of Christ. He took upon him their nature that he might die for them, and so destroy him that had over them the power of death. All this was done to save the children of Abraham. He made reconciliation for their sins, and so fulfilled for them the meritorious conditions of the covenant.

The same truth is equally evident from Gal.

iii. 13, 14: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the spirit through him." This curse would have excluded, forever, both Jews and Gentiles from the blessing of Abraham, had not Christ endured it in his own body on the cross. Hence the believer's inheritance is called a purchased possession. Eph. i. 14. He purchased the whole possession with his own blood, and so became the meritorious heir of Abraham; and it was by him that Abraham became the father of all them that believe. According to the interpretation which Paul gives of the covenant of circumcision, it promised that Abraham should be the heir of the world, and that promise was by grace: Rom. iv. 19—25. For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had yet* being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which

he had being yet uncircumcised. For the promise that he should be the heir of the world *was* not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect. Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression. Therefore *it is* of faith that it *might be* by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. "As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations" before him whom he believed, *even* God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not, as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, so shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now, it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we

believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. This is an inspired comment on the covenant of circumcision; for the language and promises of that covenant are expressly repeated, and circumcision is declared to be the seal of the righteousness of faith, and the seed promised is shown to be spiritual as well as natural, and that they who are Abraham's natural seed can be heirs, only by faith, that it might be by grace. Now we know that grace came by Jesus Christ, and that it is by faith in him that all the children of Abraham are justified. For he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth: Rom. x. 4. This righteousness, Paul tells us, shall be imputed to us, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Thus we see that the very righteousness that was imputed to Abraham, and sealed by circumcision, is imputed to us when we exercise faith in Christ. Hence it is evident that the promises made in the covenant of circumcision, were founded upon the merits of Christ. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen: 2 Cor. i. 20. It was by the merits of Christ that Abraham became the "heir of the world" which is ultimately to be brought into the church, so that all nations shall become the children of

Abraham. The heathen shall be given to the son for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession . Psal. ii. 8. If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise. Christ has purchased the church with his own blood: Acts, xx. 28. He loved the church, and gave himself for it: Eph. v. 25.

From all that has been said, it is abundantly evident that Christ was the surety of the covenant of circumcision. Must not that be the covenant of grace of which he stands surety, and the token of which is the seal of his righteousness imputed for justification?

In the covenant of circumcision heaven was promised. This promise was given typically in the promise of Canaan. This land was consecrated to the service of God. It was the residence of God's chosen people. Natural descent from Abraham gave no title to it. Ishmael and Esau were excluded. The same is true of his descendants by Keturah. The unbelieving offspring of Jacob perished in the wilderness. They could not enter into Canaan, because of unbelief, Heb. iii. 19. For apostasy from the service of God, the ten tribes were banished, and Judah endured seventy years' captivity. And since the rejection of their promised Messiah, the Jews have been expelled near eighteen hundred years. And Paul tells us, "Because of unbelief they were broken off." It was then, a holy land,

to be inherited by faith. God's temple was to be in it. The holy place where he displayed his glory on earth. There his saints worshipped him, and celebrated his praises in hymns and spiritual songs. In all these respects the land of Canaan was a type of heaven. Hence, the promise of Canaan was typically the promise of heaven.

Again, there is now reserved for the children of God a spiritual inheritance, promised to their father Abraham. This inheritance, Paul says, "God gave to Abraham by promise." Gal. iii. 18. Now we know that Canaan was literally the inheritance promised to Abraham, and therefore it must have been typically the promise of one that is spiritual, that is, heaven, which is the inheritance of all the true children of Abraham.

It may be added, that David's throne was in Canaan. God promised to establish his throne forever, and that he should "never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel." 2 Sam. i. 16, and Jer. xxxiii. 17—20, 21. This promise was fulfilled in the Messiah who sits upon David's throne: Isa. ix. 7, and Acts, ii. 30. But the Messiah's throne is in heaven. This shows that Canaan was the type of heaven. Consequently, the promise of Canaan was the promise of heaven.

In further confirmation, it may be remarked that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob understood the promise of Canaan as comprising in it the pro-

mise of heaven. Heb. xi. 8—16: “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed: and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly if they had been mindful of that *country* from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned; but now they desire a better *country*, that is a heavenly, wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared them a city.”

Thus through Canaan as a type they sought a better country than their native Chaldea, even the heavenly Canaan, in which God has prepared for them an eternal city, and is not ashamed to be called their God. Hence we see that the promise of Canaan was to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the promise of heaven. In this sense it was truly “an everlasting possession.”

We see then that in the covenant of circum-

cision heaven was promised; and therefore there is reason to believe that it is the covenant of grace.

5. That the covenant of circumcision is the covenant of grace, appears from the promise made in it that God would be the God of Abraham and his seed. Gen. xvii. 7: "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; to be a God unto thee, and thy seed after thee."

This covenant is declared to be everlasting. God will, to all eternity, be the God of Abraham. This expresses the sense of a promise previously given. Gen. xv. 1: "Fear not Abraham, I *am* thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." This implies all grace, both for time and eternity. That the promise extended to eternity, is evident from the circumstance that our Lord proves the resurrection, by the fact that God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Mat. xxii. 32: "God is not the God of the dead but of the living." After the death of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, God still declared himself to be the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and from this our Lord infers the doctrine of the resurrection.

Thus we see that, in the covenant of circumcision, God promises to be Abraham's God both for time and eternity, and to be his shield and exceeding great reward. What covenant could promise more grace?

Here it is proper to notice the most plausible objection against the doctrine supported above. It is this: "The covenant of circumcision cannot be the covenant of grace, because it includes the children of Abraham as well as himself, and surely all who are included in the covenant of grace must infallibly be saved."

In answer to this, I will state,

1. That the promise that God would be the God of Abraham and his seed after him, was made to Abraham himself, and not to his seed. Isaac was not yet born, and of course could receive no promise. This was adapted to Abraham's parental feelings. Abraham as a pious man, desired that his offspring might be saved as well as himself. In answer to this desire, God promised him that he would be the God of his seed after him.

2. As the promise was made to Abraham, so it was sealed to himself by the circumcision of himself and his household. As the promise was twofold so was the seal. The circumcision of the household sealed to Abraham the promise on behalf of his seed. Circumcision as already shown, was the sign of regeneration, and the seal of the righteousness of faith. The sign of Abraham's regeneration, and the seal of the righteousness of his faith was put upon his household. This answered two purposes. It was, as put upon them by divine authority, the pledge on the part of God that he was will-

ing to bestow regeneration and the righteousness of faith upon Abraham's seed, and to be their God as he had promised. It also was calculated to teach that the blessings of the covenant must descend to Abraham's seed through regeneration and the righteousness of faith.

3. The promises descended as an inheritance to Abraham's posterity. None but true believers were heirs. Hence it is said, "thou shalt keep my covenant, therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee, in their generations." Gen. xi. 9. And again, it is said, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." Gen. xviii. 49. Thus we see that Abraham's children and household must not only be instructed, but their hearts must be so changed by divine grace, that they will do justice and judgment, before God can bring upon Abraham the things spoken of him. "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Rom. ii. 28, 29. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed." Gal. iii. 29. "The children of promise are counted for the seed." Rom. ix. 8. "Now, we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the chil-

dren of promise." Gal. iv. 28. From these passages it is evident that natural descent of itself did not constitute heirship. Had not Isaac been a believer, he could not have been a true heir of Abraham: God could not have been his "exceeding great reward" in time and eternity. "They are not all Israel, which are of Israel; neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, are not the children of God; but the children of promise are counted for the seed." Rom. ix. 6, 7, 8. This shows beyond doubt that none of Abraham's seed, but such as were children of God, were heirs according to promise. Hence, they who fell in the wilderness could not enter into Canaan "because of unbelief." And it is evident that a Gentile, by becoming a child of God even under the old dispensation, might be an heir according to promise. Rahab the harlot, Ruth the Moabitess, Arauneth the Jebusite, are instances of this. They were incorporated with Israel, and were honored as the children of God. And one at least, was a mother of high standing in Israel, and from her descended the Savior.

From all this it is abundantly evident that none but true believers are heirs of promise according to the covenant of circumcision. They inherit blessings for themselves, and for their children. The manner, then, in which the

children of believers stand connected, forms no objection to its being the covenant of grace.

The blessings which believers inherit for their children are as truly grace as any others whatever; and they are indeed precious grace, and such as has made the hearts of parents glad in every age.

To state the blessings inherited for children, and thus show that they are grace, will give greater clearness to the subject, and will also have a tendency to promote the practice of parental duty. Then,

1. They inherit for their children connection with the church during the time they are under parental authority. I say during the time they are under parental authority. For it is connection with a believer's household, that gives them connection with the church. This is evident from the fact that an adopted child inherited the same privileges in this respect with the natural child. "He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money must needs be circumcised." Gen. xvii.

13. He that was bought with money was adopted as a son; and though he might not be an equal heir in temporal things, as was sometimes the case with children of the same parents, yet in spiritual things he was placed on equal ground: and the reason of this is obvious. His spiritual privileges did not lessen those of the real children; but in fact was greatly to their advantage, especially as they

tended to influence his conduct, and so cause him to present a good example. Nothing tends more to impede the progress of piety in a family than a continued bad example. Hence, in order to guard against it, and also to provide for the salvation of orphans and of the children of the poor, that might be placed by the providence of God in pious families, the covenant was made to embrace all under the permanent authority of believing parents. There was in this respect, one law to him that was home-born and to the stranger. This is a striking trait of benevolence exhibited in the covenant of circumcision, and nothing could be better calculated to bless the poor, and to propagate true piety.

Thus it is evident, that being placed permanently under the authority of believers, as being of their household, forms a connection with the church. Hence, the Savior said, "suffer the little children to come unto me ;—for of such is the kingdom of heaven." The households of believers are as really a part of the visible church as the households of citizens are a part of the nation. The children of a nation, when they come to maturity may renounce their allegiance to the government, and go to a foreign country, and so the children of the church, may when they arrive at maturity, break connection with their pious parents, step out of the church into the world, and throw off all allegiance to the King of Zion. They may

become rebels, but they never can release themselves from obligation. Whenever they break connection with their professing parents, without making a profession of religion, they break connection with the church. The parents are the officers through whom the church exercises discipline upon them, and when their authority ceases, the church cannot reach them by her discipline. They are branches broken off through unbelief, Rom. xi. 20. They may be grafted in again by faith, without which it is impossible to please God. All who continue to live without this, must sooner or later be cut off forever from the church, and banished from the favor of God, whatever may be the external tie that binds them now to his people.

Thus we see the nature of that connection which the households of believers sustain to the church. It is one that cannot be permanent beyond the continuance of parental authority unless by profession of faith,—“Thou standest by faith.” This is the everlasting bond of union, and without this none can be heirs of promise.

2. Believers inherit the privilege of consecrating their children to God, and of receiving the pledge of his promise in relation to their spiritual interests.

That such a privilege existed under the Jewish dispensation all will admit. The pious parent then, in the ordinance of circumcision,

set apart his children to the service of God ; but whether such a privilege now exists is matter of doubt with some who, we trust, are indeed the children of God, and who no doubt would highly esteem such a privilege, could they be satisfied that it is granted in the sacred oracles. This doubt has arisen from two sources. The one is improper views of the ordinance of circumcision. The other is the abuses that have attended household baptism. That the institution of household baptism has been greatly abused is readily admitted, but the same is equally true of the Lord's supper. Indeed there is no institution of religion that wicked men have not profaned. The abuse of an institution is no argument against it. Circumcision has been supposed by many to be a carnal ordinance, intended merely for national distinction. But against this there is the clearest evidence. The fact that this ordinance was not confined to the natural seed of Abraham proves that it was not intended for national distinction, and there are many facts to show that it did not seal the right to Canaan. The circumcision of Ishmael is one, and that of Abraham's servants is another. That it was not a carnal ordinance will be evident, if we consider,

1. That, as a purification, it signified the cleansing of the heart. Deut. x. 16: "Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart." Also, xxx. 6: "The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love

the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul." Jer. iv. 4: "Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskin of your heart." These passages show that circumcision represented the regeneration of the heart. As an emblem of regeneration it was "a seal of the righteousness of faith." Rom. iv. 11.

2. None but a true believer had a right to receive circumcision, either for himself or for his household. Abraham was a believer before he received circumcision for himself and for his household. He received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith, which he had, yet being uncircumcised: Rom. iv. 11. This shows that faith was necessary in order to the proper reception of circumcision, as it now is in order to baptism.

3. The same truth is evident from the nature of the ordinance. It was the emblem of regeneration, and "a seal of the righteousness of faith." This shows that the man who properly received it must have the things signified and sealed by it. He must be regenerated and have the righteousness of faith, in order that God may be his God, according to the promise sealed by circumcision; nor without these, could he inherit the second part of the promise sealed to him by the circumcision of his household. The sign of the father's regeneration, and the seal of the righteousness of his faith was put upon his household to seal to him the promise

that God would be the God of his seed. I have before shown that none but true believers are heirs of promise. Hence, none but a believer could properly have his household circumcised in order to seal to him the promise that God would be the God of his seed.

4. It is said the holy seed mingled themselves by marriage with the Gentiles, Ezra, ix. 1, 2. Some of the wives were daughters of Moab. This was contrary to the divine law which prohibited marriages with idolatrous women, and, therefore, they were required to put them away and the children born of them, Ezra, x. 3. The children born of them were not allowed to be consecrated to God. They were put away with their unbelieving mothers. But Boas married Ruth, a Moabitess, and from her descended the chosen family in Israel. And why this difference? Ruth had chosen the God of Israel for her God, and was eminently pious. Faith made her fit to be a mother in Israel. The children of a Jew by an unbelieving Gentile were counted unclean, that is, unfit to be consecrated to God, because it was unlawful for him to take such a wife.

But under the new dispensation, when a Gentile who was converted after marriage, while the husband or wife remained in unbelief, the seed was reckoned to the believing party. 1 Cor. vii. 14: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your chil-

dren unclean; but now are they holy." The unbelieving partner was not to be put away, because they had violated no law by their marriage, as the Jews had in the case mentioned. And the children were counted holy, that is, they might be consecrated to God as a holy seed: Ezra, ix. 2. That which may be consecrated to God is in Scripture called holy. Thus the children of believing parents are counted a holy seed. Hence none but a believer had a right to circumcision for his household. I use the term household, because although the females were not literally circumcised, yet they were reckoned as such, and were permitted to eat of the passover, of which, it is said, no uncircumcised person shall eat.

Hence, it is abundantly evident that a believer, and none but a believer, had a right to circumcision for himself and his household. The doctrine of the old Testament in relation to circumcision was the same with that of the new, in relation to baptism. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. The doctrine of the old was, he that believeth and is circumcised shall be saved. The just shall live by faith. "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised."

This view removes all difficulty with regard to the proper subjects of baptism. None but

a believer has a right to baptism, either for himself or his household. Circumcision and baptism are but different modes of administering the same seal. This will be evident if we consider,

1. That the covenant of circumcision is still in existence, as before shown. It is this covenant that constitutes Abraham the father of all them that believe, and consequently, it must continue so long as the christian system shall be promoted in the world. Then, inasmuch as the covenant still exists, it is reasonable to conclude that the seal still exists, and if it does, it is administered by baptism.

2. The seal was the sign of regeneration, and consisted in external cleansing. The blood and pain in circumcision were circumstances attending the removal of pollution, but constituted no part of the cleansing. The blood of a sinful being is no emblem of purity: the seal consisted in the external cleansing. The painful and bloody mode of cleansing was significant of the dispensation that preceded the sufferings of Christ. Baptism is an external cleansing, and as such an emblem of regeneration. "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." This, with a great many other passages in the new Testament, proves that baptism is the emblem of regeneration, just as circumcision was. Baptism and circumcision then are but different modes of administering the same seal, and significant of different dis-

pensations of the same covenant. Circumcision as a painful and bloody mode of administering the seal, was significant of the dispensation that preceded the sufferings of Christ. Hence, to receive it in its original design under the new dispensation, amounts to a denial that Christ suffered. Gal. v. 3, 4: "For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of none effect unto you." That is, the man that received the painful and bloody rite of circumcision, declared by that act that Christ had not suffered the penalty of the law, and having thus denied the atonement, he was a debtor to do the whole law. Baptism, as unattended with blood and pain, is significant of the new dispensation, and amounts to a declaration that Christ has suffered. Hence, it was necessary that such as had been circumcised under the old dispensation, should be baptized under the new. The new mode of administering the seal of covenant was an acknowledgment that Christ had suffered, and the refusal to receive this new mode, was in effect, a denial that he had fulfilled the demands of the broken law. Hence, on the day of pentecost, they who had been previously circumcised were baptized. The baptism then, of those that had been circumcised, forms no objection to the identity of the seal under both dispensations. The significancy and necessity of the different modes, form a sufficient reason for a repetition in the

case of those who lived under both dispensations.

