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AN

ALLEGORICAL DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

A PROFESSED MESSENGER FROM HEAVEN,

AND

AN OLD MAN,

ON

THE ASSUMPTION BY THE MESSENGER, THAT IMMERSION IS AN ESSENTIAL CONDITION OF SALVATION.

BY

REV. LEBBEUS ARMSTRONG, 1775-1860.

NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR.

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LEBBEUS ARMSTRONG,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the
Southern District of New York.

P R E F A C E .

THIS book derived its origin from a question put by a pious young lady, daughter of a highly respected Baptist minister in the city of New York, to the Author, who had just returned with her father from a visit to Greenwood Cemetery, in August, 1849. The question, as it was stated, alluded to the baptism of Christ by John the Baptist; and, although founded on *mere supposition*, it was complex, and comprised principles of vast importance. After having been proposed verbally, and no satisfactory answer made to it, the question was reduced to writing by the venerable father of the lady, and a categorical written answer was required on very singular specified conditions, as will be found in the sequel.

On retiring to prepare an answer, it was soon found that the question afforded abundant materials for the investigation of a subject highly important to the whole Christian community. As a *Messenger from Heaven* was hypothetically alluded to in the question pending, that Messenger was virtually admitted as a party concerned in the investigation, for the

purpose of vindicating the position assumed by him in the statement of the question. Hence, the subject matter of the question, and all the preliminaries deemed essential to the formation of an answer to it, are represented, *allegorically*, in a *dialogue* between the supposed professed Messenger from Heaven, and the Author, followed by a practical improvement of the allegorical investigation.

The dialogue represents the assumed Messenger from Heaven, as assailing both the foundation of the Author's *hope* of salvation, and his *qualification* for ministerial office, on an alledged deficiency in relation to the non-performance of an essential condition of salvation, and equally essential to qualify a human being for the ministry of the gospel of Christ; and, that the want of immersion was that deficiency. Hence, in the dialogue, the Messenger assumes the position, that immersion is the exclusive, positively designated, and divinely commanded mode of Christian baptism—that *this*, exclusively, is the essential condition of salvation, because, it comprises all other qualifications for the kingdom of Heaven—that none of mankind can be considered as true Christians, qualified to commune at the Lord's table; nor to be saved without immersion—and, consequently, that the *Old Man* had never been qualified for church-membership; nor for a seat at the sacramental table; nor for any ministerial office; but, was momentarily in danger of losing his soul forever, because he had not been immersed. The position taken by the Old

Man throughout the dialogue, is purely a course of interrogation, with a view to draw from the Messenger all possible reasons in support of the concomitants of his assumed position, that immersion is essential to salvation. The result of polemical problems, syllogistically plied, eventually elicited an *awful disclosure*, and the Messenger took his exit!

The improvement of the dialogue by the Old Man, is designed to show that the doctrines of the professed Messenger form a contrast to the Bible doctrines of essential conditions of salvation, taught by Christ and his apostles; and, of course, belong to the *tares sown in the gospel field of the world by an enemy*.

Hence, the preliminary circumstances—origin and import of the lady's question—the inexorable demand of a categorical answer by her father—the allegation and defence included in a hypothetical dialogue—and the improvement of the whole, comprising a solution of the original question, and concomitant extracts, and correspondencies, combine to constitute the substance of this volume, which is most humbly dedicated to the Christian Public by the

AUTHOR.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

From the Rev. Dr. MARSELUS.

THE undersigned has listened with unusual interest to the reading of a manuscript work by the Rev. Lebbeus Armstrong, entitled, "An Allegorical Dialogue," &c. The peculiar circumstances which originated this work; the attractive form in which it appears; the vigorous and pleasing style which characterizes it; and the issue to which it is brought; encircle it with an interest, which cannot fail to render it highly acceptable and useful to all who love the truth, and sincerely desire its triumph over error, delusion and bigotry. There is a fairness and candor evinced by the author in the discussion of the great question at issue, which are seldom found in controversial writings; and yet, where the cause of truth and righteousness demands it, he displays an intrepidity and fearlessness becoming one who "contends for the faith once delivered to the saints." He hesitates not to put into the mouth of the *professed Messenger from Heaven* the strongest, yea, far stronger arguments in favor of the exclusive system he combats, than can be found in any of the published writings of our Baptist brethren. And the overwhelming manner in which he demolishes those arguments, and shows their weakness, as well as utter futility, it is believed, will greatly stagger the faith, if not convince the judgment of those whose uncharitable (not to say unchristian) system he aims to destroy.

In the judgment of the undersigned, it seems impracticable,

if not impossible, to meet and overthrow the positions assumed, and the arguments employed, in vindication of the answer he gives to the original question proposed to him by the daughter of a respected Baptist clergyman. I have no doubt, that when this work is published, and its character and merits generally known, it will be sought with avidity, and gain a circulation seldom acquired by the religious publications of the present day.

In conclusion, I would apply to this work, the same testimony made by an eminent divine of the Baptist persuasion, in commending a recent publication by the same author: "Mr. Armstrong is an original thinker, and a fearless writer. He has drawn his arguments from the living oracles of truth, and may therefore boldly invite the scrutiny of the critic; and challenge the contradiction of all, without the hazard of refutation."*

N. I. MARSELUS,

Pastor of the Ref. D. Church, Bleeker Street, N. Y.
NEW YORK, Sept. 23d, 1850.

*From the Rev. Dr. McELROY, Pastor of Grand Street
Presbyterian Church, N. Y.*

I very cheerfully and cordially concur in the above views
and recommendation.
J. McELROY.

From the Rev. Dr. SAMUEL H. COX.

IN the above, I also concur with all my heart. Many Baptist brethren, both laical and clerical, in America and in Europe, are my personal friends, honored and beloved, very signally and dearly; but *not at all* for their offensive and schismatical peculiarities, and only in spite of them. Where their errors affect Christian communion, let them disguise it as they can, it is a schism, popery and treason in the Church of God; and if war must come in reference to the question, then, I say, let it come, the sooner the better, I am prepared for it. My own full conviction is, that their grand positions

* See "SIGNS OF THE TIMES," 3d edition, Notices of the Press, "For the New York Recorder," page 6th, C. G. SOMMERS.

in the controversy are all illusory and false: they lead to evil—to unbrotherly alienations—to miserable party manœuvres, and perpetual wickedness in the Churches. Nor do I believe that there are many elements of pure sectarian error in the Church-universal, at once more fallacious, specious, insidious, and degrading than are theirs. I do not believe that any man was ever religiously submersed by the command of God; or that submersion of any kind is made a type of *mercy* in the inspired oracles: though it is often of *judgment*, since the deluge—since the drowning of Pharaoh and his host—since the perishing in the waters of the whole herd of swine—and since the awful comminations, there written, that have such images, as “the lake of fire, that burneth with brimstone, which is the second death.” These are some few of the reasons why I recommend the work of Mr. Armstrong.

SAMUEL H. COX.

BROOKLYN, *Oct. 15th*, 1850.

*From the Rev. Dr. KREBS, Pastor of Rutgers Street
Presbyterian Church, N. Y.*

I have read the whole of Mr. Armstrong's manuscript on the subject of Baptism. It is not necessary to repeat the testimony of Dr. Marselus to its merits. I will only say, then, that this work is timely; that if published, no man who takes it up will be willing to lay it down until he has finished its perusal; and that it is eminently calculated, by its clear and logical arrangement, its minute analysis of the whole question of controversy in all its aspects, its scriptural argument, and its sprightly style, to produce conviction and awaken solemn reflection. Although necessarily controversial in its nature, so far from being obtrusive, its preparation was compelled, and it is neither bigoted, sectarian, nor angry; but it breathes the very spirit of love and kindness to “those of the contrary part,” with whom it so frankly deals, yet tenderly expostulates. It is aimed, not at their liberty wherein Christ hath made them free, but, only, at the offensive arrogance which has perverted a divine ordinance into a sanction of schism, and invalidated the very bond of Christian union in “One Lord, one faith, and one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all.” As

a *vindication* of the practice of Pedobaptist Churches it is complete and instructive. The Sermons at the close of the work are edifying in the highest degree, and ought to be scattered broad-cast.

JOHN M. KREBS.

NEW YORK, *Oct. 10th*, 1850.

From the Rev. Mr. WRIGHT, Pastor of the Associate Scotch Presbyterian Church, in Jane Street, N. Y.

I heartily concur in the statements and recommendation of Dr. Krebs.

A. H. WRIGHT.

NEW YORK, *Oct. 11th*, 1850.

From the Rev. Dr. SPENCER.

The Rev. Dr. Krebs has expressed, in the main, my opinion of Mr. Armstrong's manuscript; and his sagacity, earnestness and genius will not be doubted by any attentive reader of his book.

I. S. SPENCER,

Pastor of the 2d Presbyterian Church.

BROOKLYN, *Oct. 22d*, 1850.

From the Rev. Dr. E. D. SMITH.

The Rev. Lebbeus Armstrong has read to me a Treatise, written by him on the subject of Baptism. The argument is conducted with earnestness—well fitted to command and repay attention—free from perplexity and obscurity. The author evidently aims to do good. One of his chief objections to the system of the Baptists, is, the *exclusiveness* which characterizes it, in the refusal by the Baptist to commune with those whom *they regard as true disciples of Christ.* The book, if published, would seem to demand an answer. And in my humble judgment, the Treatise of Mr. Armstrong, if

RECOMMENDATIONS.

published, would meet with a sale sufficient to afford the publisher an adequate and perhaps a liberal remuneration.