3. Circumcision as the seal of the righteousness of faith, was for the remission of sins. It was a seal of the only righteousness through which the remission of sins can come, and therefore, it did seal to all true believers the remission of sins. Baptism seals the same righteousness to every true believer, and therefore is for the remission of sins. Acts, xxii. 16: "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts, ii. 38, 39: "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. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call."

According to these passages, in baptism there is a calling on the name of the Lord; and it is performed in the name of Christ who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Again, we are said to be baptized into Christ, and so "have put on Christ." Gal. iii. 27. Whether this be interpreted to mean spiritual, or water baptism, it is equally to the purpose. Water baptism is significant of that which is spiritual, and of course, it represents that by which the true believer is put into Christ, and puts on Christ; and by putting on Christ, he puts on his right-

eousness for the remission of sins. Hence, baptism is a seal of the righteousness of faith, as circumcision was, and is therefore, as expressly said in Scripture, "for the remission of sins." In this respect circumcision and baptism are the same.

4. Circumcision sealed the promise, and connected those, who received it, with Abraham. The same is true of baptism. "Repent and be baptized, every one, of you in the name of Jesus Christ.—For the promise is unto you, and to your children." "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.—And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise." Acts, ii. 38, 39.—Gal. iii. 27, 29. Here baptism stands connected with the promise embracing parents and children, just as circumcision did. And all that are baptized are children and heirs of Abraham, just as all circumcised were. This shows that baptism and circumcision are but different modes of administering the same seal.

5. The language and history in the new Testament in relation to baptism is such as the identity of the seal requires. Mark, xvi. 16: "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." Here the language is so framed as to suit the doctrine of household baptism. It is not, he that believeth, and *gets baptized*, but he that believeth, and *is baptized*.—Now, suppose a person baptized in infancy, and to-day

he believes, such a person has all that the text requires, he believes and he is baptized. Language could not be better framed to suit the practice of household baptism.

Again, the narratives of the practice of the apostles is just such as supposes the practice of household baptism. In the short narrative given, the baptism of a number of households, is stated. Cornelius and his household were baptized. Stephanes and his household, the jailor and his household, and Lydia and her household. This is just as if the practice in relation to circumcision and baptism were the same. We know that believers and their households were circumcised, and now the apostles baptize believers and their households. Is it not reasonable to conclude that the practice was the same in both cases? When I baptize a believer and his household, I practise as the apostles did; who can prove that I am wrong? If it be said that faith is required in order to baptism, I have already shown that faith was equally necessary to circumcision. It, like baptism, was a seal of the righteousness of faith, and was for the remission of sins. If it be urged that there were no infants belonging to those households, it may be replied that infants are not baptized because they are young, but because parts of believers' households. Ishmael was thirteen years old when he was circumcised, Gen. xvii. 25. All that permanently belong to a believer's household, and

are subject to his authority, or in other words, all children, real or adopted, were circumcised without regard to age: "He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money must needs be circumcised." This is the only law on the subject. It is true, the command was to circumcise children on the eighth day after birth, because previous to that day they were ceremonially unclean, and could not sooner be dedicated to God. But if any providence prevented its being done on the eighth day, it could be done at a later period. The object of the command was to have the child dedicated to God at the earliest period practicable. And this command should be carefully noticed by those parents who carry, or, might carry their children several times to the house of God before they dedicate them to him in baptism. Unnecessary delay is a violation of the divine command, and shows a want of due regard to the privileges of the holy covenant.

But to return to the point in hand: the child was not circumcised because there was any thing holy in its heart; but for the purpose of sealing to the parent God's promise to give it a new heart, and the righteousness of faith, and also to teach him that it needed these in order to salvation. Hence, there was the same reason for circumcising Ishmael at thirteen years of age, that there was for circumcising a child at eight days old. If a child had a holy nature, there would be no need of circumcising

it. It would need neither regeneration, nor the righteousness of faith. And of course the parent would need no promise respecting its salvation. It would be already safe. The circumcision then, of a believer's household regarded not the particular age of those composing it, but their fallen state, and their need of salvation, and the promise made in relation to their redemption through a Savior. It is not then necessary to enquire whether there were little infants in the households baptized by the apostles or not. They baptized believers and their households. I do the same; he that charges me with error in practice, is bound to prove his charge, in order to compel me to abandon such practice. This can never be done. The narrative in the case of Lydia, in particular, goes to show that she was the only believer in the family. "If ye have judged *me* to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there; and she constrained us." Acts, xvi. 15. She says, "if ye have judged *me*," not *us*. This is entirely natural on the supposition that she was the only professor belonging to the family, and altogether unnatural on the opposite supposition. Had there been other professors in the family, she would, doubtless, have included them with herself, and would have said, if ye have judged *us* to be faithful to the Lord. This would have given strength to her argument. As the brethren would naturally collect at the house

which Paul and Silas made their home, to meet them after they came out of prison, there is no reason to conclude, that those mentioned, Acts, xvi. 40. were of Lydia's household.

The language then, and the history in the new Testament in relation to baptism, are such as the practice of household baptism requires. And hence another argument for the identity of the seal under both dispensations.

6. All that has been said in relation to the identity of the seal, under different modes of administration, will be confirmed by proving the identity of the church, under the old and new dispensations. As this point involves the authority of the old testament scriptures and christian practice, under the new dispensation, it is necessary to extend the argument beyond what has been already said on the subject. I shall, therefore, first enquire whether there is any evidence against the identity of the church under the old and new dispensations. And, secondly, I shall present testimony to prove her identity under both dispensations.

1st. Is there any evidence against the identity of the church under the old and new dispensations? The following passage has been introduced as evidence against such identity; Dan. i. 44: "And in the days of these Kings, shall the God of Heaven set up a Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the Kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these

Kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." This is a prediction relative to the new dispensation. It was made at a time when Jerusalem and the temple were in ruins, and the people of God were captives in a foreign land. The church, then in her visible form, had fallen down so far that she never, during that dispensation, rose to her former eminence. The tabernacle of David had fallen down. The prediction then is, that the fallen kingdom shall be set up again, and break in pieces, and consume all those kingdoms by which it had been broken down, and oppressed, and that it should never be in the power of any kingdom to destroy it. It shall stand forever. A similar prediction is found in Amos, ix. 11, 12: "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old, that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this." This is expressly applied to the new dispensation, Acts, xv. 16, 17. It is admitted by all, that the setting up of the kingdom predicted by Daniel, was the setting up of what is now called the church. And according to the prediction of Amos, interpreted and applied in the Acts of the Apostles, the setting up of what is now called the church, was the setting up of the tabernacle of David that had fallen down. The setting up then of a

kingdom in Daniel, cannot possibly mean the originating of a kingdom, but merely the setting up of one that had fallen down. The prediction of Amos, as applied by an inspired apostle, proves most decidedly, the previous existence of what is now called the church. Thus far there appears to be no evidence against the identity of the church under the old and new dispensations.

Again, it is urged, that John's declaration that the kingdom of Heaven is at hand, Mat. iii. 1, militates against the previous existence of what is now called the church. To this it may be replied, that there are special reasons for calling the church under the new dispensation, the kingdom of Heaven. Previous to that time she was in a minor state, and kept under the law as a schoolmaster; Gall. iii. 23, 24; and iv. 1, 2. She, as an heir, was under governors and tutors; but then her king came, and liberated her from the law as a schoolmaster, and abolished the system of tutelage under which she had been placed. She now arrived at mature age, and her Lord became more directly her king and head. Thus the church is called, more appropriately, the kingdom of heaven under the new, than under the old dispensation. At the commencement of the new dispensation, her king appeared visibly in her, and her system of law was completed, and she received that maturity which prepared her for the dominion, and the greatness of the dominion under the

whole heaven. Hence, with the utmost propriety, the coming of that period of her maturity is called the coming of the kingdom of heaven. All this is perfectly consistent with the identity of the church under the old and new dispensations. Against such identity, there is no evidence.

2d. I am to present testimony in favor of the identity of the church under both dispensations.

1st. The same general covenant now exists, that existed under the former dispensation.— Paul argues that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after it, could not disannul it, so as to make the promise of none effect; Gall. iii. 17. And he also represents all believers as children and heirs of Abraham, according to the promise contained in this covenant. Hence, Abraham is the father of all them that believe, under both dispensations. This shows decidedly the identity of the church under both dispensations.

2d. Promises made to those under the old, are fulfilled to those under the new, as being the same people; Acts, iii. 22. Moses truly said, “unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.” The same people are recognized as still existing, and having the promise fulfilled to them. The same is true of all the promises fulfilled under the new dispensation, as well as all yet to be fulfilled;

they all imply the continued existence of the people to whom they were made, and of course, prove the identity of the church under the old and new dispensations.

3d. The prophets, when predicting the conversion of the Gentiles, represent them as being added to the church that then existed; Isaiah, ii. 2: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." Isa. lx. 3, 4, 5: "The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.—All they gather themselves together, they come to thee:—The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, and the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee." These are a specimen of the many passages that might be quoted to the same purpose. They prove beyond the possibility of a doubt, that the Gentiles under the new dispensation are to be added to the church that existed under the old, and thus prove her identity under both.

4th. John the Baptist teaches the same doctrine. Matt. iii. 10, 12: "The axe is laid to the root of the trees;—therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.—Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into his garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

By these two figures he shows that Christ will purge but not destroy his church. As the husbandman goes through his fields and cuts down every useless tree that cumber his ground, so the Lord Jesus Christ cuts off from his church all unfruitful members. This implies that fruitful members are spared, and the existence of the church continued; for he would, of the stones that lay on the earth, make children of Abraham to fill up his church sooner than let his promise fail.

Again, as the husbandman comes into his barn floor with his fan, and separates the chaff from his wheat, and burns it with fire, and puts his wheat into a garner; so the Lord will come into his church, and separate the barren members from the fruitful. The one class he finally casts into hell, and the other he gathers into heaven. The fruitful members are spared until ripe for heaven. The church then is purged but not destroyed. Hence it is said, "who may abide the day of his coming? Who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like refiner's fire, and fuller's soap." Mal. iii. 2. The church shall be purged, the wicked Jews shall be cast out, and the Gentiles shall be gathered in.

5th. Our Lord teaches the same truth. Matt. viii. 11, 12: "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness."

In this passage heaven cannot be meant, for the children of that kingdom are never cast out. The church must be meant, and the very church of which the Jews were members, for they were to be cast out into outer darkness, that is, the darkness that is in the world, and if they had not been in they would not have been cast out. The occasion on which this declaration was made shows what was meant. A centurion that had been brought up a heathen, exhibited greater faith than had been found in Israel. This was a strong indication that God was about to gather the Gentiles into the church and cast out the Jews. The Gentiles shall come from the east and west into the church, and settle down under the charter given to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, as the constitution of the kingdom, for each of these held the covenant in succession; but the Jews, the children of this kingdom, shall be cast out into that darkness that is without the church, and the most terrible judgments of God shall come upon them, especially in the unparalleled destruction of Jerusalem, and hence there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Thus we see that the Gentiles were gathered into the very kingdom or church out of which the Jews were cast, just as the prophets had foretold.

Again, our Lord teaches the same thing in the parable of the vineyard, Matt. xxi. 33—43. A householder planted a vineyard, and let it out to husbandmen who refused to give him the

fruits of it, and after other deeds of wickedness they murdered his son. In the judgment of the Jews themselves, the owner of the vineyard will miserably destroy those wicked men, and let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, who shall render him the fruits in their season. The application shows what was intended. "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." The Jews shall be cast out of the church, and be miserably destroyed, and the Gentiles shall be gathered into it. If the Jews had not possessed the kingdom, it could not have been taken from them. The very kingdom taken from the Jews, was given to the Gentiles. Moses predicted that every soul which will not hear Christ as a prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. This shows that only the Jews, who rejected the Savior, were to be destroyed from among the people. Of course, the people from among whom they were destroyed, remained in the church. Hence it is evident that the same church existed under both dispensations.

6th. It is said that Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it. Eph. v. 25. That he purchased it with his own blood. Acts, xx. 28. And again, it is said, that his death was for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, or dispensation. Heb. ix. 15. This shows that the same church existed under both dispensations.

7th. The apostle Paul teaches, that the Gentiles are brought into the same church that existed among the Jews. Rom. xi. 17—25. He represents the unbelieving part of the Jews, as branches broken off from the good olive tree, and the Gentiles as branches of the wild olive tree, grafted into the same tree from which some of the Jewish branches were broken off, and that too among the Jewish branches that remained. For only some of the branches were broken off. He also says, that the Jews broken off, shall be grafted in again, “into their own olive tree.” The good olive tree, then, is still living. The believing Gentiles are grafted into it, and supported by it, and the unbelieving Jews shall yet be inserted into it by faith in their promised Messiah. Can any thing be more evident than the identity of the church under the old and new dispensations?

Again, Paul teaches the same truth, in another form, Eph. ii. 11—22. The Gentiles are represented as having been far off, without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now they are made nigh by the blood of Christ, and in common with the Jews, they have “access by one spirit unto the father.” They are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ

himself being the chief corner *stone*, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord. This shows that the Gentiles were added to the church that existed under the old dispensation. The apostles are added to the prophets, and Jews and Gentiles unite on them as one common foundation, and all the building rests upon Christ, the chief corner stone, under both dispensations. Prophets and apostles alike, are founded on him. Who can, in view of this, doubt the identity of the church, under the old and new dispensations ?

8th. The church, under the new dispensation, is guided and governed by the old Testament scriptures. The authority of prophets is equal to that of apostles. The church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. The Savior himself recognizes the authority of the old Testament scriptures. Math. v. 17, 18, 19 : “ Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets. I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” Nothing shall pass from the law and the prophets till all be ful-

filled, but the law and the prophets are not yet fulfilled, nor will they be to the end of time. Of course they will continue to guide and govern the church, until the last prophecy shall have been fulfilled.

Again, whosoever shall break even the least commandment of the law, under the new dispensation, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven, that is, least in the church. From this it is evident that the law is to govern the church after the old dispensation is passed away. To this it may be added, that Christ enjoined upon the Jews the duty of searching the old Testament scriptures, and assigns as a reason for it "They testify of me." John, v. 39.

Paul teaches the same with regard to the old Testament scriptures. He calls them "the holy scriptures." Rom. i. 2. He says, Rom. iii. 31: "Do we then make void the law? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." He abhorred the idea of abolishing the law. He established the doctrines of faith and justification by the imputation of righteousness, by the ancient scriptures, Rom. chap. iv. and Gal. chap. iii. He likewise decides by them the real divinity of the Savior in the first chapter of his epistle to the Hebrews. He tells Timothy that, "from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation." The old Testament scriptures then, under the new dispensation, are able to

make a man wise unto salvation. He declares that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. This establishes most decidedly the authority of the old Testament scriptures as a rule of faith and practice. Indeed, the Savior and his apostles continually appealed to them to justify both what they did and taught. This accords with what Paul says in his defence before Agrippa. Acts, xxvi. 22, 23: "Having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles." He taught and did nothing but what was in strict accordance with the old Testament scriptures. Hence what is now called the church, is governed by the scriptures that were given under the old dispensation. The new Testament is but an extension and development of the principles contained in the old. Christianity is the same religion that existed among the Jews. Christians and Jews are alike called the chosen people of God, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, the church. Nothing can be more evident than

the identity of the church, under the old and new dispensations. And if the same covenant and the same church exist under both dispensations, it is reasonable to conclude that the same seal exists under both. The seal I have shown consisted in outward cleansing, which was the sign of the cleansing of the heart; the mode of cleansing were different, but the thing signified has ever been the same. Baptism, therefore, is but a new mode of giving the seal that was formerly given by circumcision, and as such significant of the new dispensation. Believing parents, then, inherit the privilege of consecrating their children, real or adopted, to God by the washing of water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The doctrine is plainly this: The believer, and none but the believer, has a right to baptism for himself and for his household. The promise made to him in the covenant contains two parts. I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee. The one part is sealed to him by his own baptism, the other is sealed to him by the baptism of his household. Take the case of the jailor for illustration. The promise was tendered to him; "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house." This is substantially the promise given to Abraham. Thou shalt be saved, is sealed to him by his own baptism. Thy house shall be saved, is sealed to him by the baptism of his household. His own baptism is the sign of

is regeneration, and a seal of the righteousness of faith. The sign of his regeneration, and the seal of the righteousness of his faith, is put upon his household as a pledge on the part of God that he is willing to give them the same regeneration and righteousness of faith, that he has given to their father, and so to be their God, as he is their father's God. It also teaches the parent that regeneration and the righteousness of faith are necessary to the salvation of his household, and it presents to him a strong inducement to provide for them the means of grace,—especially as parental instruction is implied in the promise as a condition. That such condition actually existed in the case of Abraham when the covenant was first given and sealed, is evident from an injunction given him, and a statement made respecting him. ‘Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou and thy seed after thee.’ “I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he has spoken of him.” Thus we see that parental instruction is indispensable to securing the blessing, promised and sealed to Abraham in relation to his seed. If Abraham do not command his children and household after him, they will not keep the Lord, to do justice and judgment, and therefore he will not bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

Parental instruction, then, stands connected with the promise, sealed by household baptism as the channel through which the blessing is to flow down to the seed of the righteous. Hence the duty of instructing children is most carefully enjoined both in the old and new Testaments. Deut. vi. 6, 7: "These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Eph. vi. 4: "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." And to the fulfillment of these injunctions the strongest inducements are presented. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Prov. xxii. 6. The way he should go, is the way to heaven. Nothing could be better adapted to the fallen condition of man than the covenant of circumcision. It takes hold of the strongest principles of human nature. By pious parents and their household were organized into a little church, over which the parents presided as rulers and teachers, and the pledge was given in the ordinance of circumcision, that God would bless their government and instructions to the salvation of their children, both real and adopted. "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in

their generations, for an everlasting covenant; to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." These are the greatest blessings that can be bestowed on man. The solemn seal is annexed as God's pledge that he will stand to his promise. He commands the children to be set apart for him. "He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised." All children, real and adopted, all subject to government and instruction, must alike be consecrated to God. The females were accounted circumcised as well as the males; for they eat of the passover, of which no uncircumcised person might eat. The whole family was covered by the gracious pledge. The business of the parents was to bring them up for God. Thus the family of the pious was made the garden of the Lord, in which the plants of righteousness were reared up to everlasting life. The parents were stimulated to labor by the expectation of meeting their precious charge around the throne of God. In this way the current of salvation has been made to roll down from age to age, and thousands of orphans, and the children of the poor and wretched have, by the providence of God, been gathered into it, and borne on by it to the world of glory. Hence, painful and bloody as was the rite of circumcision, it was ever cherished by the pious as one of the highest privileges bestowed on the children of God. But now the Savior has come, and endured the

dreadful penalty of the broken law, painful rites are no longer needful; now the gracious pledge is given in a milder form; now christian parents consecrate their households to God by the washing of water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Should we not now cherish the privilege the more, since Christ has abolished its painful and bloody form? The covenant, the privilege, and the seal are still the same. Why should they not be? What good reason can be given for abolishing a system better than all others calculated to promote true religion? Why break down the hedge that encloses the garden of the Lord? Why root up the plants of righteousness which the Lord himself planted in days of old? Why break down the asylum into which the orphan and the children of the poor and wretched have been gathered from age to age, and brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? Why take away one of the strongest incentives to parental duty? Why touch the sacred hope that sweetens all the toil of parental care? All the reasons that existed for the promise and the seal, under the old dispensation, still exist. Human nature is the same in every age. There is the same necessity now that ever existed, for bringing up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The relation between parents and children is the same in every period of the world. Parents now as ardently desire the salvation of

their children as at any former time. They need the same promise, the same seal, and the same incentives to parental duty, as in days of old. There is the same reason for household baptism, that there was for household circumcision, and it is equally calculated to promote piety. And against it, when fairly stated, there can be no reasonable objection. Baptism is not, as some have superstitiously supposed, administered to little infants because they cannot believe for themselves, or because that the parents' faith is substituted for that which the infant cannot exercise for itself; or because it is supposed that the child cannot be saved without baptism. Nothing can be more absurd than such notions. No such substitution takes place, nor is an infant baptized because it cannot be saved without it. There is reason to hope that all infants dying in infancy, whether children of believers or others, are regenerated and saved through the merits of Christ. The power of God to save, is not confined to external forms even of his own appointment. How often do the children of true believers die without the possibility of baptism? The salvation of infants dying in infancy is not by charm, but by the power of the Holy Ghost. Neither are little infants baptized because they are sinlessly perfect; for in that case they would need neither regeneration nor the righteousness of faith, of which baptism is the sign and seal to the true believer, and which are the things sealed

to him in the baptism of his household. In plain words, they would not need the salvation sealed to parents in household baptism. In these two absurd notions, have originated nearly all the abuses of the ordinance of household baptism that have so often disgraced and injured the church; and which have been the only successful arguments against this sacred institution. Infants, then, are not baptized, because either incapable of believing for themselves, or because they are sinlessly perfect, or even because they are young; but because they belong to a believer's household. Ishmael was thirteen years of age when he was circumcised. He was capable of believing for himself long before that age. Nor are they baptized to give them a right to the Lord's supper. They can have no right to that ordinance until they believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor are they baptized because they have any good in them beyond others. They are, "by nature, children of wrath, even as others," and can in themselves, have no claim to any privilege whatever. But they are beloved for their father's sake. The doctrine, then, is plainly this: a believer, as an heir of Abraham through Christ, has a right to the ordinance of baptism for himself and his household. He has the privilege of thus consecrating his household to God, and having the sign of his own regeneration, and the seal of the righteousness of his faith, put upon his household, as the pledge

that God is willing to give his household the same regeneration and righteousness of faith that he has given to himself, and so, be their God, as he is their father's God. And the parent's example, government, prayers and instructions are to be the means through which God will bestow these blessings upon his children. The gracious seal of the covenant is put upon every member of his household, and thus he is taught to labor alike for every one of them, hoping, through divine assistance, to be the means of saving all of them. While he labors to bring them all up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, he is animated by the hope of meeting every one of them in heaven. What reasonable objection can there be to such an institution? What can be better calculated to secure the discharge of parental duty? And is the covenant the less gracious, because it grants believers such a privilege? The utility of such an institution must be obvious. Every time a child, or a household, is baptized, the duty of parental instruction is urged, and urged too upon the same individual, as often as he dedicates a child to God. This cannot fail to produce a good effect, and hence all those denominations who practice household baptism in a proper manner, do pay more attention to the instruction of children than others.

I have been thus particular in explaining the doctrine of household baptism for two purposes. The one was to remove from pious people those

objections which have arisen from improper views of the nature of the institution. The other was to show that the institution is consistent with the covenant of circumcision, being the covenant of grace. The baptism of the household seals nothing to the children, but to their believing parents. Believers alone are heirs of Abraham. The blessings which they inherit for their children, are as truly of grace as those which regard their own salvation. And the blessings sealed are on condition of the discharge of parental duty, as before shown, and therefore never secure the salvation of any children, but those who are regenerated, and have the righteousness of faith. The seal is no more infallible than the promise it seals. Whatever is implied in the promise, "I will be a God to thy seed after thee," or as given to the jailer, "thy house shall be saved," is sealed. If this promise be conditional, the seal of it is conditional; but if it be absolute or unconditional, then the seal of it is the same. God's promise is infallibly true, whether sealed or not, and will always be faithfully performed. The fact, then, that all Abraham's natural descendants were not saved, shows that some condition existed, and with that condition it was sealed.

The question now arises, what is sealed to the man who makes a false, but credible profession of faith, and receives baptism? I answer, with men, because they cannot judge the heart: he must hold all the external privi-

ages of the church, upon the presumption of his being a true believer, unless he forfeit them by neglect of external duty, or by scandalous conduct; but in the sight of God he is an intruder upon the holy covenant, and not a single blessing is either promised or sealed to him. In his sight neither "circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth any thing, but a new creature." "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men but of God." God nowhere encourages men to make a false profession of religion. Philip baptized the eunuch upon the presumption of true faith. "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest," Acts, viii. 37. The unbeliever, then, has no right to baptism. But as God has authorized his ministers to administer baptism upon a credible profession of faith, the ordinance when thus administered is valid for all church purposes. Its validity in this respect depends upon God's appointment, and not upon the virtue either of him that administers, or of him that receives it. The man who fraudulently obtains a county seal, may, with those who cannot detect his fraud, obtain all the advantages of that seal; so a man, by false profession, may obtain the seal of God's covenant, and by it obtain among men, who cannot judge his heart,

and so detect his fraud, all the external privileges of the church. Should such a man repent of his sin, and believe on the Savior, he would then become an heir of what he had before fraudulently obtained. It becomes properly his own when he believes. So, the baptism of those who were baptized, as belonging to households of believers, becomes properly their own when they truly believe. They at first received it as inherited for them by their parents, and not by fraud, and it becomes truly their own by faith. The baptism then administered to households cannot entitle them to full privileges in the church, without a credible profession of faith. Baptism is the sign of regeneration, and can finally avail nothing for salvation, without the thing signified by it. And as a man is regenerated but once, so he is baptized but once. Another objection demands a short notice. It is said that because the covenant of circumcision promises temporal blessings, it cannot be the covenant of grace. To this it may be replied, that man, by his apostasy, forfeited temporal as well as spiritual blessings. The curse of the law would deprive him of every blessing, were it not for the counteracting influence of the covenant of grace. Fallen man must be fed and clothed, as well as saved, by grace. Temporal blessings, being essential to man's existence on earth, are indispensable to the operation of this system of grace. Hence, had not the covenant provided

for man's natural existence, it could not have dispensed to him spiritual blessings. The covenant of grace is intended to operate upon the world, down to the remotest period of time, and for that reason the world must be preserved. And in this sense all the families of the earth are to be blessed in the seed of Abraham. His family is to be collected out of every nation, and it will ultimately include the whole world; and there is such a natural relation between his children and the rest of mankind, that temporal blessings cannot flow to the former without extending to the latter. Indeed the one cannot exist without the other. The whole world must be put under a dispensation of grace. The sun must rise on the evil and the good, and the rain must descend upon the just and the unjust. All these blessings flow through the sufferings of Christ. All temporal blessings are of grace. It is reasonable to believe that the covenant of grace promises blessings for both worlds. Hence the old and new Testaments abound with promises of temporal blessings. A few specimens may be profitable. Psalm, xxxvii. 3, 25: "Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. I have been young, and now am old; I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Matt. vi. 33: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. v. 5: "Blessed

are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." 1 Tim. iv. 8: "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Will any one say that these promises and blessings are not from the covenant of grace? The covenant of circumcision promises the Savior, the source of all blessings both temporal and eternal; hence it promises all the grace bestowed upon man. It proffers to him the kingdom of glory, and all the provisions necessary on his way to the crown. God will be his God, to bless him in time, and crown him with glory in eternity. What covenant could promise more? Can such a covenant as this be abolished? Can God ever cease to be the God of Abraham and his seed? Can all these precious promises, ratified in blood, and by solemn oath, fail? Never! while there is virtue in a Savior's blood, truth in Jehovah's heart, or strength in his arm. The covenant is everlasting, the believer's privileges are safe, and his hope stable as the throne of God. "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will towards men."

BAPTISM.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PROPER MODE OF ADMINISTERING BAPTISM.

As baptism is a divine institution, it is reasonable to suppose that the scriptures contain all that is necessary to be known in relation to the mode in which it should be administered, and that there is no need of an appeal to heathen authors in order to understand a christian ordinance. It is well known that the Greeks used the word *baptizo* in a variety of senses, and with a considerable latitude of meaning. It is not probable that the sacred writers used it in all that variety of meaning found in classic authors. The sense in which the new Testament writers use the verb *baptizo*, baptize, and the noun *baptismos*, baptism, must be ascertained by the facts and circumstances connected with the use of them. We should then enquire what would the facts and circumstances connected with the use of these words prove to one ignorant of all modes of baptism. Then let us enquire,

I. Whether there are any facts and circumstances to prove that *baptizo*, as used in the new Testament, means immerse, and that *baptismos* means immersion.

The first passage that claims notice is Matt.

iii. 5, 6: "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." Now what would this passage prove to one ignorant of all modes of baptism? What action did John perform in Jordan? Did he immerse? Did he wash by rubbing? or, did he pour large quantities of water upon the people? or, did he sprinkle them? He may have done some one of these, but which of them did he do? To one accustomed to seeing persons immersed, the passage would seem to give the impression that John immersed the Jews; but such impression arises from the practice he has witnessed, and not from the sacred text. To one ignorant of all modes of baptism it would give no such impression. The immense number that John baptized is against immersion. The mass of the nation were baptized—Jerusalem, all Judea, and the region round about Jordan came to his baptism. Is it reasonable to believe that John stood in the water to immerse a nation? The sacred writer asserts that they "were all baptized of him in Jordan." All was done by John himself. The strength of one man was not sufficient to immerse such a multitude. Nor could he have washed by rubbing a number so immense, nor even poured large quantities of water upon each individual of them. That he baptized them by a gentle effusion is the most that the facts will sustain. No circumstances are mentioned that

favor immersion. Had it been said that John laid them down in the water, and raised them up again out of it; or had any thing been said about the people being wet, or changing clothes, we might have supposed John sustained by miracle to immerse so great a multitude. But not a single circumstance is presented that in the slightest degree supposes immersion.

From the Greek scriptures there is no evidence that John was in the water. The Greek preposition *en*, translated IN, means AT as well as IN. Rom. viii. 34: "Who is even at the right hand of God." The word rendered AT in this passage is *en*. Heb. xii. 2: "And is set down (*en*) at the right hand of the throne of God." The passage then in Matthew might have been translated thus: "And were baptized of him at Jordan." And that it ought to have been so translated appears from the fact, that John baptized beyond Jordan, and not in it. John, i. 28: "These things were done in Bethabara, beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing." John, x. 40: "And went away again beyond Jordan, into the place where John at first baptized." These passages show that John baptized beyond Jordan, and not in it. Hence the preposition *en* in this place should have been translated AT, and not IN. They were baptized of him at Jordan, and not in it.

The facts and circumstances in this case are decidedly against immersion.

The baptism of our Savior now claims atten-

tion. Matt. iii. 16: "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straitway out of the water." The translation represents the Savior as having been in the water, but the Greek is, "*kai baptis-
theis o Jesus, anebe euthus apo tou udatos.*" "And Jesus being baptized, ascended immediately from the water." The preposition *apo*, translated OUT OF, means FROM, and is so translated in Matt. iii. 7: "Who hath warned you to flee (*apo*) from the wrath to come." The Savior then was baptized at Jordan, but not in it. John baptized beyond Jordan, at the other side of it, and not in it.

Now let us enquire why was the Savior baptized? and why was it delayed until he was "about thirty years of age," Luke, iii. 21—23; and what law of the old dispensation required him to be baptized? At thirty years of age he entered upon his priestly office, and the law of that dispensation required the priests to be set apart by washing with water. Exod. xl. 12: "And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and wash them with water." John was the son of a priest, and as such, a proper person to wash the Savior, and thus consecrate him to the priestly office; and immediately after he was set apart to that office by washing with water, he was literally anointed by the Holy Spirit, the thing signified by anointing the priests with oil. The Savior needed no repentance, and, of course, was not, as others,

baptized unto repentance. He was baptized because it became him to fulfill all righteousness. There was some requisition of the dispensation under which he lived, that required his baptism. What could this be but the law that required the priests to be set apart to their office, by washing with water?—and he was now thirty years of age, the proper age for entering upon that office.