E. D. SMITH,

Pastor of the Chelsea Presbyterian Church.

NEW YORK, *Sept. 7th*, 1850.

From the Rev. Mr. SPEAR.

I have examined a work entitled, "Allegorical Dialogue," &c., proposed to be published by Rev. Lebbeus Armstrong. From my knowledge of the author, as well as from the examination I have given, my impression is that the argument on the subject treated of, is both ably and candidly conducted; and that the book, if published and circulated, will reward the labor of reading, and the expense of purchase.

S. T. SPEAR,

Pastor of the South Presbyterian Church of Brooklyn.

BROOKLYN, *Oct. 17th*, 1850.

From the Rev. Mr. GORDON.

Having read in manuscript a work by the Rev. Lebbeus Armstrong, entitled, "An Allegorical Dialogue between a Professed Messenger from Heaven, and an Old Man; on a Question involving the essential condition of Salvation, the same, in amount, as 'What must I do to be saved?'" we think its publication will be well timed, and may possibly serve to sober the senses of some, and to enlighten the minds of others, who endorse the evangelical assumptions which he is driven to expose, by an *incident related as the occasion of the work*, which, however trivial in itself, is mainly interesting, as an *exponent* of the sentiments and feelings of our Bible improving Baptists, and the practical *tendencies* of their iron bigotry, and Anti-Christian exclusiveness into which that denomination is drilled by their leaders, teaching and preaching, and *sweating over one idea*, as the *alpha and omega* of true Christian discipleship. Although many publications have appeared on both sides of this "*vexed question*," this work differs from them all, in its conception and design; showing that the doctrinal difficulty that gives the Baptists their denominational existence, comes not from heaven or earth; and

reducing their arguments to vast absurdity. One fact related is appalling, namely,—THE DEPOSITION of a Baptist Clergyman for the crime of sitting down at the Lord's table with Christians who had not been immersed!

There is throughout this treatise a directness of logical remark, and energetic closeness of pursuit, which impart to the reader all the animation of the chase. There is no "let up." And although some may complain that the Baptist is impolitely pulled, and pushed, and shoved about, it must be remembered that he, *more impolitely* has made the onset. All orthodox Baptist authors unchurch every denomination but their own. Mr. Armstrong has simply tried upon them the force of their own *ramrod arguments*, and if it be an uncomfortable endurance, yet they must submit to be shown that their own existence as a constituent part of the visible church, depends upon the question, whether the visibility of the Church of God be not owing to the ABRAHAMIC COVENANT in virtue of which said Church was first set up as a visible organized society? Now, if this be fairly argued out we think the boasting Baptist will be found in the *vocative*. The author has shown them their true position. And if he has rebuked them sharply, it is that they may be sound in the faith. We hope his work may be widely extended.

WILLIAM R. GORDON,

Pastor of the D. Church, cor. of Green and Houston Sts.
NEW YORK, Oct. 10th, 1850.

From the Rev. Dr. LANSING.

I have read the whole of the Rev. Mr. Armstrong's manuscript on the subject of immersion as indispensable to Christian Communion at the Lord's table, and am prepared to unite with the Rev. Drs. Marselus, Krebs, Cox, and others, in the wish that it might be published, and with them to express my full conviction that it cannot fail to be read.

This work, in its plan, its argument, and its illustrations, is entirely its author's own. Few men would, or *could*, if they *would*, write such a book. I say not this to disparage it; but rather as looking at the peculiar features of the author's mind. He exhibits throughout a charming Christian spirit; and while he says some things that are exceedingly severe and cutting, he comes to the work as one who has to force

himself onward by the love of truth against the remonstrances of his natural sympathy. That he has, as a whole—truth, the example of gospel saints, and of the Christian Church in the earlier periods of its history, and the outgushings of the sanctified ingenuousness of even our *Baptist brethren*, as well as the friends of Christ of other denominations on the side of the blessedness as well as the solemn duty of *universal Christian communion*, I have no doubt.

D. C. LANSING,

Pastor of the Congregational Church, Clinton Avenue.
BROOKLYN, Oct. 22d, 1850.

From the Rev. Dr. KENNADAY.

Although I have not been able to examine the manuscript of Rev. Mr. Armstrong as minutely as those brethren have whose opinions are expressed in his "Prospectus," yet, I fully concur in their convictions of the importance of the subject, to which the work is devoted, and of his ability to furnish an appropriate volume. The many years through which I have known Mr. Armstrong, have given me such evidences of his Christian kindness, as prompt me to believe that his work will be pervaded by a candor and charity greatly diminishing that asperity which too often enters into controversies. From these considerations I commend the work to the Christian public.

J. KENNADAY,

Pastor of the Pacific Street M. E. Church.
BROOKLYN, Nov. 5th, 1850

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CHAPTER I.

A VISIT TO GREENWOOD CEMETERY.

ON a very pleasant day, near the departure of the summer season of 1849, (which will be long remembered by mourners who have followed their departing friends to the shades of silent repose,) an estimable Baptist Minister, long the much-loved pastor of a peaceful and orderly church in the city of New York, invited the writer of these lines to accompany him on a visit to the celebrated Cemetery, where the wife of his bosom, and the dear mother of his children had slept in the earth during several years, with a lovely infant in her arms, awaiting the approach of the rest of the household, to share, with her, the quietness of the bed of death, which Christ has sweetened for his friends, in preparation for their triumphant resurrection to mansions of eternal glory.

The invitation was gratefully accepted. And at an early hour in the forenoon, aided by a pleasant stage-ride to the place, we were walking together among the vaults, and tombs; over hills and dales; amid

the complicated meanderings of the various carriage roads, and pathways within the pales of that vast enclosure of death. These, all, were surrounded and interspersed with the most delightful shade-trees of various species and sizes, from the lowly shrub to the sturdy oak, KING-TREE of the forest, whose formidable trunk and wide-spread branches, apparently, bid defiance to the violence of the tempestuous tornado.

There, also, beneath the shades of the forest, monuments of the dead, of various admirable descriptions, are surrounded and overgrown with ten thousand times ten thousand blooming roses and violets, of such variety and beauty, as to invite the attention of all beholders to the ever-memorable contrast which subsists between the living beauty of the blooming vegetable kingdom in the glory of her summer-season dress, and the pale, and withered aspect of nature's gloom, after frosts of autumn have performed their office of prostrating leaves and flowers beneath the feet of the traveller as he walks among the tombs of the dead. And not less is the contrast between the healthful child, the blooming youth, the strong man in the full vigor of life, and, their appearance, when dressed in the habiliments of death, in preparation for a transport from their respective homes, to become residents among the mouldering inhabitants of the grave.

Surrounded with such objects, the variety of which afforded ever-varying subjects of meditation, we continued our walks among the slumbering dead, in vari-

ous portions of the admirable grove, where delight and solemnity combine to teach the living what they ought now to be; and, what they soon must be, when the "course of time" shall have numbered their allotted moments, and a tomb in the cemetery shall become the place of their abode!

At length, the past-meridian sun moved us to wend our way among the tombs, to the plain, but beautiful enclosure of the long-departed consort and infant of the devoted man of God, whose numerous visits there, before, had taught him many lessons of submission to the sovereign government of Him, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." There we lingered, and meditated, and felt! Alas! who that had buried a virtuous wife, could help but feel by the side of her grave? And who, that had been blessed with the help and comforts of a virtuous wife for more than fifty-two years, and expected soon to be separated from her by death, (as was the case with the writer,) could help but *feel*, or would wish to repress the most solemn reminiscences, or anticipations, in the society of a brother minister whose kindness had directed his footsteps to those monitory shades where the beloved partner of his life, joys, and sorrows, lay mouldering in the grave!

After taking leave of this memorable spot, we retired from the vast enclosure of the dead, to the house of a friend, where we were kindly entertained by refreshments, and returned to New York, under the impression, that such a visit to the abodes of the dead

afforded superior mental enjoyment to all that could be derived from the most splendid festivities of earth. Yea, we learned by experience the truth of the inspired declaration, that "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting, for that is the end of all flesh, and the living will lay it to heart."

The foregoing visit afforded matter for the following Ode on the celebrated Greenwood Cemetery; which is most humbly dedicated to all who have friends deposited there, or expect, themselves, soon to share, for a season, an inheritance in the dark abodes of the city of death, where no other preparation can be made for the day of judgment, than to sleep in the dust till the archangel's trumpet shall call all nations to the bar of God.

GREENWOOD CEMETERY.

Mount of repose, where legions of the dead
 Are sleeping, lonely, in their coffin bed;
 Remains of friends, belov'd in former years;
 Gone, now, where mounds are oft bedew'd with tears!
 Around each sculptur'd monumental tomb,
 Rear'd in these hallow'd shades of nature's bloom,
 Each fading flow'r, and epitaph of friend,
 Teach living mortals that their days will end.
 Remov'd from life, here sires and infants sleep;
 Here mothers moulder, o'er whom children weep.
 Each hillock calls some mourner to this grove,
 Under bereavement, bath'd in tears of love!

Alas ! what shall be said of man's short life ?
 Spent in mere quest of earthly good, or strife ;
 Or worse than wasted by opposing God ?
 Made wretched, more, by thirst for human blood !
 More useful lessons in this grove are taught ;
 Earth's noblest creatures, here, to dust are brought.
 Remember this, let Greenwood visits blend,
 Sure preparation for thy latter end.

August 28th, 1849.

While on a visit with that esteemed family, each member of the household, from oldest to youngest, consisting of nine in number, selected the subject of an acrostic on his or her name, all which were prepared, and presented, on condition of the recital of the ten commandments, and cordially received, accompanied with the interchange of social and Christian affection, reciprocally cherished, in a manner never to be forgotten while memory retains her office. That their selection of subjects for acrostics is worthy of record and imitation, will appear from the admirable catalogue of their own choosing, which is as follows :
 1. Christ is all, and in all. 2. The Bible. 3. Greenwood Cemetery. 4. The resurrection of Christ. 5. God is love. 6. The death of Christ. 7. The penitent thief's prayer and Christ's answer. 8. The star of Bethlehem. 9. What qualifications are requisite to a worthy participation of the Lord's Supper as he commanded, " This do in remembrance of me."

But, strange as it may appear, a very singular, and

important question arose, on the solution of which, the happy circle of Christian friends above described, were well known to entertain different opinions. And yet the question came from such a quarter, and was so complex in its construction, that to evade it, or avoid it, or attempt an answer, was soon found to be impossible, without involving unavoidable controversy, which, perhaps, was not anticipated by the mover of the question; and the very thought of which, could not for a moment be cherished, by at least a portion of the company present. On the whole, the question, for sometime after it was propounded, was evidently considered, by some portion of the company, as being triumphantly unanswerable, and equally unavoidable, however humiliating the result of its existence might be to a party concerned in that circle of Christian love and unity. At length, circumstances rendered it indispensable that the question should be answered, categorically, and it was promptly so answered by the individual to whom it was propounded; but not without the appearance of regret that such a question was ever proposed.

The origin and momentous import of the question alluded to—the singular progress of its pendency—and the method and amount of its solution were evidently among the providential “*Signs of the Present Times*,” and as such, it is believed, are imperiously called for by the Christian public, for whose prayerful consideration the following historical facts are recorded.

CHAPTER II.—

A Question Proposed, Based on a Supposition of very Singular and Complex Import, and a Categorical Answer Required on Most Hazardous Conditions.

Soon after the visit to Greenwood Cemetery, the pious and accomplished eldest daughter of the Baptist minister above alluded to, who was on the eve of entering into a most happy connubial connexion, proposed, in the presence of her father and household, the following question, namely: “Mr. Armstrong, if a messenger from Heaven should be commissioned to inform you, that you could not be saved, unless you was baptized in the same way that Christ was baptized by John the Baptist, which of the three following practices would you choose, Immersion, Pouring, or Sprinkling?”

As there had been no previous controversy, nor conversation with her, or in her presence, on that subject, and in view of the complexity and incongruous import of the question on first hearing it; and, also, a desire to avoid controversy, I, at first, preferred an evasive

answer. Observing this, the father of the lady was moved most earnestly to require a categorical answer to the question. The following answer was then presented for substance, as follows: If the salvation of my soul was divinely suspended on my choice of the mode of Christian baptism, and I was made to believe that such was the fact, the only sure method of safety would dictate, to be baptized in all three of the practical modes mentioned in the question.

This was considered to be an unsatisfactory "sophism," designed to avoid, totally, an answer, or to present a new mode of evading the force of the question, which, it was alleged, required, specifically, that one, and one only, of the three specified modes of baptism should be selected, and that this should be positively the mode in which Christ was baptized by John in Jordan, or, in which mode I believed that Christ was baptized.

The father of the lady hesitated not to pronounce the answer given as an uncandid manifestation of a disposition to avert or escape from a conviction of the truth. This was followed with words still more earnest and decisive. "Why do you not answer my daughter's question?" was repeated and reiterated. At length it was said earnestly, "You dare not answer that question. I now challenge you to do it." This moved me to say, "Put your daughter's question in writing, with your name to it, and I will answer it." A paper was shortly after presented, on which was written as follows, and placed in the following order:

“*Brother Lebbeus Armstrong*;

“If a messenger from Heaven should be commissioned to inform you that you could not be saved unless you were baptized in the same way that Christ was baptized by John the Baptist, which of the three following practices would you choose ?

“1. Immersion,

“2. Pouring,

“3. Sprinkling.

“Be so good as to write your name opposite to the mode you would choose, and return this paper to me.”

After the challenged question aforesaid was reduced to writing, signed by the initials of the Baptist minister's name, whose daughter proposed the question, and delivered and accepted in form as above, considerable altercation was next had in relation to the precise manner in which the signature should be made on the paper.

The writer of the question peremptorily insisted that nothing should be written on the blank portions of the paper containing the question, on either side of it, except the name of the person to whom it was addressed. And that his name should be written by his own hand, opposite to his choice of three modes of baptism,—to be done as though done in the presence of a Messenger from Heaven, commissioned by the Great Eternal, to decide, “That if he failed to set his name opposite to the mode in which he believed that Christ was positively baptized by John the Baptist, the salvation of his soul should be forfeited !!!”

The receiver of the written question, before any answer was attempted, with equal promptness contested the point, by affirming, that although the writer of the question had assumed the prerogative of requiring of a fellow mortal such a restricted and categorical answer to a hypothetical question, by the mere signature of his name, under such conditions as would involve the awful hazard of two chances out of three, that he might miss the mark, and lose a jewel, worth more to him than the whole globe of earth could repay; and that no explanation nor reason should be given in connection with the signature, to show why such a question was given; the circumstances under which it was received; and the import of the answer designed to be given by the signature, a requirement than which nothing could be more unreasonable; and if complied with, nothing could be more absurd, preposterous, and even a blasphemous trifling with God, and undervaluing the soul which he had made; yet, it was claimed as an equal prerogative, belonging, in all consciousness, to the receiver of the question then in hand, to write upon the blank portions of the paper any explanations or reasons which he pleased, in connection with his signature, which he had engaged to give, and that no arguments nor persuasions need be attempted to dissuade him from that position.

Here, it was argued, (before a word was written on the paper containing the question given, and received for solution,) that the burden of the question was not whether immersion is a scriptural mode of Christian

baptism. This was admitted by the receiver of the question, and confirmed by an affirmation that he had baptized two persons by immersion, who desired it, in the course of his ministry, and, that, if he was requested to do it, he would baptize forty more, or any number required; not because he believed *that* to be the only scriptural mode of applying water in Christian baptism; but, it was *a mode* of applying water in the administration of a divine ordinance, which divinely required the application of water to a proper subject, in the name of the Holy Trinity. And as water baptism was a sealing ordinance, and as there was reason from Scripture to believe that the forehead of a human body was the part of the body to receive the outward sign of water baptism, hence this ordinance was divinely appointed to represent, by purifying water, the gracious purification of the sinner's heart, by the sprinkling application of atoning blood, in the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Consequently, it was argued that if water was applied by a divinely authorized administrator to a proper subject for Christian baptism, in the name of the Holy Trinity, either by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling, the amount would be, the administration of water, as a purifying seal on the forehead, to represent the necessity of the purification of the soul from guilt, by the application of the blood of atonement, which cleanseth from all sin.

And it was further argued, that the burden of the

question which remained to be solved, was not to determine precisely, nor positively, in what particular mode Christ was baptized by John, in Jordan, to fulfil the righteousness of a divinely-required Mosaic rite, in a legal consecration to the office of the Jewish priesthood, which it was necessary for Christ to fulfil, to give legal sanction to his public office-work, as a teacher and preacher of righteousness, during the three years of his ministry previous to his crucifixion, and subsequent abrogation of the ceremonial law and ordinances. The question to be solved has nothing to do in determining the particular mode of John's baptism of thousands unto repentance ; nor of the mode in which Christ was baptized ; nor to designate the precise rule of our faith in the way or mode in which Christ was baptized. All these points are merely recorded as circumstantialities. They are facts, which are recorded in Scripture, of the sayings and doing of Christ, and his forerunner John, before Christian baptism was instituted or commanded by Christ. Hence, the mode in which Christ was baptized by John can never constitute the infallible rule of our faith and practice, as a divine ordinance in the Christian Church, until it can first be found in the Bible, that when Christ was baptized by John, whatever the mode might have been, he then and there, or subsequently and elsewhere, declared that immersion was then and there instituted as the only divinely-appointed, expressly-designated, and commanded mode of gospel baptism, and that those who practiced any other mode of applying water in

Christian baptism should be considered, and ranked, among the violators of a known, designated, and positively commanded, divine law, the penalty of which is, that impenitent transgressors shall be punished with eternal damnation.

Such, I understand, to be the consequence which the problem, presented to me for solution by signature, attaches to immersion as the only scriptural mode of Christian baptism.

All this is most assuredly implied in the very problem proposed for my solution, under the forfeiture of my soul's salvation, if an error is committed by placing my name opposite to the mode in which Christ was baptized by John the Baptist. The very question is predicated on the awful presumption that none of mankind have been saved since the days of John the Baptist, but those who have been baptized by immersion, and that none of mankind can ever be saved, unless they are baptized by *immersion*!

Now, if such is the "IF," "the supposed," "the taken for granted," doctrine of the messenger from Heaven, to whose problem I am requested to subscribe my name, it might well be supposed that if I had the least degree of faith in the correctness of the presumptuous doctrine comprised in the hypothetical question; and the still more unreasonable proposal that I should subscribe my name, upon the peril of my soul's salvation, to the mode in which I believe that Christ was baptized, not one of which supposed doctrines or requirements are expressly required in the

Bible, as essential to the salvation of human beings; it must be considered as the height of *presumption*, especially, if the well-known name of a gospel minister should appear in signature by his handwriting to such a compound of absurdity, without a single explanation or reason appended to show the circumstances of such an unheard-of request, and presumptuous compliance.