It is reasonable, then, to conclude, that John washed the Savior as Moses washed Aaron and his sons, when he set them apart to the priestly office. There is not the least evidence that the Savior was immersed.

John, iii. 23, is worthy of some notice: “And John also was baptizing in Ænon, near to Salem, because there was much water there; and they came, and were baptized.” The Greek is “*polla udata*,” many waters, from which it seems that Ænon abounded with springs, and, of course, was very suitable for holding meetings so large as those held by John. The vast numbers that attended John’s ministry, made it necessary that he should hold his meetings for baptism in places that abounded with water; for this reason he selected Ænon as a place of baptism, and not on account of the mode in which he baptized. This passage proves nothing with respect to the mode in which John baptized.

The baptism of the eunuch now claims our notice. Acts, viii. 38, 39: “And they went

down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip."

Now admitting just what the translation says, that both went down into the water, and came up out of the water, still, to one ignorant of all modes of baptism it would not prove immersion. The circumstances do not determine what Philip did. Nothing is said about laying the eunuch down in the water, or lifting him out of it. Not a word is said about the eunuch being wet, or changing his clothes. Had Philip intended to wash a part or the whole of the body, or to pour a large quantity of water upon the eunuch, he would as certainly have gone into the water as if he had intended to immerse him; consequently, going into the water does not prove what was done in the water. There is, then, no proof that Philip immersed the eunuch.

From the Greek there is no evidence that Philip and the eunuch went into the water. *Katebesan amphotoi eis to udor*; they both descended to the water. *Eis* translated INTO, is, in Matt. iii. 11; translated UNTO. "I indeed baptize you with water unto (*eis*) repentance." In John, xx. 3, 4, 5, *eis* is translated TO, and must mean TO; "And came to (*eis*) the sepulchre." "The other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to (*eis*) the sepulchre—yet went he not in." He came TO the

sepulchre, but went not in. This shows that *eis*, in this place, means 'TO. Hence "they both descended to the water," is a correct translation. *Ote de anebesan ek tou udatos*; "And when they were ascended FROM the water." This is a literal translation. In Matt. iii. 17, *ek* is translated FROM. "And lo, a voice (*ek*) from heaven." Mark, i. 11: "And there came a voice (*ek*) from heaven." *Eis* means UNTO and TO, as well as INTO, and *ek* means FROM as well as OUT OF. Consequently it never can be proved by these words that Philip and the eunuch were in the water. They both descended from the chariot to the water, and Philip baptized the eunuch. This they would have done to baptize in any mode. There is no reason to believe that the eunuch would either sit in his chariot, or stand on the bank, until Philip should have brought up water to baptize him. For both, in such a case, to descend to the water, was natural, supposing that the baptism was performed by effusion. They did just what they would have done, baptizing in any mode whatsoever. Their descending to the water, in such circumstances, is no evidence in favor of one mode more than another. There is then, in the baptism of the eunuch, no proof in favor of immersion.

Let us now examine Rom. vi. 3, 4: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? therefore we are buried with him, by baptism,

into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Some suppose that this alludes to baptism by immersion, but for such supposition there is no reason; there is no likeness between immersion and the burial of Christ. He was laid in a sepulchre, a room hewn out in a rock, and was not covered in the ground with clay, as we now cover dead bodies. There is no resemblance between laying a dead body in a room, and immersing a living person in water. In addition to this, it is evident that spiritual baptism is meant. To purify with water is to baptize, and to purify with the spirit is to baptize; hence purification, whether by water or by the spirit, is, in the scriptures, called baptism. To be baptized into Christ is to be united to him by regeneration. Let us ask the question, how are we baptized into Christ? Paul answers, "by one spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles." 1 Cor. xii. 13: "And because that one body was crucified, dead and buried, we are said to be crucified, dead and buried with it, and as it was raised by the glory of the Father; even so we, by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, arise to newness of life." The baptism of the spirit constitutes such a oneness between us and Christ, that we are represented as suffering, dying, being buried, and rising with him. Paul argues that we cannot live in

sin, because we are baptized into Christ. If he meant water baptism, then his argument is, we cannot live in sin because we are baptized with water. Who can believe that an inspired apostle would argue, that, because baptized with water, we cannot live in sin? Some of the worst sinners on earth are baptized with water.

There is no likeness between the burial of Christ and any mode of baptism; and spiritual, and not water baptism, is intended in the passage. Hence it is abundantly evident that it contains no proof of immersion.

None of the passages we have considered, contain any evidence of immersion, nor can any passages be produced from the new Testament that will prove, to one ignorant of all modes of baptism, that either John the Baptist or the apostles baptized by immersion.

II. The facts in the new Testament are against immersion.

1. John is represented as having himself baptized the inhabitants of Jerusalem, of Judea, and of the region round about Jordan. It appears that he had no assistance from his disciples, they "were all baptized of him." "I indeed," says he, "baptize you with water." He alone is called the Baptist, or more correctly, the Baptizer. No one man, unless sustained by miracle, could have immersed so many as John baptized. But "John did no miracle." The facts, in the case of John, are clearly against immersion. That he baptized

by a general effusion, or sprinkling, as Moses sprinkled the book and all the people, is more probable than any thing else. That he should have immersed a nation is incredible.

2. Three thousand were baptized on the day of Pentecost, Acts, ii. 41: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls." From this it is evident, that three thousand gladly received the word, and were baptized. Peter began to preach at the third hour of the day, our nine o'clock. It appears he preached a long time. Three thousand that had come together by the promptings of curiosity, were converted, received, and baptized on the same day. They had come without change of clothes. Nor is there the least probability that there was water convenient, sufficient to immerse three thousand persons, and if there had been, there was not time to receive their profession and immerse them. That the three thousand were immersed is wholly incredible. Such a fact is decidedly against immersion.

3. The baptism of Cornelius and others with him seems to preclude the idea of immersion. Acts, x. 47, 48: "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." Can any forbid water, is an expression not likely to be used with re-

spect to a river, or a large quantity of water necessary to immersion. Can any man forbid a cup of water, the little quantity necessary to baptize these persons, is natural, and is the idea conveyed. These ought to be baptized, and who can forbid us the use of a little water for that purpose. And the baptism seems to have been so immediately performed as to preclude the idea of immersion. The passage is against immersion.

4. The baptism of the jailer and his household is against the belief that the apostles immersed. Acts xvi. 33: "And he took them the same hour of the night and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his household." The baptism was performed somewhere within the walls of the prison; for it appears that the apostles would not go out until the magistrates brought them out, Acts, xvi. 35—39. The baptism was performed immediately, in the building of the prison of which the jailer's house formed a part, and consequently, there is no probability that the jailer and his household were immersed.

5. The baptism of Paul is against the idea that immersion was practiced by the apostles. Acts, ix. 17, 18: "And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him, said, brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the

Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." Greek, *anastas ebaptisthe*—being risen up, he was baptized. A similar account is given, Acts, xxii. 16: "And now, why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." These passages show that Paul was either sitting or lying in a house, and that upon rising, he was baptized. In this case, immersion cannot be supposed. Paul was certainly baptized standing in a house.

The facts then in the new Testament are against immersion.

III. In the usage of the new Testament writers the verb *baptizo*—baptize—does not mean immerse, nor does the noun *baptismos*—baptism—mean immersion; I mean they do not use *baptizo* in the sense of immerse, nor *baptismos* in the sense of immersion. Whatever *baptizo* means in other books, in the new Testament it never means immerse, nor does *baptismos* mean immersion. *Baptizo* uniformly means cleanse or purify, and *baptismos* cleansing or purification.

1st. That *baptizo* means purify is evident from Matt. iii. 11: "I indeed baptize you with water—but—he shall baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire." To baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire, is to purify with the Holy Ghost and with fire. In regenera-

tion the Holy Ghost purifies from the pollution of sin. Hence the expression "the washing of regeneration," Tit. iii. 5. Fire purifies metals, and therefore fire is a fit emblem of purity. John's was "the baptism of repentance," Acts, xix. 4. He preached repentance, that is, reformation. His baptism was significant of reformation, which is spiritual purification. Hence he says, "I indeed purify you with water unto repentance, but—he shall purify you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Purify is here a fair translation of the word *baptizo*. For whatever was John's mode of baptism, in baptizing, he purified the people. His baptism was a purification.

2d. The same is evident from Mark, vii. 2, 3, 4: "And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, (that is to say, unwashen) hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash *their* hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And *when they come* from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and tables."

Fault was charged upon the disciples because they eat with defiled hands; they did not wash according to the tradition of the elders. The Pharisees and all the Jews washed their hands often before eating, or, as it may be translated, ("*pugme nipsontai tas heirus*") they wash-

ed their hands carefully. And when they come from the market, (*me baptisontai*) unless they are baptized, they eat not. They also held many other things, such as the (*baptismous*) baptism of cups, pots, brazen vessels, and (*clinon*) couches, as it should have been translated.

This passage shows that *baptizo* is used as *nipito*, wash, and that *baptismos* is used to signify washing. Hence, our translators rendered *baptisontai*, wash, and *baptismous*, washing.

These several washings were purifications. Whatever may have been the mode of washing, the design was to purify from defilement. The fault found with the disciples was, that they did not purify their hands; but eat with them defiled. The sacred writer introduced the customs of all the Jews to illustrate the ground of charge against the disciples. They did not purify themselves from defilement, as the customs of all the Jews required, and these customs were handed down from the ancients; they were the traditions of the elders. This passage is clearly against immersion. *Nipsontai* and *baptisontai* are alike used to signify wash. This is confirmed by Luke, xi. 38: "And when the Pharisee saw it, he marveled that he had not first (*ebaptisthe*) washed before dinner." Mark says, "except they (*nipsontai*) wash their hands oft they eat not," and Luke says, "the Pharisee marveled that (*ebaptisthe*) he had

not washed before dinner." The very custom of washing before eating, mentioned by Mark, is here introduced. The Savior eat with defiled hands, as the disciples had done, and the Pharisee marveled that he had not been baptized before dinner. This shows clearly, that *baptizo* is used as *nip̄to*, wash. And it shows that *baptizo* is in the new Testament used as we use the English word purify. The Pharisee marveled that the Savior had not purified himself before dinner, as the tradition of the elders required. The Savior reproved the Pharisee for making clean the outside to the neglect of the inside. The Pharisees purified the outside with water, while within they were "full of ravening and wickedness." Luke, xi. 39.

The passage in Luke shows, that *baptizo* does not mean immerse. Even in Campbell's Testament, it is not in this place translated immerse, and this is an admission that *baptizo* does at least, in one place in the new Testament, mean wash, and if so, it never can be proved that immersion is commanded. If *baptizo* means, as Campbell's Testament represents it, both to immerse and wash, then washing is as much commanded as immersion. But it has been shown that there is no proof that *baptizo* means immerse, as used in the new Testament. The usage of Mark and Luke, in the passages now under consideration, are decidedly against immersion.

According to the statements of Mark, the baptisms were for the purpose of cleansing. Immersing a thing in water merely wets it, and does not wash it. Immersing hands in water is not washing them. It is rubbing and rinsing with water that constitutes washing. Friction is necessary to remove pollution. Hence, the application of water by rubbing, is commonly called washing. Rinsing a thing, by tossing it in water, or by pouring water upon it, is also washing, because there is in it friction sufficient to remove pollution. But immersion is not rinsing; there is not friction in it sufficient to remove pollution, and therefore it is never called washing. The baptisms of the cups, pots, brazen vessels and couches, did not consist in immersing them, or merely wetting them, but either, in the application of water by rubbing, or in rinsing them by tossing them in the water, or by pouring water upon them.

It seems they were baptized in both these ways, because *baptismous* is plural, and is literally baptisms, expressing the idea of different modes of washing or purifying. Vessels of wood, when defiled, were required by the Levitical law, to be rinsed in water. Lev. xv. 12: "Every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water." In the Greek translation, it is *niphesetai udati*, shall be washed with water. They, no doubt, applied water differently to different vessels, and especially, the application of the

water to the long couches on which they reclined at meals, was different from that to vessels. The manner of washing these articles varied according to the nature and size of the thing washed. These different applications of water are called baptisms, that is, purifications, because every form of washing was intended to purify. Thus it appears, that every kind of purification by water comes under the Greek word *baptismos*, as used in the new Testament, and if immersion comes under it at all, of which there is no evidence, it is only as one kind of purification. And so little pollution is removed in immersion, that it can scarcely be called a purification, and if it be baptism, it is only because it is a purification. It is the purifications of the cups, pots, brazen vessels and couches, that are called baptisms. There is not the least reason to believe, that immersion was any of the baptisms mentioned by Mark, and, especially, it is unreasonable to suppose, that the long couches on which they reclined at meals, were immersed.

Luke harmonizes with Mark in the use of *baptizo*. Luke xi. 38: He represents the Pharisee as marveling that the Savior, (*ebaptisthe*) had not been baptized or purified before dinner. That cleansing or purification was meant, is evident from the rebuke which the Savior gave the Pharisee. Luke xi. 39: "And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the plat-

ter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness." This shows clearly that *baptizo*, as used by Luke, means cleanse or purify.

There is not the least reason to believe, that the Pharisee marveled that the Savior had not been immersed before dinner. Mere immersion has but little tendency to make the outside clean. The making of the outside clean, was the thing expected by the Pharisee, as the Savior's reproof shows.

3d. The Savior says, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." Luke, xii. 50. -

Some suppose this means that he was to be overwhelmed with sufferings, and is a figurative allusion to immersion; but the allusion seems to be this: the high priest entered into the most holy place, being purified by "blood which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people." Heb. ix. 7. The sprinkling of blood was a purification under the former dispensation. Heb. ix. 11—28. As the high priest entered into the most holy by the sprinkling of blood, so Christ, being a high priest, entered into the true holy place "by his own blood." Heb. ix. 11, 12. As the high priest was sanctified by the blood of innocent animals, so Christ was sanctified by his own blood. Heb. x. 29. "The sins of his people were laid upon him." Isai. liii. 6. He was purified from them by his own blood. The

passage then means that he had a purification to be purified with; *baptisma*, baptism, then, means purification.

4th. *Baptizo*, as used, Acts, xxii. 16, means to purify: "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." According to this, to be baptized is to wash away sins. As water, in baptism, purifies the body, so the spirit purifies the soul. Baptism represents the cleansing of the soul, consequently, is said to wash away sins. To baptize, then, is to purify.

5th. That baptism is a purification is implied, 1 Peter, iii. 21: "The like figure whereunto (*baptisma*) baptism, doth also now save us; not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

As Noah, by divine command, entered into the ark, and was saved in it from the deluge, so the sinner, at the divine command, enters, by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, into Jesus Christ, and in him is saved from the wrath of God, of which the deluge was an emblem.

This is not water baptism which merely puts away the filth of the flesh, but that which produces the answer of a good conscience towards God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who was raised for our justification. Christ's resurrection was his justification, as the representative of his people. By his justification we are justified, being made one with him by the baptism of the Holy Ghost; and hence we have

the answer of a good conscience. The believer being, by the baptism of the spirit, saved in Christ, is like to Noah's being saved in the ark. It is this baptism that saves us, because, by it we enter into Christ, and come under the covert of his righteousness. Peter guards against mistake by telling us that it is not the baptism that puts away the filth of the flesh, that is, it is not water baptism, but that which cleanses the soul.

This passage clearly implies that water baptism purifies the body, as spiritual baptism does the soul.

7th. Paul, in contrasting the old and new dispensations states, that the former "stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances." The divers washings were, *diaphorais baptismois*, different baptisms, Heb. ix. 10. These different baptisms were all purifications. Persons and things were, under the former dispensation, purified in a great variety of ways, each of which was a baptism. One of these baptisms was the washing of the priests, when they were consecrated to office, Exod. xl. 12. Another was cleansing from leprosy. Lev. xiv. 7: "And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy, seven times." The leper was to "wash himself in water." Two different baptisms, besides washing his clothes, were necessary to cleanse the leper—one with blood and the other with water. Sprinkling the blood of bulls and

goats, and the ashes of a heifer, upon the unclean, purified the flesh, and was a baptism, Heb. ix. 13. Moses, with the blood of calves and goats, and water, sprinkled both the book and all the people, Heb. ix. 19. This was a baptism or purification. All the Jewish purifications by water, or by blood, were baptisms. The forms of purification were exceedingly different, hence Paul calls them different baptisms. All came under the general term baptism, because all were purifications. It cannot be denied that all the Jewish washings, of every form, were for purification. These are called baptisms. Hence *baptismos*, baptism, means purification.