The question, in all its hypothetical profundities, before being written, has been safely answered, verbally, by the proposal to sign the name opposite to *all* the practical modes of Christian baptism; but this was not satisfactory. And now, since the question appears in writing, an answer is required by writing a name opposite to the mode in which it is believed that Christ was baptized by John, on the supposition, that I am informed, by a messenger from Heaven, that the salvation of my soul depends, exclusively, on my choice of the mode in which water is to be applied in Christian baptism, and that such signature shall be made without a word else written on the paper. No, sir, that cannot be.

As if to put an end to any farther debate upon the point last mentioned, the writer of the problem which I was required to answer, peremptorily inquired thus, "In what mode do you believe Christ was baptized?"
A. "With, or in, the water of Jordan." *Q.* "Was he baptized by immersion or sprinkling?" *A.* "The Scriptures do not expressly designate the mode." *Q.* "Was he sprinkled?" *A.* "The water of Jordan was applied to his body by John the Baptist, and, consider-

ing the Jewish ceremonial rite of consecrating Aaron and his sons to the office of the priesthood, divinely required that they should be washed with water at the door of the tabernacle, by *sprinkling* the water of purification upon them;" (Num. viii. 7.,) "and, as Christ's baptism by John was, evidently, a mere compliance with that Mosaic ceremonial rite of consecration to the sacred office of a public preacher of righteousness, and as he required that John should baptize him to 'fulfill all righteousness,' hence, there is as much reason to believe that John baptized Christ *with* the water of Jordan, by *sprinkling*, as there is to believe that Christ was baptized *in* the water of the Jordan, by *immersion*."

Q. Do you say, then, that you believe that Christ was sprinkled?

A. I now say that Christ's baptism was in conformity with a Mosaic ceremonial rite to "fulfill all righteousness." The ritual which was "fulfilled" by his baptism, was a divinely-appointed consecration of the Aaronic priesthood to their sacred office by washing with water at the door of the tabernacle, which Moses was expressly commanded, by the Almighty to perform by "sprinkling." (*Vide* Numbers viii.) Hence, as Christ's baptism was, evidently, a sacred consecration to his ministry as a preacher of righteousness, in fulfilment of a Jewish ceremonial rite, it is reasonable to conclude that the ancient mode of that ceremonial rite was performed by sprinkling; and to say the least, there is as much reason to believe that

Christ was baptized by *sprinkling*, as by *immersion*.

Q. Will you sign your name to this paper that I have written, that you say, that you *believe* that Christ was sprinkled by John?

A. I will do no such thing.

This inflexible promptness moved the writer of the main question to propose, with leave, to withdraw the question altogether; to destroy the paper, and thus let the whole subject be, and remain, as though it had never existed.

This movement was at once repelled with promptness. "No, sir, this cannot be. The subject has progressed too far, to be thus disposed of by oblivion! I have been long watching 'signs of the times.' In this friendly controversy, signs of the present times have been developed which deserve to be spread before the public, and a record of them will most assuredly be forthwith in preparation. I would not take a five dollar bill for the paper you gave me containing the question of your amiable daughter, written and signed by your hand. Of course, you may not only expect my signature to that paper, categorically, as has been required, and promised, but also my explanations and reasons for so doing, both on that, and on other paper, as I may deem expedient. And, perhaps, it may appear in print, in connection with a discourse which I delivered long ago, in vindication of the scripture doctrine of infant baptism, designed as a manual both of the subjects and mode of Christian baptism."

The reply for substance was, "Well, then, go forward. Write what you please, and if you will publish it in connection with your sermon on Infant sprinkling, of which I have heard, I will give twenty-five dollars to aid in the publication, and will answer it when you have done. I have, however, this request to make, now, before any answer is made to the question proposed for solution, now in your possession. I have learned from your conversation that you have formed an opinion that, because we Baptists refuse to hold free, sacramental communion with all others, whom we deem to be unbaptized, because not baptized in the mode which Christ was baptized by John; therefore, you think that we hold, that the mode of baptism by immersion is essential to the salvation of the soul, which I now assure you, positively, *is not our belief nor doctrine*. I know not a Baptist in the world, who believes that *immersion is essential to salvation*. And for this very purpose, lest you might suppose from the 'question' that we hold immersion to be essential to salvation, you will please to notice, particularly, that the conjunction 'If,' in the question now in your possession for answer, is underscored with threefold strokes of the pen.

"Now, will you believe that we are honest when we say this? Answer me now, do you believe that we speak the truth when we say, that no Baptist believes immersion to be essential to salvation? Can you believe me, when I say, that I believe no such

thing, and that I know of none other Baptists who do believe it? What say you?"

My reply to this repeated and reiterated question was, "Most certainly, brother, I believe you, and all others, when they affirm the same thing. I am bound so to do. But, I have yet to learn the fact, if your doctrine and practice of close communion does not amount to the very same thing which you so earnestly disavow. And, for that very reason, I consider close communion a canonical error of such magnitude and tendency, that the unity and prosperity of the Church of God require its abandonment from Christendom. And to make this appear will be the burden of my investigations and reasons which may be expected to accompany the signature of my name to the question on paper which you have committed to me for solution."

Such being the preliminaries, the question was next taken under solemn and prayerful consideration, before any signature was made. It was hence deemed an important duty to spread the paper before the Lord, and to seek instruction and counsel from heaven before venturing the final decision of such a complicated and momentous question. This, it is believed, was done in singleness and integrity of heart, in a prayerful search after the knowledge of divine truth.

CHAPTER III.

A Dialogue on the above Question, Resulting in an Awful Disclosure,
and Solemn Soliloquy.

THE question was next taken up for examination, and the scene which led to an accurate analysis of all the component parts of the professedly new revelation from heaven, based on mere supposition, comprising principles repugnant to the gospel of Jesus Christ, may be learned from the following dialogue, between a real lover of Bible truth, and an unreal visionary visitant, professedly commissioned from the celestial regions, not only to present and confirm the identical problem which was put into my hand written and subscribed on paper; but to aid me in that awful emergency in forming such an answer to it as, it was averred, would, if complied with, result in my present and everlasting benefit, honor, and salvation. Thus, the scene commenced, progressed, and ended, as follows:

In closet-retreat from all mortal observation.

An old Congregational Minister, in retirement for

devotion, sits reading the Scriptures, with a paper in his hand. Suddenly, (as may be supposed,) an unearthly form, indescribably majestic, appears before him, and thus accosts him: "Old man, I am a Messenger from Heaven, commissioned to give you *new* and important information!"

As may be supposed, the old man, (for such, henceforth during this hypothetical conference, will be the appellation of one of the parties concerned,) rising from his seat, bows with reverence, and with trembling solicitude, ventures to say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth!"

Messenger. I am authorized from the Throne of Heaven, to announce to you, that, although you have preached to others for almost half a century, and administered divine ordinances to many of mankind; yet you have never been duly qualified to officiate as a gospel minister, and you are still in danger of losing your immortal soul.

Old Man. This is important information indeed, if true; but it is not exactly *new*, for I was told the same thing for substance, between thirty and forty years ago, by a celebrated Baptist minister.

Messenger. I know you have been often warned of your deficiency in Bible knowledge, and yet you have kept on in your old way, hardening your heart against the most unequivocal portions of Scripture, and even now, when I have condescended to make you a visit in your old age, and just began to reveal the instructions of my celestial commission to you, the first

thing that comes into your noddle to reply, is an insult of my majestic commission. You say, "this is important information indeed, *if true*," implying your irreverend disbelief of my word. I might tear you in pieces if permitted. How dare you thus dispute my word? I will prove the truth of my commission to you, and point out your deficiency and danger from the very book in your hand, and show you, that all the curses written in that book are ready to break forth in vengeance on your hoary head. You have professed faith in Christ; but, you have never been baptized, as Christ was baptized by John the Baptist in Jordan, by *immersion*, and, until that is done, you never can be saved; and all your preaching will be in vain.

Old Man. Can you prove from the Bible that the mode of baptism by immersion is an essential condition of salvation, without the performance of which, none of Adam's race were ever saved since the days of John the Baptist; and that none can be saved unless baptized by immersion? Here, then, take the Bible, and show me a "Thus saith the Lord" to prove it.

Messenger. How dare you speak so to *me*? Have I not told you, that I am a messenger from heaven, commissioned to inform you that you could not be saved, unless you were baptized in the same way that Christ was baptized by John the Baptist, which, every body ought to know, was immersion? And will you now, in my presence, dispute my word?

Will you be baptized by immersion, as Christ was baptized, and be saved? Or, will you go on in your old fashioned way, endeavoring to make baby Christians by sprinkling them as you was sprinkled? Every time you sprinkle a person, old or young, and pronounce the words, "I baptize thee," you utter a falsehood with the name of God in your mouth, and commit blasphemy. Once more, I ask you, will you be baptized by immersion, as Christ was baptized by John the Baptist, and be saved, or, will you cling to your Idol-sprinkling, and be *****?—let eternity say what! Answer me without an "if" or an "and."

Old Man. I have waited a long time to hear your proof from the Bible, that immersion is the *only scriptural* mode of Christian baptism, and that it is an essential condition of salvation, without which none of Adam's race were ever saved since the days of John the Baptist, and that none can ever be saved unless baptized by immersion. But you have refused to take the Bible into your hands, and have waived the answer to my question. And now in the seventy-fourth year of my age, you demand of me, peremptorily, the performance of a new condition of salvation which I have never seen in the Bible; and which, I suspect, you have never seen in the Bible, or you would have produced the Bible testimony, when you was desired to do it. You have positively asserted that I cannot be saved unless I am baptized in the same way that Christ was baptized by John, and that the mode of

baptism by immersion is an essential condition of salvation.

Now, sir, you have entered my room in a nick of time. I was just considering the contents of a question put into my hands by a friend for my solution, on certain specified conditions. And, if I am not laboring under gross mistake, it comprises the very same doctrines, inculcates the same principles, and requires the same answer which you have enjoined. I have not been able to discover but one point of difference between the writing and your message. Here is the paper, look at it; perhaps your explanation will supersede the necessity of a quotation from the Bible, which you have declined.

Messenger. (Takes the paper, and reads it.) Well. What is the point of difference to which you allude?

Old Man. Why, plainly, a difference appears. The question on paper is based on hypothesis, altogether. You see it begins with "IF," thoroughly underscored, to show that the venerable writer was honest, and meant nothing but supposition, i. e., 'if,' or admitting the supposition, or taking it for granted, that a Messenger from Heaven should be commissioned to inform you that you could not be saved, unless you were baptized in the same way that Christ was baptized by John the Baptist, in what mode would you choose to be baptized, by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling? So the question was put to me, and a cate-

gorical answer was required, by signing my name to the mode which I should prefer.

But *you* come to me without any "if," and inform me that you are a Messenger from Heaven, commissioned, positively, to inform me as positively, that I cannot be saved, unless I am baptized by immersion; that this is the only scriptural mode of baptism, and that it is positively essential to salvation. And here, you also differ from the friend who wrote that hypothetical question, so full of awful importance, founded merely on supposition. He declared, that although he believed immersion to be the only scriptural mode of Christian baptism, and that no unbaptized person, in that mode, had a scriptural right to the communion-table of our Lord; yet, he did *not* believe that immersion or any other mode of water baptism is essential to salvation.

And now, before I subscribe my name to that paper, as I am required to do, the discrepancies above stated must be settled to my full satisfaction. As one of God's rational and accountable creatures, possessed of an immortal soul, which must be saved on God's plan of grace, in compliance with his appointed conditions of salvation; or be lost, by a rejection, or neglect of the essential conditions of salvation; I have a right to claim, of those who profess to know, what the essential conditions of salvation are. And if I have not complied with any one condition, which is proved from the Bible to be essential to gospel salvation, I declare, in the presence of my Maker, that I will comply with

that condition, forthwith, on my full conviction of its name, nature, and divine appointment. If it is *immersion* in the identical river and spot where John baptized, I will hasten, with all possible expedition, to the place, and be there *immersed*.

But, it must first be proved to me, from the Bible, that immersion is the only scriptural mode of gospel baptism, and that it is positively taught in the Bible, as a doctrine of Jesus Christ and his apostles, that, to be baptized by immersion is essential to salvation. When I am fully convinced of all this, I will be immersed, but not before. And now, if you are a Messenger from Heaven, commissioned to teach me what I must do to be saved, please to answer the following question unequivocally and categorically.

Is immersion the only scriptural mode of Christian baptism, expressly designated and commanded by Jesus Christ (the Divine Lord and Head of the Church on earth and in Heaven), to be observed by all his followers, as an essential condition of salvation? In short, is immersion the only scriptural mode of gospel baptism, and is it essential to salvation?

Messenger. Christ was baptized by John in the river Jordan by immersion. So says the Bible.

Old Man. Does the Bible say that Christ was immersed?

Messenger. The Bible says: "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan; and when he was baptized, went up straightway out of

the water." This is Bible proof to a demonstration, that Christ was immersed, and as a Messenger from Heaven, to show you the way to be saved, I now say that the way that Christ was baptized by John the Baptist was immersion, that this is the only scriptural mode of gospel baptism, and unless you are baptized as Christ was baptized by John the Baptist, (which is the language of the question now under your consideration for an answer,) you cannot be saved! If this is not Bible doctrine, then I am no Messenger from Heaven. But, out of pity to you, an old sinner, not fit to preach, nor to administer divine ordinances, nor to commune at the Lord's table with the true Church of God, nor even to be saved—yes, for your sake, old man, I have come from Heaven to give you information, lest ignorantly, inadvertantly, and presumptuously, in this critical and evil hour, you might, in the pride and obstinacy of your heart, utterly and forever, seal your damnation, by signing your name to the wrong mode of baptism, on the paper which you have shown to me, containing a question of infinite importance to you. Now, my friendly advice to you is, to settle that question at once, by subscribing your name opposite to the word "*immersion*," on the paper, without a single note or comment, explanation or reason; and I have no doubt but that the quietness of your own conscience, the honor and esteem of thousands who have been immersed, and, above all, the security of your salvation, by following your Saviour down into the water,

and be baptized by *immersion*, as he was, and then following him up out of the water as he came up out of it, will abundantly atone for all the past ignorance, errors, and obstinacy of your past long life, while the knowledge of your reformation will be published to all the earth, and cheer the hearts of every true child of God.

Old Man. I must admit that you begin to convince me of one interesting and important *fact*, which I am not entirely prepared to disclose. But you may rest assured that my mind—my whole soul, lies open to conviction; and when fully convinced, the disclosure will be made without delay. A few more questions answered satisfactorily, will most probably prepare my mind to settle the question on paper, where it will be likely to remain settled during the remainder of my life, which will afford but little opportunity of redeeming time in days that are evil.

Messenger. You rejoice my heart to hear you so speak; and, although some trifling difficulties may yet remain to be settled in your mind, still it may probably be best, on the whole, to dismiss them, and boldly write your name as I have advised, and rise to the honor and glory of a triumph over one of the most disgraceful and dangerous errors that ever bewildered mankind, namely, *sprinkling* for *immersion*.

Old Man. Something still remains of importance on my mind, before giving my signature to that paper, as you have proposed. And as you have begun to

convince me of a very important *fact*, I feel disposed to make further inquiries before yielding a point.

Messenger. Well, then, time has been well spent so far: let the whole budget of your old, worn-out, putrified system of *sprinkling* be brought forward, and, doubtless, the more it is investigated, the more fully you will be prepared to write your name opposite to the mode of *immersion*; and after being *immersed* yourself, by going down into the water and coming up out of it, the better Baptist you will be; and the better prepared to hold communion with none but *immersed* believers, and to preach *immersion* all the rest of your days, as the only mode of Christian baptism—the only true badge of a real Christian, and the only essential *condition* of the salvation of mankind. Come, cheer up; be not cast down in view of the conquest which is about to be gained over you, nor of the cross you will have to bear;—yes, to take up and bear, in following Christ down into, and up out of, the water; for by it you will obtain a glorious crown, which, doubtless, you would have lost forever if *I* had not made you this visit. Propose, then, every doubtful question you can think of, and I will not consider it a loss of time to hear and answer you to the full of your heart's desire, although I long to witness the result of your prognosticated *disclosure*!

Old Man. I feel much indebted to you for the information which you have given in relation to the import of the important question, the answer of which is pending, and devolves on me to make. You

have said that Christ was positively baptized by immersion—that immersion is the *only* scriptural mode of Christian baptism, and that immersion is essential to salvation. Now, if all this be true, and is so acknowledged by all pious and devoted Christians belonging to the Baptist denomination, then I must admit the unavoidable conclusion, that unless I am baptized by immersion, as Christ was baptized by John, I never can be saved. Now, on this point, I am still dissatisfied, and wish to inquire further. The substance of my further inquiries will be directed to two points only. First, the precise *mode*; and, secondly, the *importance* attached to John's baptism. All the proof that has been given me that Christ was *immersed*, and that *immersion* is the *only mode* of Christian baptism, is, that John and Christ went down into the water of Jordan, and came up out of it. Now, I wish to inquire, how do you *know* that Christ was positively baptized by immersion?

Messenger. I am astonished! I thought that point had long ago been settled.

Old Man. The question was asked a long time ago, indeed; but it was not answered, otherwise than in the unsatisfactory manner which I have just above stated, namely, that Christ was immersed because John and he together were in the water of Jordan, and came up out of it.

Messenger. Have I not proved to you positively, from a quotation of Scripture, that Christ was immersed? Your *mind* must be disordered, or your

memory is very treacherous. You soon forget. Let this matter be tested. Do you *remember* the question which you asked me (as you say long ago), perhaps a half hour ago? What was it, and what was my answer from the Bible? Let us see if you have not forgotten?

Old Man. The question which I asked, some time ago, at least, was in the following words: "Does the Bible say that Christ was immersed?" Your reply was in Bible language. First, from Mark's gospel, ch. i. 9: "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth to Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan." Next, you quoted Matt. iii. 16: "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water." This, you declared, was Bible proof that Christ was immersed; and here you rested the proof of the point, and proceeded to exhort me to be immersed. Now, I wish to know if going down into the water of Jordan, and coming up out of it, proves that Christ was *immersed*?

Messenger. Certainly it does.

Old Man. Does going into the water of Jordan, or any other river, up to the knees, or waist deep, and standing there one minute or five, or less or more, and then coming "up out of the" water, prove infallibly, that the whole body was plunged, dipped, or immersed wholly under water?

Messenger. I perceive that you are upon the catch! I must be going.