8th. The scriptures call the cleansing of the soul by the Holy Spirit, baptism. Matt. iii. 11: "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." Rom. vi. 3: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?" 1 Cor. xii. 13: "For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body." Gal. iii. 27: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." Coloss. ii. 12: "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through faith of the operation of God." The Holy Spirit purifies us into the image of Christ, and thus puts us into Christ. The fact that the Holy Spirit baptizes, in cleansing the soul from the pollution of sin, proves that *baptizo*, baptize, does mean cleanse or purify.

From all that has been said, it is abundantly evident that the word *baptizo* is used by the new Testament writers to mean purify, and not immerse.

To purify is the thing commanded, in relation to being baptized. The mode of purifying, or baptizing, is not commanded; yet some modes of baptizing are more convenient and significant than others. Of all modes of baptism immersion is the most inconvenient, and the least significant of purifying, which is the thing commanded in baptism. Still, if immersion were commanded, its inconvenience, and want of significancy, would form no reason why we should not be immersed. We ought cheerfully to do whatever God commands, how inconvenient soever it may be. But it has been clearly shown that immersion is not commanded, and that it was not practised by the apostles.

IV. Let us now enquire what is the proper mode of administering baptism?

1st. This may be learned from a prediction made by John the Baptist. Matt. iii. 11: "I indeed baptize you with water—but—he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." This prediction was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, when the conversion of three thousand took place by an extraordinary effusion of the Holy Ghost, which came upon the disciples first, and then upon those that heard them preach. Acts, ii. 1—41. This was a fulfillment of a prophecy

by Joel, Acts, ii. 16, 17: "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh." The baptism then, with the spirit, on the day of Pentecost, was by **POURING OUT**. If **POURING OUT** the spirit upon the people is baptism with the spirit, then **POURING OUT** water upon the people is baptism with water. Hence John's baptism was by **POURING OUT WATER UPON THE PEOPLE**. "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them." This was an emblem of the spirit coming upon them in the miraculous gift of speaking languages they had never learned. "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance." This was a fulfillment of John's prediction—he shall baptize you with fire. If the coming of fire upon the people is baptism with fire, then the coming of water upon the people is baptism with water.

Peter, in relating the baptism of Cornelius, says, "As I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost." Acts, xi. 15, 16. This reference to John's baptism confirms what has been said. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is compared with his. The Holy Ghost was poured out upon Cornelius and his household; "he fell on them" as he did upon the disciples and the three thou-

sand, when poured out, at the beginning, on the day of Pentecost.

The Savior predicted, as John did, the baptism of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. Acts, i. 4, 5: "And being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence." The sacred writer relates the extraordinary effusion of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, as a fulfillment of this prediction. The disciples waited at Jerusalem for the promise of the Father, that he would pour out his spirit upon all flesh. In these several passages the baptism of John is connected with that of the Holy Ghost. John baptizing with water represents the Savior baptizing with the Holy Ghost. The Savior baptized by pouring out the spirit upon the people; hence John baptized the people by pouring water upon them. If pouring out the spirit upon the people is baptizing with the spirit, then pouring out water upon the people is baptizing with water. Three thousand were baptized on the day of Pentecost, both with the Holy Ghost and with water. The baptism of the Holy Ghost WAS BY POURING OUT; hence the baptism by water must have been by POURING OUT; the one represents the other. The one is an external, and the other an internal purification.

When Peter perceived that the Holy Ghost was poured out upon Cornelius, and those convened at his house, he said, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized?" Acts, x. 44—48. Can any forbid water, that it should not be poured upon these in baptism, seeing that the Holy Ghost is poured upon them. "On the Gentiles also was poured the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts, x. 45. Of this pouring out of the Holy Ghost, water baptism is the symbol. Is immersion a suitable symbol of pouring out the Holy Ghost? Can we suppose that Peter commanded them to be immersed, in order to represent the pouring out of the Holy Ghost from heaven upon them? Nothing can be more unreasonable than such supposition. There is not the least reason to doubt that the three thousand, Cornelius and his friends, were baptized by pouring water upon them. Nor is there any reason to doubt that John baptized the vast multitudes that came to his baptism in the same way. The pouring out of the Holy Ghost was represented by the pouring out of water in baptism. Paul was, evidently, as has been shown, baptized in a house, immediately upon his rising up either from sitting or lying, and must have been baptized by pouring or putting water upon him.

2d. It was predicted that the Savior should purify by sprinkling. Isa. lii. 15: "So shall he sprinkle many nations." The disciples were commanded to teach and baptize all na-

tions. Matt. xxviii. 19. The Savior purifies the nations by sprinkling them. Baptism is the emblem of this purification. He baptizes the nations by pouring out his spirit upon them. The disciples are commanded to baptize the nations, as a symbol of Christ's pouring out his spirit upon them. Hence baptism is properly performed by pouring, or by sprinkling, which may be done by pouring small quantities of water upon the persons baptized.

The eunuch had, but a little passed, in reading Isaiah, the passage "so shall he sprinkle many nations," when Philip joined his chariot. Acts, viii. 32. It is probable that this passage brought up the subject of baptism, with respect to which, Philip, no doubt, instructed him, else how would he have known it to be his duty to be baptized. This passage occurs just where the prophet begins to speak of the sufferings of Christ, about which the eunuch was reading; and hence it would likely be one of the first passages explained, and it is very probable that it was the text from which Philip preached baptism to the eunuch. Hence it is very probable that Philip administered baptism to the eunuch, by sprinkling, in accordance with this text.

Another prediction worthy of notice is found in Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26: "Then I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within

you." The connection shows that this prediction is to be fulfilled when Israel shall be gathered out of all nations. The Lord will purify them both by water and by the spirit. He will regenerate them by his spirit, and sprinkle clean water upon them in baptism. What else can the passage mean? In what sense will the Lord sprinkle clean water upon them, if not in baptism? If it be said that the passage means the cleansing operations of the spirit, and not literally water, still it is equal proof that baptism is by pouring or sprinkling, because baptism represents the pouring out, or sprinkling, of the spirit. The passage, then, proves that baptism is properly administered by pouring or sprinkling. Under the former dispensation sprinkling was the most common and significant mode of cleansing. Paul says, "almost all things are by the law purged with blood." Heb. ix. 22. "The priests were sprinkled with blood." Lev. viii. 30. "The altar was sprinkled with blood." Lev. viii. 19. "The tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry were sprinkled with blood." Heb. ix. 21. "Moses sprinkled water and blood upon the book, and all the people." Heb. ix. 19. "When the high priest entered into the most holy place he sprinkled blood upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat he sprinkled blood seven times." Lev. xvi. 14, 15. Thus the most important purifications by blood were by sprinkling. Hence the blood of Christ is called the

“blood of sprinkling.” Heb. xii. 24. Believers are chosen unto obedience, and “sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” 1 Pet. i. 2. ‘This blood “cleanseth us from all sin.” 1 John i. 7. “We must have our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience.” Heb. x. 22. ‘These passages, with many others that might be selected, show that the Lord has appointed sprinkling as the most important and significant mode of purification. It was, perhaps, in allusion to the purifying tendency of rain, which, owing to the distance it falls, wears even the stones, that sprinkling was appointed as the most significant mode of purifying. It is doubtless in allusion to the pouring out of rain from the clouds, to purify and fructify the earth, that the Holy Spirit is so often, in scripture, said to be poured out; and hence sprinkling is the most suitable symbol of divine influences, which purify the soul and make it fruitful.

From what has been said, it is evident that pouring or sprinkling is the most convenient and significant mode of administering baptism, and the one practiced by the apostles. Immersion can scarcely be said to be a mode of baptism, the mere wetting of a person in water can hardly be called a purification, and nothing but the groundless opinion, that baptism represents the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, could have given such a mode of baptism popularity in any branch of the church. ‘The Lord’s supper was intended to represent the death of

Christ, and baptism, the purifying influences of the Holy Ghost. It has been shown, that there is no likeness between the burial of Christ, and any particular mode of baptism.

3d. There is a seal which the people of God do, on earth, receive in the forehead. Rev. vii. 3: "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, *nor* the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads,"—"and his name shall be in their foreheads." Rev. xxii. 4. This is a seal given on earth; now what can it be but baptism? It cannot be the Lord's supper; that is not received in the forehead. In baptism, water is poured or sprinkled upon the forehead, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and thus the persons baptized are sealed in the forehead, and the name of God is in their foreheads.

4th. There is no more reason to believe, that the mode of administering baptism is commanded, than that of administering the Lord's supper. The word *baptizo* is used by the new Testament writers to signify purify, without expressing any mode of purifying, hence the mode must be learned from other circumstances, and not from the word in which baptism is commanded. The same is the case with the Lord's supper. There is nothing in the terms Lord supper, that expresses the mode of administration. There are certain things evident to all in relation to baptism. The disciples were commissioned to baptize. Baptism was

to be performed with water, and in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Some water must be used in this ordinance; but the quantity is left to human prudence, as the quantity of bread and wine, in the Lord's supper. Some bread and some wine are essential to the Lord's supper; but he who takes the smallest portion of wine, and the least crumb of bread, in faith, takes the Lord's supper as fully as if he had taken a larger quantity. It is a mere symbol, and its significancy does not depend upon the quantity of bread and wine received, nor upon the particular mode of administration, but upon the Lord's appointment of it, to show forth his death till he come. So, some water is essential to baptism; but as it is a mere symbol of divine influences, its significancy does not depend upon the quantity of water, nor upon the particular mode of administration; but upon the Lord's appointment of it, to represent the purifying operations of the Spirit. If, then, baptism be performed by a minister with water, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, it is all the baptism the Scriptures require. It is only on this ground, that immersion ought to be admitted to be baptism; for the apostles, as has been shown, did not immerse those they baptized, and hence it has no divine sanction as a mode of baptism.

How desirable is it, that all christians should examine the subject with care, and come together upon clear, scriptural ground, and admit

that to be baptism which is administered by a minister, with water, in the name of the Father, Son and Spirit. This is unquestionably all the sacred oracles require. We should earnestly desire and pray for the coming of the time when the followers of the Savior shall cease to divide about the mere mode in which baptism is to be administered.

It is by open, candid, and christian discussion, with the blessing of God, that division is to be healed, and the armies of the Lord united for universal victory, over the powers of darkness.

PARENTAL DUTIES.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DUTIES OF PARENTS IN RELATION TO SUPPORTING AND EDUCATING THEIR CHILDREN.

THE church is called a holy nation. She, like a nation, is one great family composed of smaller branches. These are private families, and the primary elements both of civil and religious society. The church, like a nation, lives by succession. Hence, her very constitution is a system of education. The old and new Testaments are but a development of the covenant given to Abraham, as the constitution of the church. In these, parents are represent-

ed as the natural guardians and teachers of their children. To fathers and mothers are committed the temporal and eternal interests of their offspring. Hence the parental relation is one of the greatest importance, and infers the highest responsibilities. In proportion as the duties of this relation are faithfully discharged, the church arises in strength and beauty and throws her light abroad upon the earth. Did all parents but understand and perform the duties they owe to their offspring, the fountains of sin and sorrow would be turned back in their channels, and the curse of offended heaven would cease to blight the earth; the world would become as the garden of Eden, the tree of life would overshadow the nations, and give its fruits to every land.

The parental duties are numerous and various.

1. The first to be mentioned in the order intended, is that of providing for children the necessary comforts of life. This duty is clearly enjoined in the sacred oracles. "If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." This duty is so clearly enjoined in the scriptures, that the neglect of it is a practical denial of the faith, and the man that is guilty of such neglect, sins not only against divine authority, but against the strongest feelings of humanity, and of all others has the least claim to being a child of God,

and is even worse than the avowed infidel. Industry and economy are obligatory on all, but in the case of parents, the obligation is increased in proportion to the number of children dependent for sustenance. A comfortable maintenance of children is essential to their moral culture. Poverty and want throw around them the strongest temptations to vicious practices. While every thing extravagant should be carefully avoided, children should be comfortably fed and decently clothed. Parents should use their best efforts to render happy the existence they have been the means of creating. They should ever feel the duty of comfortably supporting their children as of the highest obligation.

2. The duty of giving children an education suited to the station they are intended to occupy in society, is one that arises from the strongest necessity.

Education is necessary to the existence and the appropriate exercise of civil government. A nation without education would be unable to frame laws for their own government and protection; under such circumstances their rights could not be maintained, and the liberty necessary to the service of God, and the best interests of man could not exist. Civil government is an ordinance of God. "The powers that be, are ordained of God," consequently, whatever education is necessary to the existence of this ordinance, it must be the duty of parents

to give their children. A good government is one of the best gifts that the father of the universe bestows on men, and one that is highly necessary to the best interests of the church. Parents then should give their children such educations as are calculated to promote the best state of civil government.

Education is also indispensable to carry on the common enterprises of the world. The duty of prosecuting the callings necessary to sustenance and comfort, is clearly taught in the word of God, "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called." According to the sacred oracles, men should be "diligent in business," not indeed for mere selfish purposes, but that they "may have to give to him that needeth." Then all the various enterprises that are calculated to better the condition of the human family should be industriously carried on in the spirit of benevolence. Every man should labor in his calling to bless the world, and every piece of machinery should be put in motion for the good of man and the glory of God. All the mechanical arts, and all the various honest employments of life, should be consecrated to the service of God. Holiness should be written upon the horse bells. Then it must be the duty of parents, so far as practicable, to give their children such educations, as are necessary to carry on, in the best manner, the various pursuits of life.

It is more than equally worthy of remark,

that some education is indispensable to the very existence of christianity. So much as is necessary to read and understand the bible is essential to the continuance of true religion in the world. Without this the knowledge of the truth would soon be lost, and the whole world would sink into a state of entire heathenism. Consequently, there is the strongest necessity for education. And hence the sacred scriptures sanction not only a common, but the most extended education. Moses, destined to give laws to the world, could not receive an extensive education among the enslaved Hebrews, and therefore the providence of God placed him in Pharaoh's family, that he might obtain the learning necessary to the station he was intended to fill. In extensiveness of education, none, in his age, exceeded Moses, and no man ever surpassed him in extended usefulness. The apostle Paul is another instance in which God has sanctioned an extended education; none in his day, excelled Paul in literary acquisitions; and in usefulness he had no equal. It is readily admitted that the other apostles, when chosen, were not men of liberal education; but it should be recollected that they were afterwards taught by a teacher that infinitely transcended Gamaliel, and that the Holy Spirit was given in a miraculous manner, to enable them to remember all that they had received from their heavenly teacher. In addition to all this, they received the power of

speaking languages that they had never learnt, so that every deficiency in learning was supplied by positive miracle. Consequently they had more ample qualifications for the work than has the most learned missionary in modern times. Nothing then can be more absurd than the notion that many have entertained, that the Savior in the selection of his disciples, sanctioned ignorance, and that christianity is opposed to education. The very reverse is true. One of the most prominent tendencies of the holy scriptures is to promote education. And it is undeniable, that wherever the bible has the most extended influence, education is not only more than elsewhere generally diffused among the common people, but is advanced nearer to a state of perfection. It is this tendency that places christian nations, in respect to learning, so far in advance of the heathen. Since the days of inspiration, God has by his providence given the highest sanction to education. The prominent instruments of the reformation have been men of education. This is true of Luther, Calvin, and Knox, to whom the protestant nations are peculiarly indebted for light and liberty. These were men of education, and God's chosen instruments for dispelling papal darkness and tyranny, and giving light and liberty to the nations that had so long been shrouded in ignorance and bound in the iron chains of despotism. Were it necessary thousands of other

stances might be presented to the same purpose. Reason, revelation, and the providence of God conspire in pressing upon parents the duty of giving to their children, so far as the means is afforded, such educations as are suited to their capacity for usefulness. And when means are limited, the most rigorous economy and industry should be used to extend them.