Old Man. No, sir; I am asking for information

of one who professes to have come from Heaven expressly to show me what I must do to be saved. I have asked that question, with deep and awful solicitude, almost sixty years ago, and was answered from my Bible (which I was taught to read in school from childhood,) “*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*” I believed that doctrine. I trust that by the grace of God, my heart was changed, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. I loved my Saviour: I trusted in the merit of his atoning blood alone for the forgiveness of sin, and the hope of salvation. I have preached the doctrine of *faith in Christ crucified* as essential to salvation for almost fifty years. And now, in the seventy-fifth year of my life, a messenger, professedly from Heaven, comes to me in this private apartment, stating his commission to inform me, that immersion is the only scriptural mode of baptism, and the essential condition of salvation. You are that messenger! And, if you are what you profess to be, you will not leave me till you have given me all existing evidence to prove that going down into the water of Jordan, and coming up out of the water, is *infallible proof that Christ was immersed*, and that immersion is the only scriptural mode of gospel baptism? Please answer that question, *ut supra* which you evaded.

Messenger. A person might indeed go down into the water of a river to the waist, and come up out of it, and not be immersed. This must be admitted.

Old Man. Then, if going down into the water of

Jordan, and coming up out of it does not, positively, prove immersion, how do you know that Christ was baptized by *immersion*? Could not John have dipped up water in a cup and poured it on his head; or dipped his hand in the water of Jordan and sprinkled it on the head of Christ, as water was used for purification in the Mosaic ceremonial rite of consecrating the Aaronic priests, in cleansing them at the door of the tabernacle by sprinkling?

Messenger. John *baptized* in Jordan, and the word baptize signifies nothing but *immersion*. Here take this budget of Greek Lexicons which I have brought with me from Heaven to convince you of your error. I am perfectly acquainted with all the vulgar and learned languages of earth. I can speak them all, and write them all, and teach them all. Now see if you can find an instance in the languages in which the Bible was written, where the word translated *baptize* signifies any other mode of applying water than *immersion*?

Old Man. Do not words rendered baptize, signify, in their original import, the application of water?

Messenger. Suppose they do; what then?

Old Man. Is it not said that the Jews observed a ceremonial rite of applying water to their hands for cleansing before eating?

Messenger. Well suppose they did; what then?

Old Man. Am I to understand that their whole bodies were immersed in water, when they washed

their hands only, by rubbing the fist of one hand into the open hand of the other ?

Messenger. I have told you that to baptize, in the original import of the word, signifies *immersion*, and nothing else. And for this reason, if there were no other, an old man, ignorant as you are ; unqualified to preach as you are ; unworthy as you are to commune at the Lord's table with true Christians, and certain to be damned as you are, unless you are baptized as Christ was, baptized by immersion ; yes ! such an old man as you are, ought to be convinced of the truth of all that I have told you without seeking for any other proof than the word of a messenger from heaven.

Old Man. Well sir, from your words of information I have received much benefit. Your visit has nearly prepared my mind to sign my name to the question proposed to me by my friend. If but one point more can be settled to my satisfaction, I shall be fully prepared to subscribe the paper, and show my reasons for so doing, although it may result in my perpetual humiliation through life.

Messenger. Glory, glory ! Do you indeed say so ! O how glad I am that I have made you this visit. I have long had my eye upon you for good. I have witnessed many things in you that were very displeasing to me ; but I have never given you up for lost, although you have long been obstinate in resisting truth, which is essential to salvation. I have sent many a friendly agent to labor with you, to convince you of your capital error in relation to the *subjects*,

and especially the *mode* of baptism. But you have always been obstinate and unyielding, which, I rejoice to believe, my personal visit will triumphantly overcome. You alluded to one circumstance in our conversation of a visit from a Baptist minister between thirty and forty years ago, that you stated had told you the same things for substance which I have told you. Now, I wish you to give me a concise, yet particular account of the name and circumstances of that interview as a test of your good memory. Favor me with that account if you please.

Old Man. In the winter of 1816, there was a special awakening in the Congregational church and society, of which I was then a pastor, and had been for about thirteen years. Among the hopeful converts were two persons, one a son of a Baptist minister,* and the other a woman, both of whom wished to be baptized by *immersion*. As I had never doubted that immersion was a *mode* of gospel baptism, as well as pouring and sprinkling, because *all* comprised the application of water to the person who was consecrated to God by baptism, I consented to gratify their wishes, and *did baptise them by immersion* in the Hudson River, near the door of my church, in the town of Moreau, Saratoga County, New York, about three miles from old Fort Edward.

* This minister's name was Willoughby, who was deposed from the ministry in Kingsbury, Washington County, New York, for communing with a Presbyterian Church, to whom I was invited to administer about 1809 or 1810. The son, whom I baptized by immersion, is now a Congregational minister at the West.

Not long after, a Baptist minister from Hartford, in the adjoining county of Washington, commenced baptizing in the Hudson River, opposite to my house of worship, and large congregations assembled to witness his frequent baptizings. This minister, whose name was Swain, about that time, made a visit to my house, and was kindly received and treated. Alone with me in my study, the *mode of baptism* became the subject of conversation, in which, as may well be supposed, he endeavored to convince me of my error in believing in sprinkling, and practising immersion. During the conversation I advocated the doctrine of different modes of the application of water in the administration of the ordinance of Christian baptism, and my ardent and prayerful desire that the followers of Jesus might be united in communion at the Lord's table. To this Elder Swain replied: The reason why we do not commune with Pædo-baptists is, because we do not consider them to be baptized. We hold that immersion is the only mode of gospel baptism; and that none, who refuse to be baptized by immersion, after the example of Christ, have a right to commune at the Lord's table. Of course, we cannot commune with them, nor consider them either qualified to administer any divine ordinances, nor to partake of them until they are baptized as Christ was baptized. Then, sir, said I, you do not consider me as a gospel minister, nor my official acts as divinely sanctioned. Certainly I do not, was the reply. I cannot fellowship you as a gospel minister, nor believe that any of your

official administrations are valid. You are unbaptized, and until you can humble yourself to take up your cross and follow Christ down into the water of baptism by immersion, I am bound in conscience to hold you as an intruder upon divine ordinances. These were his words as nearly as can be recollected. This pointed ministerial reprimand and denunciation in my own house and study, I mentioned plainly to some of my Christian friends. The result was, that soon after Elder Swain called on me—wished private conversation—entered with me into my study, and regularly commenced a process of gospel labor in conformity with the divine rule, Matt. xviii. 15. on a “charge of slander.” Specification. “Reporting that I said you was not a gospel minister, qualified to administer divine ordinances.”

I admitted the fact that I had so reported to several Christian friends, and that I had understood him to utter the same words to me in my study. “Can you *prove* that?” was the reply. “I cannot, except by yourself: *you* was a witness to the fact.” “What do you wish of me?” “I wish you to make a public confession of a *slander* which you cannot prove. Will you do it?” “Certainly not.” “Then expect further process.” At such a time I shall visit you with a witness. At the time appointed, he came with a son of one of my deacons, (who was pointedly opposed to some of my doctrines and management of a special awakening,) and the second step of gospel

labor was regularly performed, on the aforesaid charge, without success. No gospel *hearing* was obtained.

A meeting of my church was then requested, the time agreed on, and I was desired to read the public notice of a church meeting, to transact business of importance, which was agreed to and performed. The notice was carried, on wings of the wind, to the good people in that region of country.

At length, the day arrived: fine weather, in spring season. At one or two o'clock, P.M., my house of worship was crowded full. Baptist ministers and people were among the crowd to witness the proceedings of a Congregational church meeting. As I was the standing moderator of the church, so constituted by my ordinant instalment, I took the chair, called the church to order, opened the meeting with prayer, and announced that the Congregational church of Moreau was then and there duly opened, and ready for such business as might come before them.

Elder Swain arose, and informed the church that he had an accusation in writing against their pastor; that he had taken the previous steps of gospel labor required in the Divine rule, but without success, which he was now able to prove; and that he was now prepared, if permitted, to take the third step of gospel labor, by telling the trespass to the church then assembled—by reading to them the words of the alleged offense. All ears were now opened to hear. Perfect silence prevailed, and no objections to the proposal offered appeared.

Of course, Elder Swain read audibly, in the ears of all the people, a charge of slander against the pastor of that church, the specification of which was as above stated, reporting that I said you was not a gospel minister qualified to administer divine ordinances. On this charge, and after having taken the first and second steps of gospel labor without success, I am now ready to prove, and would call on Mr. A. B., for the first witness.

Here the Moderator rose and observed, that although it was always in order to ascertain whether a church accepted a proffered accusation against a member, and also to inquire whether the accused person was ready for trial, before a process of examining witnesses should be commenced ; yet, as the Moderator himself was the person accused in the complaint, he would now supersede the necessity of the above questions of order, and, also, of the necessity of examining any witnesses on the case, by a public confession of the fact of having himself reported to several persons present, the identical words of the specification, and the only one preferred in the charge now read before the church, and there is no need of witnesses on that point.

Elder Swain rose and replied : “ And are you, sir, now ready, before this congregation, to confess also that the words which you have reported are *false*, and a base slander. If you are, do so.”

Moderator. If the words reported are either false or slanderous, I should stand self-convicted, and be

bound to confess. But, that they are neither *false* nor *slandorous*, I am now prepared to prove before this congregation. That I have given currency to the words set up in the charge preferred, I have confessed. That they were uttered by you, Elder Swain, to me, when together in my study, and no other person present, is not *false* but *true*. Now deny it if you *will*, or *dare* to do it here on your oath before God! And, that the words are *not slandorous* I aver, because they are in accordance with the doctrine and usages of the Baptist church, and well known to be so by all who are acquainted with the doctrines and usages of the Baptist denomination. This *fact* totally destroys the charge of slander. And now, to establish the position which I have taken on this defense, I call upon you, Elder Swain, in the presence of this vast assembly, and of God, to answer me to the following questions :

1. Did you not utter the identical words of the specification in your charge in my study, and many other words of like import in connection? And,

2. Are not the very words of the specification in conformity with the doctrines and usages of the Baptist church, to which you belong? In a word, do you now, before this congregation and before God, acknowledge me to be a gospel minister, qualified to preach the gospel and to administer the divine ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper? Answer me now or abandon your false accusations!