It should also be remembered, that if it be the duty of parents to give education to their children, it must be incumbent upon all to improve their own minds, so far as they have an opportunity. If the time spent in idleness and trifling amusements were devoted to reading history, systems of geography, chemistry, philosophy, and astronomy; the merchant, the farmer, the mechanic, or even the day laborer, might make striking advances in science, and possess a high degree of mental improvement. The systems of science are now so happily simplified as to present the greatest facility for the acquisition of knowledge. The mind is almost the whole of man, and therefore, to improve and elevate it, is a prominent end of our being. To make some retrenchment in the style of living and clothing for mental improvement, should in many cases be felt as an indispensable duty. Every calling should be so conducted as to allow sufficient time for cultivating the mind. And much that is given for luxuries and extravagant clothing should be expended for useful books. Christianity is in-

tended for the entire elevation of the human family, and to this, mental improvement is essential. In the millennial age there will be no degraded class in society, there should be none now. It is vice and ignorance that degrade men, and not humble occupations. Every honest occupation should be esteemed reputable. The Lord of the Universe washed his disciples' feet, and he extends his care as readily to the crawling worm as to the massy world. The cottages of the poor are oftener his dwelling place than the palaces of the great. Education should be so conducted as to better the heart while it improves the mind. The knowledge to be gained by education is the knowledge of God and his works. In every department of science, there is much to lead the mind to the contemplation of the power and wisdom of the Creator. In the study of languages we see much of the wonderful capacity of the human mind. The structure of language, and the vast variety, thought, and passion displayed in it, exhibit the immense power of the soul, and invites us to admire and adore the eternal fountain of excellence from which the immortal mind emanated. In the study of geography, chemistry, philosophy and astronomy, the pious heart may exclaim with the inspired Psalmist, "O! Lord, how great are thy works! O! Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all. The earth is full of thy rich-

es ; so is this great sea." "When I consider the heavens the work of thy fingers ; the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained ; what is man, that thou art mindful of him ? or the son of man, that thou visitest him ?" "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord." In all the vast field of science there are continued and grand displays of the wisdom, power, and goodness of God. From the beginning to the end of the most extended education, the pious teacher may continually direct the minds of his pupils to the divine excellence unfolded in the works of creation. Hence parents should be careful not only to select competent, but pious teachers. Every part of education should be conducted with a direct view to the promotion of piety. Parents should feel that the education of their children is a christian duty, and one to be performed for the glory of God and the best interests of man. The entire system of science should be consecrated to the service of God.

This part of the subject ought not to be closed without urging the necessity and importance of making the study of the sacred scriptures a part of common education. That there is a strong tendency to exclude the scriptures from the common schools, is a matter of the deepest regret. It is urged by many, that the bible is too sacred to be a school book, children are prone to use it in a profane manner. Others say that to make it a school book is

calculated to induce disgust in the minds of children at sacred truth, and that in future life they will have no relish for reading the word of God. In all this there seems to be good intention; but why is the bible too sacred to be a school book? Should not schools themselves be sacred? And should not children be taught to pursue their study as a duty they owe to themselves, and to the God that has made them? Is the fact that some children profane the sacred oracles, a reason why they should not be made to read them? Should our children profane the public preaching of the gospel, ought we on that account to exclude them from the house of God? Should we not rather correct their profanity, and still lead them to the holy temple to hear the life-giving sound of the gospel? If children at school profane the bible, their profanity should be corrected, but surely the holy oracles, the best means of reformation, should not be taken out of their hands. In the papal world the scriptures were taken out of the hands of the common people to prevent abuse; and what was the result? The nations were shrouded in darkness that could be felt.

It is not true that making the bible a school book is calculated to induce disgust in the minds of children, and produce a disrelish for reading it in after life. We are prone, in advanced age, to venerate beyond all others the first books read at school. With them are as-

sociated the scenes of early life, and by them were made upon our minds some of the first and strongest impressions. They ever bring to view the fond recollections of childhood and youth.

But after all it is urged that the translation is so antiquated, that some things have become indelicate to modern ears, and that the composition is such as is unfavorable to making good readers. To this it is replied, that indecency of expression does not consist in the names of real and known existencies, but in the ridiculous use of those names. Now in the translation, there is no such ridiculous use of names. Nothing is named but what every one knows exists, and about which all must think and speak. The language of the translation is grave and necessary, and conveys no ideas that are not often brought up in the most decent circles of society. And we may venture to say that it always gives most offence where there is the least modesty.

That the composition is unfavorable to making good readers cannot be maintained. The vast number of good readers produced from the schools in which the bible has been read as a school book, is against the objection. The composition of the common translation is both grave and dignified, and has all the variety of style and expression necessary to good reading.

While no sufficient reason can be given for

the exclusion of the bible from schools, many may be given for making the study of it a part of common education.

If we desire to present to our children a book that is calculated to excite the deepest interest, and induce a desire for reading, the bible is that book. There is in human nature a strong propensity for the marvelous. With this the scriptures abound. It may be found on almost every page. And what gives peculiar interest is, that the wonderful transactions related are not fictitious, but real. In this the bible as a school book, has vastly the advantage of all others. It meets fully, one of the strongest propensities of human nature, and thus presents the strongest inducements to reading.

If we would give our children the best specimens of historical writing, they are found in the bible. The narrative of Joseph is the finest ever written. It is simple, yet dignified, marvelous, yet true. By the simple narration of facts without eulogy, it gives the fairest specimen of human character. No effort is made to move the passions, and yet nothing can be better calculated to touch all the finer feelings of the human heart; no one can read it without the strongest sensations of sympathy, admiration, and delight. And while it commands the noblest passions of the soul, it impresses the brightest example of piety upon the deepest sympathies of the heart.

This sacred narrative stands not in the scriptures as a mere insulated instance of excellence; all the historical parts of the bible are worthy of imitation. He that would write history in the best manner, should draw his model from the sacred volume. The gospel by Luke, and the acts of the Apostles, should be ever in his mind; they have been equalled by no uninspired writer. In these there is a simplicity and candor that exceed all praise.

It should also be observed that the bible contains the most important history ever presented to the world. It gives us the richest facts in relation to this world, and all we know about the spiritual and eternal world. It gives us the true character of God, the creation of the universe, the origin and character of man, and many vast and important transactions beyond the date of any history. Surely, in respect to history, nothing can equal the bible. Such is the profusion of historical light it has poured upon the world, that, like the never-failing fountains that water the earth, it has ceased to be valued. The bible not only contains the richest treasure of historical knowledge, but the first that should be studied. Hence it claims the precedence of all other books. Should we not put it into the hands of our children so soon as they are capable of reading? What else can they read with so much interest and profit?

If we should enrich the minds of our chil-

dren with the noblest samples of the sublime, we should give them the bible. It will not be denied that in sublimity it immensely exceeds all other books. If we desire to find a specimen that no uninspired writer has equalled, it may be found in the very beginning of the sacred volume. "God said, let there be light, and there was light." How simple the language, but how sublime the idea expressed. The Creator spoke, and light came into existence by the energy of his word. The idea of God's lighting up the vast universe by simply saying, "let there be light," is exceedingly grand. It gives us the highest possible view of divine power.

Almost every part of the bible abounds with the sublime; the book of Job, the psalms of David, and the prophecies of Isaiah, are worthy of special notice as being exceedingly rich in sublimity. The close of the sacred volume is no less sublime than the beginning. In Rev. xx. 11, is a striking instance of true sublimity. "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away; and there was found no place for them." Nothing can be more sublime than the idea here given of the divine majesty. What is better calculated to ennoble and enrich the minds of children than such examples of sublimity? The bible contains the richest treasures of sublime thought, and of course is better than all other books,

calculated to expand and elevate the youthful mind.

If we desire to give our children a perfect system of morals, the bible contains the only one found on earth. Our duties to God, to our neighbor and to our relatives, to civil and religious society, and even to our enemies, are clearly set forth under the strongest sanctions. They are enforced by the authority of God and the stupendous realities of eternity. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart—and thy neighbor as thyself." "Husbands, love your wives. And the wife see that she reverence her husband." "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." "I say unto you, love your enemies." "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets." Were these sacred precepts written upon the hearts of all mankind so as to induce obedience, the whole world would become free and happy, and the nations would learn war no more. What can be more appropriate to children than such a system of morals? Can they be made to read it too soon?

If we would have our children practice godliness, which has the promise of the "life that now is, and of that which is to come," we should cause them to read the bible so soon as practicable. From a child, Timothy knew the

scriptures which were able to make him wise unto salvation. The same should be true of our children. The bible contains the truth necessary to their salvation. This makes it infinitely important that they should read it soon. Our children, while reading the scriptures at school, may as readily become wise unto salvation as when reading them elsewhere. The truth of God is as efficacious when read at school, as when read at home on the sabbath. The efficacy in saving souls depends upon the operations of the Holy Spirit, and these may as readily flow down upon the school, as upon the family at home. And no doubt, if schools were as religiously conducted as they ought to be, conversions would often take place among the children. Besides, the knowledge acquired by reading the scriptures at school may be the means of conversion in after life. There is reason to believe that few who do not read the scriptures at school, become familiarly acquainted with them.

The memories of our children should be well stored with divine truth. It is the sword of the Spirit, and must be wielded against their spiritual enemies, if they are to escape the pollutions of the world, and gain the crown of life. Whether, then, we view the bible as a source of literature, or as a system of divine truth, it is the most valuable treasure we can put into the hands of our children. It contains such ancient literature as can be had from no other

source, and such as is of the highest value. And it contains the knowledge of the true God and the plan of salvation; it unfolds to us the unsearchable riches of Christ. The love of God manifested by the gift of his Son for the salvation of sinful men, is the grandest truth in the universe. It is the sun of the moral world to diffuse light and life throughout the dark regions of sin and death. Who would withhold from his children such a treasure of light and life? Sure no one who values, as he ought, their eternal interests.

Every part of education should be religiously conducted. Common schools should be nurseries of piety, in which the holy scriptures should be read and studied. The most important knowledge should be communicated first. The bible contains such, and therefore it should be the first book read and studied. In this way, a permanent foundation will be laid for future usefulness. The purity and grandeur of divine truth will purify, expand and elevate the minds of children, and better than any thing else, prepare them for important stations in society, as well as for an endless inheritance in heaven.

CHAPTER VIII.

IT IS THE DUTY OF PARENTS TO BRING UP THEIR CHILDREN TO INDUSTRY.

PARENTS should bring up their children to habits of industry. This duty becomes difficult in proportion to the increase of wealth. In wealthy communities, it is often the case that idleness becomes fashionable, and industry disreputable. In some circles, none are esteemed gentlemen and ladies, but such as live upon their estate, and spend their lives in idleness. Nothing can be either more absurd or more pernicious than such estimation. The tendency of it upon society is the very worst. It degrades the honest, industrious, and in truth, the best classes of people. And hence a strong inducement to live without labor, and by unfair means. The father of the universe formed man for industry, and made it indispensable to the existence and happiness of our race. How absurd then is it, to despise that which is essential to our very being,—that which clothes and feeds us, and spreads around us all the comforts of life! The very wealth upon which men so much plume themselves, is itself the fruit of industry. And how transcendantly wicked and mean is it to despise and degrade the men and women, without whom nakedness and starvation would pervade the world! The Lord of glory honored industry by his own example.

When he came to our world on the errand of mercy, he labored, for a time, at an honest occupation. Hence, when he began his public ministry, it was said of him, "is not this the carpenter?" Industry is necessary to sustenance, to health, to mental vigor, to morality, and of course, to happiness. Consequently, it is the duty of parents, whether they live in the city or in the country, and whether they are rich or poor, to provide for their children useful improvement. This is a duty of imperious necessity. The neglect of it will bring upon our offspring the sorest evils. How vast the number of children through want of suitable employment, fall into vicious practices, and of the most degrading kind, and thus bring poverty and ruin upon themselves. How many have died by the hand of the public executioners! how many have lingered out years in public prisons, and still how much greater the number that have perished by debauchery and intemperance! How great the number of females that fall into consumption, and languish and die in consequence of being brought up without employment! And how many others linger out a more protracted life of continual debility, and live strangers to the flowings of health and to the enjoyments of a vigorous youth. How inexpressible is the anguish of such a life! Who can estimate the wretchedness and misery that result from bringing up children without suitable industry! And are not parents ac-

countable for such results? Will they not have in such cases, to account for the sufferings and premature death of their own offspring? Let every parent, who is disposed to bring up his children in idleness, bear this in mind.

Parents, then, should enforce upon their children the duty of being industrious, while they at the same time, provide the means of useful industry. Utility should always be presented as a motive to action. Children should be taught that piety, intelligence, and industry are the constituents of true greatness. They should be instructed to estimate character according to these, and not according to wealth and external appearance. The pious, intelligent, and industrious man is indeed the man of real value in society; and therefore, whether rich or poor, worthy of the highest estimation.

Every useful occupation ought to be regarded with due respect, so that none should be either degraded or despised on account of his particular employment. When young persons have proper impressions on this point, they will the more readily employ themselves in some one useful occupation or another, rather than live in idleness. The children of the rich often become poor; and having been taught to despise certain occupations that might still be within their reach, and afford them an honest living, reject them, and engage in enterprises that terminate in ruin. False notions on this subject have led to many a public execution. Parents

then should exercise great caution on this point. Children should be made to feel that useful occupation is honorable, and that any one should be chosen, rather than idleness. And they should be made to understand that poverty is no disgrace, except when it is the result of idleness or bad conduct. The wealthiest may, by adverse providences, be reduced to entire poverty; and should they be the less esteemed because events over which they had no control rendered them poor? Why then should the honest and industrious man be the less esteemed because he has never had the means of becoming rich? The Lord of the universe was born in a stable of a poor virgin; his cradle was a manger, and when publishing the glad tidings of peace and salvation, he had not where to lay his head.

The duty of training children to industry is so palpable, that it seems, at first view, unnecessary to urge it; but facts show that there is no duty to which many parents pay less conscientious regard. Many appear never to feel the slightest obligation to make the duty of industry a part of the moral instruction given to their children. Indeed, in some circles, it is even fashionable to bring up children in idleness; and not a few think it an honor so to have been brought up, because, as they suppose, an evidence of wealthy descent. But what is the honor of being born a drone to eat up the wealth accumulated by industrious ancestors? And

what honor is it to parents to rear up a family of drones to eat out the wealth of community? What can either the church or the state expect from such a progeny? What would be the state of the world if all parents were to bring up their children in this way? Is not the rearing up of such progenies one of the most prominent sources of crime and poverty? Surely, then, parents should feel that it is highly criminal to bring up children in such a state; and it should be esteemed worthy of deep disgrace. How shameful is it to rear up a family to be a dead weight upon society; or in other words, to throw upon the world a progeny of nuisances?

The duty of bringing up children to industry, is urged with the more earnestness, because it is essential to the best interests of society, both civil and religious. Upon it depends the prosperity of church and state, and, of course, it involves eternal interest.

CHAPTER IX.

PARENTS SHOULD TEACH THEIR CHILDREN THE DOCTRINES AND PRECEPTS OF CHRISTIANITY.

PARENTS should teach their children the doctrines and precepts of christianity. This duty is clearly enjoined in the scriptures. "And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart; and thou shalt teach them

diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Deut. vi. 6, 7. The doctrines that relate to the existence and character of God, the fallen condition of man, and the plan of salvation through a Savior, are essential to eternal life. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." John xvii. 2. How is it possible to love God supremely and worship him according to his infinite excellence, unless we understand the truth in relation to his divine perfections? How shall a man, ignorant of his fallen state, be induced to seek a Savior? Or how shall he receive a Savior of whom he has no knowledge? The scriptures represent faith as essential to salvation. "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Faith consists in accrediting aright divine truth. Hence, it is said: "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." "He that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." This shows that it is impossible to come to God without the medium of divine truth. Consequently, the popular notion, that it is no difference what a man believes, provided his practice is good, is both absurd and dangerous. No practice can be good, farther

than it is directed by truth; just so far as a man errs in faith, he must err in practice. A person may entertain false views on some points, and yet believe and practice the truth on others; but on the points where his faith is wrong, his practice must be in accordance with it, and cannot be good. For illustration, suppose that a man believes that the Savior is a mere creature. Can he worship him as God equal with the Father, and honor him even as he honors the Father? Any one can see that it is in the very nature of things impossible. A good practice is simply the practicing of the truth, or to use a scriptural phrase, it is walking in the truth. What is the practice of idolatry but the practice of error? The heathen believe that their idols are gods, and therefore they worship them. Their practice is the result of their faith, but their sincerity in their false faith, cannot make idolatry right. Idolaters shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

Then it is abundantly evident that some doctrinal knowledge, where there is a capacity to receive it, is essential to salvation. Hence it is said, "where there is no vision, the people perish." Consequently, there is the strongest reason why parents should give their children doctrinal instructions, and why they should give them so soon as there is a capacity to receive them. While they dandle their children

upon their knees, they should impart to them the words of eternal life. In this way, many a pious mother has been the means of making upon her children deep and lasting impressions. The Holy Spirit may, at a very early period, make the truth effectual to salvation. The young mind is less hardened in sin, and consequently more susceptible of serious impressions, than when more advanced in a sinful life. This should encourage parents to begin the work of religious instruction as early as possible.