Without a word of reply, Elder Swain rose, gathered

up his papers, and without ceremony made for the door. The house of worship was rapidly cleared, and the assembly dispersed to their homes.

The above facts were never written, nor any account of them published in any journals of record to my knowledge ; but the truth of the circumstances may be relied on, and are as fresh in my memory as if taken place within the last year.

Messenger. You have obliged me very much by the history which you have given. I believe every word of it, and I am astonished at the accuracy of your relation of that occurrence. And now I will just remind you of the fact, that the very account which you have given was one instance of many which have been adopted to convince you of your soul-destroying—I had like to have said, *damnable errors*, which would have been true ; but I chose a softer expression, especially *now*, when, I presume, you are on the very eve of abandoning them forever. I rejoice in the pleasure I have of informing you, that I was an unseen, yet personal witness of the manner in which you obtained advantage over that good minister, whose heart's desire was to convince you of your dangerous errors. It was through my agency that he was appointed to make you that friendly visit ; and you ought forever to be ashamed of your obstinate persistence in the same errors till your hairs are whitened almost with the frosts of death. But, before I ask you another question, or hear one from you, I wish to hear from your lips some account of that poor elder, Willoughby,

whom you was the means of destroying, and whose son you say you baptized by *immersion*, (which was abominable,) and is now a Congregational minister at the West. Please to give a short account, by way of confession, of your gross absurdity of an act which you performed in the former part of your ministry.

Old Man. If you think proper to term it my *confession*, I submit. But the facts, so far as I know, or in which I had any concern, were, to my best recollection, as follows: In the early part of my ministry, which commenced in June, 1803, in the northern part of Saratoga county, a special awakening attended my labors, and hopeful converts to the faith of the gospel of Jesus Christ were multiplied in that hitherto region of moral desolation. In the town of Kingsbury, a house of worship had been built on a plan of union, one half of which belonged to the Baptist denomination, and their minister's name was Willoughby. A small Presbyterian church was organized about that time, which occupied the aforesaid house of worship the other half of the time, and had no settled minister, but sought for supplies when they could be obtained.

At a certain time I was invited to preach in that house of worship on a Sabbath, and administer the ordinance of the Lord's Supper to the infant church, at the distance of from ten to fifteen miles from my residence and charge, between Sandy Hill and Fort Ann. On that occasion, I preached on the nature and importance of Christian unity, and love, and commu-

nion of the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. The audience was a mixture of different denominations, among whom was the Baptist minister, with whom I was unacquainted, and with him, also, a number of the members of his church.

When the communion table was spread, I felt peculiarly impressed on the invitation of guests at the table. As near as my memory serves, I made observations in the following words, or to the same import: "This is the Lord's table. Its provisions were purchased at the expense of his precious blood. The bread and the cup represent his body and blood, broken and shed for the salvation of guilty rebels, who repent, believe, and trust in him alone for salvation. All such are, by Divine grace, constituted his friends and followers. For all such, he instituted the gospel feast of the Holy Supper. To his friends and followers he spake when he took the bread and the cup, and blessing, brake, and distributed to them all and said, 'This do in remembrance of me.' The same Saviour has providentially furnished the sacramental elements of this table. His invitation *is* to all who love him. Come, eat, drink, and be strengthened, comforted, and blest. As a professed minister of Jesus, I now invite his friends to this table. Come all who love Christ and his cause, and are regular members of evangelical churches of the Lord Jesus, draw near and take your seat in those reserved for communicants. If there should be any hesitation in the minds of any, on account of different modes or forms of worship which

are not essential to salvation, let not such differences prevent you from taking your seat at this table of the Lord. What would Jesus say to you, if he were here in person at this table, as he *was* in the day when the first sacramental supper was instituted? Would he not invite you *all* to come and be partakers of his feast of love? Most assuredly he would. Should some of you say, if there were two tables, one on *this* side of the house and the other on *that* side, we would take our seats at the table of our choice at thy bidding. Suppose he who said, 'Let there be light, and there was light,' should utter the word of command, and two tables should instantly be spread in your presence without hands, and Christ should say, 'Now, friends, take your seat at the table of your choice; but come all you my friends, that love me—come to one or the other of the tables.' Both tables being spread as this is, you, doubtless, would all come. But before the elements were distributed, suppose Christ should speak, "My friends, I am the Saviour that was once nailed to the cross for you. I loved you unto death. My command now to you is to love one another, and to commune together at my table. To please you I have commanded, and two tables are spread, and you, my friends, are seated at the table of your choice.' To prove before your eyes that there is no deception, he works a miracle by rising from the floor and walking through the air in your sight, around the area of the space within these walls, and returns to his stand between the two tables where

you are separately seated, and utters the following word of command, 'Tables, come together, and be *one*;' and the tables obey, and become *one*, and but *one* solid table, spread from end to end with sacramental elements, all ready for distribution in remembrance of his sufferings and dying love for your precious souls, and for all his friends on earth, would you then leave the table or keep your seats and commune together?' I paused. Instantly several persons, unknown to me, arose from different parts of the house, and came forward to seats among the communicants, and were partakers with them. Among the number of those who then came forward, as I was afterwards informed, were Elder Willoughby and several members of his church.

Such were the facts which I once witnessed. Of the result, I was afterwards informed by a missionary from some part of New England, who attended the trial of Elder Willoughby, and gave me an account of the proceedings, the amount of which was, that a charge was preferred against the elder for communing with the *unbaptized*. A council was summoned and convened as a board of trial, and after several days' sitting, the result was announced, that Elder Willoughby be deposed from the ministerial office. I was informed that on the trial, Elder Willoughby acknowledged before the council the fact in charge—that he had communed at the Lord's table with the Presbyterian church—that he did it conscientiously, in the full belief that all the true followers of Christ, who

were regular members of evangelical churches of Christ, were commanded to love one another; and that, in his full belief, ought to commune together at the Lord's table. Still, the charge of communing at the Lord's table, with a Presbyterian church, was not only proved against him, but confessed and pleaded as an act of Christian union, in conformity with the command of Christ to his apostles and followers to love one another; and on such proof and confession he was deposed! After several unsuccessful efforts to obtain a further hearing and restoration to his ministerial office, he sickened and died, a martyr to the cause of unity among the followers of Jesus.

Messenger. I have no doubt of your history of that wretched affair, for I was a witness to the whole transaction from first to last; and knew that you, Old Man, was then in your younger days, the criminal cause of the crime of that minister and a number of his members, in a departure from their rules of separation from the ungodly, who are too proud to take up their cross and follow Christ into the water of immersion. You had no divine authority to administer at that table. The so-called church (to which you ministered with unbaptized hands and a proud heart) were unqualified to be partakers of the *real* sacrament of the Lord's Supper, for they, like yourself, were unimmersed. Here, then, was a mock-minister and a deluded company of guests, who were destitute of the wedding garment, *blasphemously* preparing *unworthily* to take the bread and cup of damnation into

their unhallowed mouths from your unhallowed hands. And you could not be satisfied to commit such an outrage against the true religion alone. No; you must exert the ingenuity of an earthly demon to tempt the godly to join with you in your abominable desecration of a Divine ordinance. It is a wonder, indeed, that Christ had not descended to that table of blasphemy, and pronounced upon you the anathema of Heaven, for your unhallowed attempt to decoy a godly minister and some of his church into the deadly snare of your infernal open-communion plan of union between the holy and the profane! It is not to be wondered at that the minister was deposed from his office on such a charge of *heresy* sustained, and that he died under that righteous deposition, (not as a martyr to the cause of unity with the followers of Jesus,) as you have said; but as an accursed apostate from the truth and Church of God. And having died impenitently, under the guilt of that apostacy, he has gone to his own place, where you will go, with his damnation loaded on your head, if you should continue obstinately to live and die under the guilt of rejecting the last call of mercy by refusing to follow Christ down into the water, and there let the world be witnesses of your atonement of all your past obstinacy, by submitting humbly to the cross-bearing condition of salvation, by being *immersed*. It would be well for you, if the abominable *guilt* and *death* of Willoughby, (of which you have been the *criminal* cause,) should haunt you day and night with apparitions of horrible despair,

until your affrighted soul should be made willing to be immersed, and unite yourself with the only followers of Christ, who are worthy to eat that bread and drink that cup which giveth life eternal. You might, however, save yourself such awful forebodings, if you would, at once, take my advice, and subscribe your name to the mode of John's baptism, to which Christ himself submitted. Every moment's delay is indescribably dangerous; for your own conscience *must* make you now tremble in view of your aggravated crime of being the sole cause of the guilt, death, and damnation of poor Willoughby. O, viper of a man!—an old man—a hardened wretch—I, a Messenger from Heaven, warn you to flee—flee from the wrath to come; and let your repentance be known to all men by your immediate submission to John's baptism by immersion! I wait with impatience for your intimated *disclosure*.

Old Man. The event of my *disclosure* is near at hand. Your last address has probed the very bottom of my soul, and fully convinced me of your celestial origin, and of your accurate knowledge of all the events of this earth. I am now fully convinced that *immersion* is probably a scriptural, and evidently a common-sense *mode* of applying purifying water to human bodies in baptism. But there is one or two difficulties still resting on my mind, which, if satisfactorily removed, will fully prepare me for the steps of a *most wonderful disclosure*!