Parents should also teach their children the preceptive parts of divine truth. The duties they owe to God as their creator, and preserver, and redeemer, should be clearly pointed out to them, and urged with earnestness proportionate to their importance. The duties they owe to man as their fellow-being, are enjoined by the same authority, and, therefore, should occupy suitable attention. Children should be instructed in all civil, social, and relative duties. All these are enjoined in the sacred oracles, and consequently form a part of religion. And the discharge of them are necessary to the happiness of individuals, of families, of neighborhoods, and of nations; and they must ever form a prominent part of christian practice.

It is obvious that parents, in order to instruct their children in the doctrines and duties of religion, must qualify themselves by studying diligently the scriptures. They occupy in

their families a station similar to that of a pastor in a congregation. God has made it their duty to teach immortal beings the doctrines and duties of religion. But how shall they teach, unless they understand the things to be taught? How awfully criminal are those parents who never study the sacred oracles, and, of course, live in ignorance of the first principles of the gospel, and thus are incapable of giving their children the instructions necessary to eternal life! Surely such will have to account for the souls committed to their care. How liable are parents, through ignorance, to teach their children error, even fatal error, instead of truths. O parents, how will you be able to meet your children at the final judgment, if you prove unfaithful to their eternal interests? If they shall perish forever through your ignorance and negligence, how will you stand when God shall rise up in judgment against you? O, how unnatural and horrible is the sin of destroying the souls of our own offspring! Who will sink so deeply in the gulf of eternal ruin, as unfaithful parents?

CHAPTER X.

THE DUTY OF PARENTS TO GOVERN THEIR CHILDREN.

THE duty of family government devolves upon parents. This is a duty of the greatest importance, and one of more than ordinary difficulty. The variety of dispositions and capacity that exists among children, renders it difficult to form a plan of government suited to the condition of each individual. A knowledge of the disposition and capacity of each child is necessary to a suitable exercise of government. The manner of governing should be varied according to disposition and capacity.

In the exercise of family government, there should be as much uniformity as practicable. This will render obedience the more easy, and inspire the greater confidence and respect.

The government of a family should be so managed as to secure the affections of those governed. This will render obedience pleasant, and make it a matter of choice, and not of compulsion. Hence, family government should always be mild and persuasive. Commands should be given in the language of tenderness. In this way, correspondent feelings will be excited, and will form strong inducements to cheerful obedience.

Parents should carefully avoid moroseness

of temper and sarcastic or provoking language. These are hateful things; they will make parents hateful in the eyes of their children, and destroy that influence which should ever be extended over a family; and nothing will more discourage the efforts of children to please their parents. "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath," is an injunction that should be carefully regarded in the exercise of family government.

Parents should be careful neither to expect nor require more of children than is consistent with their age and capacity. Due allowance should be made for the vivacity of youth. The sedateness and gravity of mature age, should neither be expected nor required. Playfulness in childhood is necessary to health of body and vigor of mind, and therefore is not in itself criminal, and consequently, should be indulged at proper times, and under suitable restrictions. Such amusements as have a natural tendency to immorality, should be entirely prohibited. The innocency or criminality of an amusement, must, in a great measure, be determined by its tendency. That which uniformly tends to extravagance and consequent immorality, must be criminal. Such is the uniform tendency of promiscuous dancing and theatrical exhibitions. The same is true of all petty games, for trivial sums. These are the primary fountains of vice; seemingly small at first, but soon swell to mighty streams whose

overflowings deluge the world. No amusement then, should be allowed without considering well its tendency. While on the one hand, we guard against extreme rigor, we should, on the other, carefully avoid too much looseness. Human nature is prone to extremes ; and therefore, it is necessary that every man, in order to govern well, should guard against this tendency. Too much rigor imbitters life, and renders government hateful, and too much laxity undermines authority, renders children impatient of restraint, and results in all the evils which the exercise of government is intended to prevent. While then, undue rigor is avoided, the exercise of family government should be firm and decided. The commands given should always be reasonable, and founded upon justice, and should be enforced by suitable authority. The giving of trivial or unnecessary commands should be avoided. Children are more inclined to neglect such than they are those that are more important ; and it is more difficult to enforce such than those of greater utility ; consequently, there is a strong liability on the part of children to disobey, and on the part of parents to neglect enforcing obedience. And thus habits of disobedience are brought on to the subversion of authority. If children are allowed to neglect commands of little importance, they will soon learn to do the same with respect to those involving the utmost interests. No commands

then should be given but such as are intended to be enforced. The full maintainance of authority is essential to good government. Parents who do not support their authority, will neither have the respect nor the affections of their children, and of course, will soon find themselves incapable of exercising government.

The most painful part of family government is the giving of reproof, and the infliction of punishment. Both these are, sometimes, necessary, and often attended with serious difficulty. When to give reproof, and in what manner to give it, so as to produce the best results, requires the exercise of much discretion. If reproof is too frequently administered, it will not have a salutary effect. It will become vexatious and discouraging; it will harden the feelings, and be ultimately disregarded. Many of the indiscretions of children should be passed without notice. Reproof should be given when there has been a manifest intention to do wrong. It should be administered with earnestness and affection, and the reasonableness and necessity of it should be clearly shown. So long as reproof will answer the purposes of reclaiming and restraining children, there should be no infliction of punishment. To punish without necessity is cruel, and must have an injurious tendency. There should be no infliction of punishment but when the crime has been willful and perverse. To punish, as some parents do, for wrongs that were not in-

tentional, is unjust, oppressive, and calculated to produce in the minds of children feelings of unhappy tendency. There have been many instances of children being severely punished for doing what they thought right. Such inflictions are unreasonable and cruel, and cannot be profitable. As to the kind of punishment to be inflicted, there is a variety of opinions. In modern times, it has become fashionable to punish children by placing upon them some mark of disgrace, or by confining them in dark rooms. This has been thought to be an improvement, and as such has been substituted in place of using the rod of correction. To such modes of punishment, there are strong objections. To place upon a child a mark of disgrace, is to operate merely by means of the corrupt pride of its nature, and is calculated to cultivate such principle, rather than to remove it, and tends more to provoke the child, than to bring it to repentance. To say the least of this mode, it is calculated to excite the worst feelings of the heart, and gives time for their indulgence.

To confine a child in a dark room may so frighten it as to produce serious consequences. In this respect it is, in some cases, dangerous. And when it does not tend to frighten, it gives time for the long indulgence of a sullen and bad temper, and thus tends to cultivate ill nature. The process is too tedious to produce the best effects.

The tendencies of such punishments were well understood by the Holy Spirit, and had they been best, they would have had his sanction. The fact that no such measures are sanctioned in the scriptures, is against them. We, in modern times, may improve in understanding the sacred oracles, but the things taught in them cannot be improved. The Holy Spirit, being infinitely wise, knew every thing from eternity that can be known now. Consequently, whatever he has revealed for our instruction is best. He says, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, *but* the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." Prov. xxii. 15. "Withhold not correction from the child; for if thou beatest him with a rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shall deliver his soul from hell." Prov. xxiii. 13, 14. "Chastise thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." Prov. xix. 18. "The rod and reproof give wisdom; but the child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame. Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul." Prov. xxix. 15, 17. "He that spareth the rod, hateth his son; he that loveth him, chastiseth him betimes." Prov. xiii. 14. Here, then, we have the mind of the unerring spirit of God, both as to the necessity of punishment and the instrument with which it is to be inflicted. The rod is God's appointed instrument of correction. It was no doubt chosen because it was

the best. It is the speediest and most certain means of reducing a child to submission; and, of course, gives little opportunity of indulging in bad temper. There is a vast difference between the process that reduces to submission and good temper in a few minutes, and that which requires hours, and that, with great uncertainty of success. The one subdues ill temper immediately, while the other gives long time for its indulgence, and thus brings it into habit.

When correction is necessary, it must be given thoroughly, so as to subdue the child entirely, and bring it to submission. This is a very painful duty, and requires the exercise of much fortitude. We are prone to spare for his crying. Partial correction has a bad effect. It makes frequent repetitions necessary; the result of which is so to harden the child as to cause him to disregard correction. Thus it happens that some parents are almost continually correcting their children with no advantage. Parents should never attempt correction unless they intend to carry it through, so as to bring the child to entire submission. When this is once done, it will ever afterwards be easy to support authority, and little more correction will be necessary.

Government should be exercised so soon as the capacity of children will admit. They should be early taught to reverence and obey their parents.

The rod of correction should never be used as an instrument of revenge, but as an ordinance of God. The indulgence of revengeful feelings is under all circumstances sinful; but it is peculiarly so when exercised towards one's own offspring.

In the exercise of family government, the father and mother should be mutual and equal. The authority of the mother should be regarded by the children with as much promptness as that of the father. The authority of one parent should never be set in opposition to that of the other; but they should mutually support the authority of each other. Nothing is better calculated to prostrate all parental authority and influence, than that of one parent taking part with the children against the other. In all such cases, the authority of one or both parents must be abolished. There may be extreme cases in which it may be the duty of one parent to assume the entire government of the family, in opposition to the other. Such necessity may arise from such profligacy and wickedness as may incapacitate one parent for exercising authority, while the other maintains the utmost integrity, and is well calculated to exercise government. The duty, in such a case, to assume the government of the children so far as practicable, is manifest; but yet it must be attended with extreme difficulty. Many pious mothers, owing to the intemperance and profligacy of their husbands, have had this dif-

difficulty to encounter, and not a few have succeeded well in governing their children, and saving them from the influence of a profligate example.

Family government should be so exercised as to protect the morals of children. They should be separated so far as practicable, from all immoral company. They are ever liable to fall into the habits of those with whom they associate. Hence they should be prohibited from making companions of such as are of bad morals. Children should also be prohibited from frequenting places of immorality, and from indulging in any immoral practices. How vast is the number of promising children that are ruined by wicked company, by frequenting places of immorality, and by not being restrained from immoral indulgences. These are prominent sources of ruin, and against them parents should set up the strongest barriers.

Children should not only be required to abstain from what is wrong, but also to do that which is right. God speaking of Abraham says, "I know him that he will command his children and household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." Parents, like Abraham, should command their children after them, to keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment. They should require them to attend upon both the public and private means of grace. They should enjoin upon them the strict observance

of the sabbath. This is of the utmost importance. The proper observance of the sabbath prepares the mind for the discharge of every duty. It is a day set apart for moral improvement, and a suitable attention to it never fails to better the heart. The violation of the sabbath corrupts and hardens the heart, and thus prepares it for every species of immorality. Hence it is generally the entrance to the grossest crimes. The confessions of criminals show that it is often the beginning of the course of wickedness that leads to public execution. It is the rock of danger on which thousands have been dashed to ruin; and thousands more are hastening on to the same fatal termination. How carefully should parents, in the exercise of government, guard their children against this rock of ruin?

The duty of requiring children to attend upon the means of grace, and to observe the sabbath, has been urged for two reasons. The one is, that attendance upon the means of grace, and the observance of the sabbath, are preparatory to the discharge of all other duties. The other is, that the duty urged is lamentably neglected, even by many professing parents. Not a few professors of religion go to the house of God themselves, and permit their children either to stay at home, or roam abroad at pleasure on the sacred sabbath. How vast a number of the children of professors spend the sabbath in idleness and play! What can be hoped for

such children! How many of them shall be tenants of public prisons, and how many of them shall die by the hands of the public executioner, time will reveal! And how many of them shall go down to endless perdition, will appear on the records of eternity! What an account will the parents of such children have to render, when the judgment shall sit. How will they endure to meet their ruined children at the bar of God? Let such parents remember that the blood of the souls of their children will be required at their hands. O! how awful will it be to stand in judgment, charged with the crime of destroying the souls of our own offspring! To avoid this, how careful should we be to bring up our children to the discharge of every duty.

It is obvious that, in order to govern a family well, parents must carefully study to know their duty. The art of governing well should be made a matter of prayerful and diligent attention. Without this, success cannot reasonably be expected.

CHAPTER XI.

THE DUTY OF PARENTS TO PROCURE FOR THEIR CHILDREN THE MINISTRATIONS OF THE GOSPEL.

God has appointed the preaching of the gospel as one of the most prominent means of sal-

vation, and therefore it is the duty of parents to provide it for their children. This is a part of that provision which every man is, so far as practicable, to make for his own household. This is better far than furnishing houses and lands. These can, at best, but accommodate the poor dying body, that must soon become the prey of loathsome worms. The body needs but little, nor does it need that little long. The soul is of infinite value, and consequently, demands peculiar regard. The gospel presents to it the unsearchable riches of Christ. Hence, parents should make every reasonable effort to have the gospel preached to their children. To have the souls of our offspring saved, should be the primary object of parental care. To this, every thing else should be made subservient. How many professing parents expend vast sums in supplying the temporal wants of their children, while they contribute almost nothing to procure for them the public means of grace! How many, for the sake of procuring houses and lands for their children, move them from the temple of God into the wilderness, no more to enjoy stately the public ordinances of religion! Does this look like making the salvation of their children a primary object of pursuit? It may, indeed, be the duty of christian families to emigrate to new countries, but surely not in such a manner as to deprive themselves and children of the ordinances of the gospel. Unless they can go in such

numbers as to establish the gospel among them, no earthly gains should induce them to move. Enlarged estates will make no compensation for the loss of souls. Parents should permit no prospect of gain, how flattering soever they may be, to interfere with the eternal interests of their children! True religion is the one thing needful to immortal beings. Death will soon strip us of all else on earth; but this will give us an eternal home in heaven. Then, christian parents, let your most ardent exertions be made to promote the salvation of the souls of the children God has committed to your care. Show by your liberality in supporting the gospel, that you prize religion above every thing else. Better far that you and your children should be as poor as Lazarus, and go to heaven, than that you and they should possess kingdoms on earth, and sink to hell. God will curse the basket and the store of the wicked. Wealth without grace affords the means of wickedness, and that tends to the deeper ruin of the never-dying soul. Hence, in thousands of instances, the houses and lands which parents have, with ceaseless toil and anxiety, procured for their children, will be the means of heating for them sevenfold hotter the furnace of immortal woe. And during an endless eternity, they will curse that worldly care that denied them the means of grace, and furnished them the means of crime, and so became the occasion of sinking them more deeply in the

gulf of perdition. Awful, indeed, is the thought of bringing such calamity upon the children we love ! but awful as it is, it will be realized by millions.

We should then remember, that nothing but divine grace can make our children happy ; without this, all that we bestow upon them will but aggravate their future condemnation. 'This should induce us incessantly to provide for them the means of grace.

'The gospel ministry has been ordained of God as the prominent means of propagating the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation. It pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But how shall they hear without a preacher ? Thus we see, according to the scriptures, the living preacher is appointed as an active instrument in saving souls. Hence, it is said, " take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine ; continue in them ; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

The gospel minister should give himself wholly to his work. It is not reason that he should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Hence arises the necessity of support. We must not engage in secular employments, as other men do. " Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel shall live of the gospel." The support of the

gospel ministry is a matter of justice, and not of charity. This will appear, if we consider,

1st. The expense and labor necessary to qualify a man for preaching the gospel. The bible is not only a large book, but one of great antiquity, and it was originally written in different languages, that have since ceased to be spoken. Now, whatever literature may be necessary to enable a minister to explain and defend the holy oracles before the people, should be acquired.

An ignorant minister is ever in danger of misleading the people, as well as of becoming the scoff of infidels. It is easy to see that years must be spent, and at great expense, to enable a man to be mighty in the scriptures, as a minister should be. The apostles spent years under the instruction of him who taught as man never taught, and, in addition to this, they had the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to lead them into all truth, and even to enable them to speak languages that they had never learned. The day of miracle has now passed away, and men must gain by industry, the knowledge necessary to preach the gospel. Is it reasonable, then, that men should labor, at great expense, for years, to qualify themselves for service, and then receive no compensation for their services? Could the congregation that would take such services without reward, expect the favor of God? Could they expect to grow and thrive upon unrequited toil?

2d. A devoted minister, in a temporal point of view, is worth more to any neighborhood than an ample support will cost. The faithful preaching of the gospel promotes morality, industry, economy; and these are essential both to comfort and wealth. Consequently, every neighborhood will become more wealthy by supporting a faithful minister than it would otherwise do. This observation is founded upon fact. Wherever people support a faithful ministry, they improve in their temporal circumstances more than others do. In this respect, godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, as well as that which is to come. Hence, it is the interest, as well as the duty, of all men to support the gospel.

3d. It requires all the time of a minister to attend to the duties of his office. A preacher of ordinary good talents, may find profitable employ for every day and every hour. If the limits of his immediate charge are too narrow to require all his labor, he should go beyond. Every where, multitudes are crowding the broad road to ruin. These he should aim to arrest, as they are hurrying on to destruction. To fulfill his duty, he must preach the word, and be instant in season and out of season. For this reason, he is not allowed to entangle himself with the affairs of this life, as other men do. Is it not reasonable, then, that he should have a competent support ?

4th. Secular employments tend to disqualify a minister's mind for the duties of the sacred office. They allow not time for the study and devotion necessary to expand the mind and warm the heart, and hence his discourses become barren, the life-giving glow of piety is lost, and they fall upon the people like the frosts of the second death. Worldly mindedness enters his heart, and embarrassing care distracts his mind; his piety languishes, his soul ceases to burn with heavenly fire, and instead of giving life to his flock, he imparts spiritual disease. Saints and sinners are permitted to slumber in carnal security, and thousands crowd the gates of eternal death! Such must be the results of a secular ministry. And the want of suitable support tends to make such a ministry. O! what an account will ministers and congregations have to render at the bar of God, in relation to the mutual discharge of duty! How many churches have wasted the energies of their ministers, by denying encouragement and support, and have been wasted, in turn, by barren and lifeless discourses.

5th. The spiritual advantages imparted by a faithful minister are such as can never be estimated. To some he is made the instrument of conversion and eternal salvation. He is, in the hand of God, the means of raising them from the deepest ruin to a crown of endless glory. The children of God he feeds with celestial food, and guides them in the way to hea-

ven. Who can estimate the value of such services? What on earth can requite the gospel minister for the responsibility he bears, while watching over never-dying souls? If he sows unto the people of his charge spiritual things, is it a great thing if he reap their carnal things? So reasons an inspired apostle. Nothing is more plainly taught in the sacred scriptures than the duty of supporting the ministry. The Savior sent out his disciples to preach the gospel, with nothing more than a present supply, that they might depend upon the fruits of their labor for sustenance. The laborer, he assured them, was worthy of his hire. The support of the minister, then, is a matter of justice, and not of charity. It is the duty of every one, according as the Lord has prospered him, to contribute liberally and cheerfully to support the gospel ministry. The Lord loveth a cheerful giver. Christian parents should attend to this duty with peculiar interest. It is the surest method of procuring the eternal happiness of their children. Parents who neglect this duty, have little reason to expect that they and their children will ever meet together in the kingdom of glory. If we would have all our offspring gathered into heaven, we must earnestly employ all the means that the Lord has appointed to accomplish this happy end.

To defraud any laborer is a crying sin; but to defraud the gospel minister, whom God has set to watch for our souls, and toil for our sal-

vation, is a crime attended with peculiar aggravation. This is, no doubt, a sin that is in many places wasting the church of God. It often turns the fruitful field into the barren wilderness. Parents, then, should see to it, that the minister has an ample support to dismiss him from secular cares, and if he does not sacredly attend to the duties of his office, he should be dismissed, that one more faithful may be employed. Never can we hope well for our children, but when they are placed in the hands of God, and under the care of a faithful pastor.

To place them in such circumstances we should count no sacrifice too great; and to accomplish this, we should labor with infinitely more ardor than to gain for them the wealth and honors of this world. And when parents shall have come up fully to the discharge of this duty, their children will crowd the way of holiness, and the church will arise from the dust, and shine forth with the brightness of the morning.

CHAPTER XII.

THE DUTY OF PARENTS TO MAINTAIN FAMILY WORSHIP.

THERE is the same reason that parents should pray in their families, as that ministers should pray in their churches. Prayer should be of-

ferred in families, at least morning and evening ; and should be attended with singing praises and reading the scriptures.

Nothing is more likely, than morning and evening devotions, to impress the hearts of children with a deep sense of religion, and secure them from the paths of sin, the temptations of the world, and enticing snares of the devil.

The exercises in family worship should be short. Long exercises tend to weary children, and cause them to dread the hour of devotion. Many parents, by long prayers, weary their children, and thus prevent the good that should result from family worship. Tediousness should be carefully avoided. Due efforts should be made to render the exercises interesting and pleasant.

Some excuse themselves from performing family worship on the ground of incapacity. Such excuse springs rather from the want of inclination to pray, than from incapacity. Any that can ask for a piece of bread can pray. A long prayer is not necessary. When the publican went up to the temple to pray he made a much shorter prayer than that of the pharisee, and yet it was very effectual. He simply said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The pharisee was rejected, and the publican was justified. There is no parent that has the power of speech, but can bow down with his family, and say, God be merciful to us sinners for

Christ's sake. This is as long as was the publican's prayer. And if presented from a fervent heart, in the exercise of faith, it will be as certainly heard and answered. Every one whose heart is right, and who has the power of speech, can pray in his family. It may not be the duty of every one to lead devotion in public, especially when there may be others better qualified to do it; but it is the duty of all parents who have the power of speech, to lead the devotions of their own families. When the father is absent, it is the duty of the mother to lead in devotion, unless some one else is present to supply the place of the father.

Parents should not allow the hurry of business to prevent them from the constant performance of this important duty. They should always feel that religion is the great business of life, and that to promote the salvation of their children is infinitely more important than gathering the perishing treasures of this world. God has given ample time for secular employments without encroaching upon the hours of devotion.

Parents should endeavor so to improve their minds as to enable them to give variety to family worship, and not be under the necessity of repeating the same prayer every morning and evening. Variety will give interest to devotion, and better secure the attention of children.

Professing parents are God's consecrated ministers of religion to their household. And will they refuse to worship God in their families? If they do, how will they answer for their violated vows? How will they be able to stand when God shall require at their hand, the souls committed to their care? Let all parents feel deeply their responsibility, and never fail to present morning and evening, the example of prayer to their children. How lovely is the truly devout family! O may the world soon be filled with such!

DUTY OF BAPTIZED CHILDREN.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ADVANTAGES THE HOUSEHOLDS OF BELIEVERS DERIVE FROM UNION WITH THE CHURCH.

It has been shown that the households of believers do belong to the church as certainly as children belong to a nation. We shall now notice some of the advantages they derive from this relation.

1. The children of believers are under the immediate care of the church. The officers of it are bound to see that their parents have them taught to read the scriptures, that they instruct them in the knowledge of divine truth, and govern them as the scriptures require, that

they separate them from such company as may corrupt their minds, that they pray with them, and for them, and set them a holy example, by carefully walking according to all the requisitions of the gospel; and that they provide for them the public and private means of grace so far as practicable. The officers of the church have a right to require parents to discharge all these duties, and ought to call them to account for the neglect of any one of them. They have a right to require parents to give reproof and correction in cases of immorality. It is through the parents that discipline is to be exercised upon their households. The officers of the church may also teach, counsel, reprove, and warn them as circumstances may require. And in case of the decease of the parents, it is the duty of the church officers to use due efforts to have the children placed under pious guardians, and have them brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. And dying parents are under obligation to leave their children thus to be brought up. And where they have not pious relatives with whom to leave them, they ought to leave the officers of the church guardians with power to have them religiously educated.

Now in case church officers discharge their duty, children thus situated have, over others, the advantage every way. Such a system is better than any other calculated to promote the temporal and spiritual welfare of children.

How deeply is it to be lamented that a large proportion of church officers seem to have lost sight of their duty in relation to the children of the church. O how many children perish by the negligence of those appointed to watch over them! O what an account must many church officers and parents render at the bar of God for neglecting the souls committed to their care! Great indeed are the responsibilities of church officers, as well as of parents.

2. Children of believers are committed to the care and prayers of all in the communion of the church. It is the duty of each member to guard the morals of all the children of the church, to set them a good example, and to give them good advice so far as they have opportunity. One grand end of church association is that of mutual aid. Every individual member of the church is bound to promote the spiritual interests of every professing family, and to watch over the children as well as the parents. A particular church is in fact but a larger family associated for mutual aid in promoting the salvation of souls. Every one then should feel that he or she is charged with the duty of watching over the children of the church, and also of praying for them. In case church members discharge their duty, it is one of the greatest privileges on earth to have our children connected with such a society. O that church members did feel as they ought, their obligations in relation to the children of

the church, and did live in the constant discharge of their duties! Then would Zion arise from the dust, put on her beautiful garments, and shine forth with the brightness of the morning.

3. God promises to bless the means which the church uses for the conversion of her children. Isa. lxi. 9: "And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they *are* the seed which the Lord hath blessed." Isa. lxxv. 23: "They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them." Isa. xlv. 3: "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." These passages show that God has special blessings for the children of his people. They shall be known among the Gentiles by their piety, as the seed which the Lord hath blessed, by the saving influences of his spirit. He will pour out his spirit upon the seed of the righteous, and his blessing upon their offspring. In this respect the promise is unto their children, Acts, ii. 39. He does promise to save their households, Acts, xvi. 31: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."

From what has been said, it is evident that

children of believers by union with the church, not only inherit the best means of grace, and the prayers of the pious, but also the promise of God's spirit to make those means effectual to salvation. And the fact that a large proportion of those who profess and evidence faith, are the offspring of the righteous, proves that the promise of God is verified. If it be asked then, what advantage have the households of believers by union with the church, and what profit is there in their baptism? we answer, much every way.

In view of these privileges, let me address some important considerations to baptized children.

1st. "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, and in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first, God having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." Acts, iii. 25, 26. You now stand where the Jews did. They were, by unbelief, broken off from the good olive tree, and the Gentiles were grafted into it. Rom. xi. 17—24. You then are the children of God's covenant, and the Lord Jesus Christ has been raised up to bless you, in turning every one of you from his iniquities. You are his in covenant relation. You have been solemnly consecrated to the service of God, by the washing of water, in the name of

the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. All this is of mere grace to you; God has no need of you; he has power to raise up the very stones of the earth children to Abraham. All then is done for your benefit, to make you forever happy. You have peculiar encouragement to embrace the Savior; he was raised up for you, and is tendered to you in a special manner; "the promise is unto you,"—he is ready to bless you, in turning you away from your iniquities.

2d. God has said "those that seek me early, shall find me." This is a special promise made to the young. When persons are young, the mind is more susceptible of religious impression, hence, in early life, is the most favorable time for becoming truly christians. The longer persons live in sin the more hardened they become, and the less susceptible of religious impression, and therefore is there less reason to hope that they will ever be saved. This forms a good reason why children, so soon as capable of understanding gospel truth, should believe in the Savior and obey him.

Another reason why they should, as early as practicable, obey the gospel, is, that their own happiness, even in this life, depends upon the discharge of their duty. God has constituted us to be happy only in the enjoyment of himself. The sooner that we enter upon this enjoyment the better. Religion is calculated to make us happy, both in time and eternity.

“Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” Nothing could make this world so happy as entire conformity to the gospel. It would banish the thorn and the thistle, dry up the very sources of sorrow, and spread the beauties of Eden over the face of the whole earth. Pale-faced sickness would bid the world adieu, and health and vigor would sit radiantly on every countenance. The bible commands nothing but that which is best for us in this life, as well as in the life to come. The sooner, then, that children obey the gospel, the sooner they will be happy.

3d. The sooner you embrace the Savior, the more you may accomplish in his cause, and the greater will be your reward in heaven. “The Lord will reward every man according to his works,” “and they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.” Every moment, then, you live in sin, you lessen the amount of future glory to be expected, even if afterwards you should become christians. All who do not serve Christ, serve the devil. The devil is a vile and mean master—the meanest and most hateful being in the universe. Why should you give to him the sweet morning of life? Why give, in sacrifice to the ruthless prince of hell, the best of your days? Why deny to the compassionate and bleeding Savior, the sweet

incense of early gratitude and praise? Why not give to him the blooming flower of youth, before it becomes withered and defaced by the blasting winds of crime and vice? No hand but his can protect you, and guide you safely through the rugged paths of life. All his ways are pleasantness, and all his paths are peace. Nothing can give you so much happiness as walking in the highway of holiness. Nothing is so adorning to youth as true piety. Give then, O! give the sweet morning of life to the Savior, who has loved you and given himself for you.

4th. Permit me to say to you, in the language of David to his son Soloman: "Know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts; if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever."

If you seek the God of your fathers, he will be found of you; but if you forsake him, he will cast you off for ever. He knows all the secret purposes of your hearts, and will receive nothing but honest devotion. He says to each of you, "Son, give me thine heart;" You must give your hearts to him, and serve him with a willing mind, else he will cast you off for ever. And how intolerable will be your condition, if after being exalted to heaven in point of privilege, you be cast down to endless

perdition. All your present privileges will be the savor of death unto death; they will heat for you sevenfold hotter the furnace of immortal woe. O how can you think of lying down in everlasting burnings, and of dwelling for ever with devouring flames? "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." O be persuaded now to "break off your sins by righteousness, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor." "Cease to do evil and learn to do well." Engage immediately, in the discharge of duty, relying alone upon the Savior for assistance, and expect to be accepted only for his righteousness' sake. Christ is the way to the Father; all must either come unto God by him, or perish for ever. O come to him and live—come without delay! "The Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

FILIAL DUTIES.

CHILDREN owe special duties to their parents. "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." *Exod. xx. 12.* This commandment is repeated in the new Testament. *Eph. vi. 1, 2, 3*: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right.

Honor thy father and thy mother, (which is the first commandment with promise,) that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." The perpetuity of this injunction cannot be doubted, and this solemn repetition of it speaks its importance. Parents are the means of the existence of children; they are their natural guardians; they watch over them in helpless infancy, with the utmost tenderness and solicitude, and with toil and expense provide for them the comforts of life. God has constituted them the governors and teachers of their children, during the state of minority. Parents love their children with an intenseness that cannot be estimated. No amount of ingratitude and rebellion can break the bands of parental affection. Absalom rebelled against David, his father, and not only sought to take his kingdom, but even his life; and yet, when David heard that Absalom was dead, he exclaimed, "O my son, Absalom! my son! my son Absalom! would to God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" Such was the intensity of a father's feelings towards a most ungrateful and rebellious son. Love intense, and solicitude incessant, possess the bosoms of parents, and call for the highest returns of affection and gratitude on the part of children. The honor which children are required to render to their parents, is a matter of justice. Next to God, children are indebted to their parents. They should return to their pa-

rents love, gratitude and respect proportionate to the love and favors bestowed upon them. All the lawful commands of parents should be strictly obeyed. The authority of parents is derived from God, and, consequently, extends only to things lawful. They have no right to command their children to violate the law of God, nor are children required to obey unlawful commands. But all the injunctions of parents that do not contravene the scriptures, are to be strictly obeyed, even though unimportant in themselves. The Lord has denounced the severest judgments against children who treat their parents with disrespect. Prov. xxx. 17 : "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it." The disobedient child may expect to die by some sudden judgment of God, lie unburied, until the ravens shall pick out his eyes; and the eagles shall eat them. Sudden and unexpected death is the penalty denounced against disobedient children. And if they die suddenly for their sin, without time for repentance, they will perish for ever.

THE END.