Messenger. I shall rejoice in all celestial labors

which may require patient endurance to convince and set you right. What are the last difficulties which still rest on your mind as impediments to hinder your immersion? Let the upshot of the matter now appear.

Old Man. I wish to inquire summarily and finally, whether I have obtained a true understanding of the sum total of all your celestial instructions. I will place them numerically in order, that I may be sure of no mistake. The

1st thing required is the signature of my name to the mode of immersion as the *only* scriptural mode of gospel baptism, and that this mode is essential to the salvation of the soul.

2d. That I be immersed without delay, which will bring me regularly into the Baptist church.

3d. I must renounce communion with all professed Christians who have not been immersed.

4th. That I must profess the belief that *none* but such as have been immersed, have been saved since the days of John the Baptist, and none but those who have been or shall be immersed, can give evidence of being true followers of Christ, of course must not be communed with, are not in the way to Heaven, and never *can* be, short of *immersion*.

Now, am I to understand that such will be the amount of what I am required to believe and do, if I subscribe my name opposite to *immersion*, on the question before me, in order to become a consistent Baptist?

Messenger. Such conditions, and such only, will be divinely required of you; and to be *consistent*, all Baptists must be of the same belief, and their practice must be accordingly. And if you had *only* been immersed when you first made a profession of religion, you would have saved yourself from a life of error, and from all this burden of inquiry after instruction how to be saved.

Old Man. If you can help me to some answers to questions which I have often put to Baptist people, which they could not answer consistently, I shall soon be prepared to write my name to *one* of the three modes of baptism on the question which gave rise to all the foregoing series of disquisition on the nature and importance of John's baptism, and proceed to the performance of whatsoever my hands find to do, and do it with my might, commencing with an *awful disclosure*.

Messenger. I am overjoyed to hear that sentence. I think you will make as good a Baptist in your old age, as you have been an evil enemy to them in all your past life. But what are your knotty questions, which the Baptists have not been able consistently to answer satisfactorily, and which, if pounced upon you when you become a consistent Baptist, as you have entangled others, you now wish me to prepare an answer to help you out of their clutches?

Old Man. You know if I subscribe my name opposite to the word *immersion* on the question paper, as you have advised, and, consequently, become a

consistent Baptist, I must believe, and be able to show, that no persons were baptized by the apostles, nor in the apostolic age, but by immersion. Now, if somebody should ask me, as I have asked others, where the jailer, Saul of Tarsus, the three thousand, and many others, were immersed, what shall I answer?

Messenger. Tell them that a Messenger from Heaven told you to your head, that they were all *immersed* by *immersion* somewhere, because there is no other scriptural mode of immersion but to *immerse*, and that the Greek word *baptizo*, and its English translation, ought to be expunged from the Bible; and if they will inquire of a Messenger from Heaven, as you have done, they may obtain his word to prove it. So answer them.

Old Man. Suppose some person should put three questions in the form of a logical syllogism to entrap me, thus, by proving that the Baptists are wrong in their doctrine of close communion, as I have often done, by the following method.

Question 1.—Are there no other real Christians on the earth than the Baptists? And suppose I should answer, as others have answered me: Certainly, there are. All true believers in Christ are *real Christians*.

Then, suppose the 2d. Question should be put to me, thus: Have all real Christians a right to the Lord's table in the participation of the holy Supper? And I should answer, yes; surely, they have a right to do

what Christ has expressly commanded, this do in remembrance of me."

Then, suppose the question to me is, 3d. By what authority, then, do you refuse communion with them? Now, should I not be driven, by my own concessions, from the doctrine of close communion? And, to be consistent, must I not, now, admit, that if others, who have never been immersed, are real Christians—if Christ requires them to partake of his divinely instituted ordinance; and if He, himself, communes with, and blesses them in the participation of the memorials of his dying love; by what authority, indeed, could I justify myself in refusing to commune with them? By this plain course of reasoning, I have silenced many objectors to free, and open communion, of true Evangelical Christians, and I have never yet been able to see how such a scriptural argument could be refuted. Now if I should be immersed and become a consistent Baptist, and such connected syllogistical questions, should be put to me, what shall I answer?

Messenger. What will you answer? Why, tell them that a Messenger from Heaven told you, that you made two mistakes in answering the two first questions of the syllogism, and these mistakes led you to an unavoidable error, in the conclusion. Now, I will state the questions of the argument, precisely as you have stated them. And after answering the major and minor propositions, as I will show you, the conclusion will be as unavoidable, that consistent Baptists

cannot commune, consistently, nor conscientiously, with any professed Christians, who have not been immersed. The following demonstration, will prove the fact which I have just stated. Thus :

Question and Answer of the Major Proposition.

I. Are there no other real Christians on the earth but Baptists? Your answer should have been,

A. No: none can be true followers of Christ, but those who follow him down *into the water* and are immersed, and then *follow him up, out of the water*.

Minor Proposition. Question and Answer.

Q. Have all real Christians a right to the Lord's table in the participation of the holy Supper?

A. All real Christians who have been baptized by immersion have a right to the communion-table, and none others, for the reason, that they have not been immersed and, of course, give no evidence that they are followers of Christ.

Such are the only consistent Baptist answers.

Now for the conclusive Question and Answer.

Q. By what authority do you refuse to commune with those who are not immersed? The answer is short, and easy to be remembered. *Viz:*

A. The reason has been assigned in the Minor answer. Because all who have not been immersed, have no right themselves to Christ's communion-table. And why should real Christians commune with those who have no right to commune themselves?

Now, you see how clear, *consistent Baptists*, by the assistance of a Messenger from Heaven, can make the truth appear against all the syllogistical arguments of unbelievers in immersion, as being the *only condition of salvation*. All that is wanting is, to know how to do it. And for want of this knowledge, which I teach, many run themselves into confusion, by admitting that there may possibly be Christians, who are not immersed, while Christ refuses to own, or bless, or commune with them, as his sheep, his followers; because, they refuse to follow him down into, and up out of the waters of immersion. Depend on it, immersion is the only sign of true discipleship; the only badge of a true Christian; and, as I have often said, the *only condition of salvation*.

Now remember. A Messenger from Heaven declares to you, that none ever were saved unless they were immersed! None are now in the way to Heaven unless they have been immersed. And none to the end of the world, will be saved but those who are immersed, as Christ was immersed. And when you are immersed, as I trust you soon will be, you may preach to the day of your death, and give your authority from a Messenger from Heaven, which you received from his mouth, that immersion is the only mode of Bible baptism. Immersion is the only mark of a true Christians. Immersion is the only condition of salvation, for none *can* be saved without it. This is my truth.

Now, if you can believe me what hinders you, Old Man, from writing your name opposite to the word

Immersion on the paper you have shown me, and becoming, at once, a consistent Baptist?

Old Man.—Why—really—your doctrine and arguments are wonderful! They are captivating!

And if they are all true, (and it must be admitted, that you have told me they are true,) who of all the sinners of mankind would not wish to be immersed, and thus to be saved! But, there is one point more on which I wish for instruction from you. If I am immersed and hold ever so strong to close communion, yet the Baptists will not fellowship me for two reasons if no more. (Perhaps, you can remove them by your logic.) One, is, I am now so old, and have been so long an unbeliever in some of their doctrines that even if I should subscribe my name, baptistically, on the original question-paper, and submit to immersion, and close communion, yet, if I profess to believe the main point of doctrine, which you inculcate, viz. that immersion is essential to salvation, and, that all who are immersed, will infallibly be saved, they would not believe nor fellowship me. I should have to preach, that if all the apostles were immersed to qualify them for communion with Christ, then Judas was immersed, and must be now in heaven, if immersion is essential to salvation? And Simon the sorcerer also is now in heaven, for he must have been immersed! And that every individual who was ever immersed by the Baptists since there have been Baptists on the earth, have all gone to heaven, or are on their way there; and that the thousands and millions of holy Martyrs

and devoted Christians who have lived on the earth since the days of the apostles, whose names are on sacred record and church history, but were never immersed, according to your doctrine, are now in hell! All this, and much more, equally absurd and dangerous, are implied in the doctrine that immersion is essential to salvation. What now is to be done with this difficulty? Let the whole be reduced to a short question.

Are Judas who betrayed Christ, and died a self-murderer; and Simon Magus the sorcerer; and every individual whom the Baptists have immersed in past generations, in heaven? And will every one who is immersed be saved? This you have affirmed, on the authority of a commissioner from heaven to advise, counsel, and instruct me in duties essential to my salvation. The Baptists do not believe that immersion is essential to salvation. And they will not fellowship me if I preach it. Now, before I make the disclosure for which you have long waited, let this last dilemma be solved, on the principles of true baptistical consistency. Why do not the Baptists understand this subject as you understand it?

Messenger. Because they have never been taught it, till of late. I have taken much pains to instruct them into the doctrine, that immersion is the only essential condition of salvation, because it includes all other conditions that are required of mankind in order to be saved. I have endeavored to convince the Baptists that immersion is just as essential to salva-

tion, as it is to close communion. To set them right upon this subject, I have reasoned with them after the following manner, namely: 'The very same qualification, or condition is required to prove any person to be a true Christian—a true follower of Christ—and qualified to be a partaker of the Lord's Supper, that is required to be saved, and this is immersion. Immersion is the regular door into the Baptist church—the sure token of true discipleship—the badge, which, alone, entitles a person to the communion-table of Christ. In the full belief of all these doctrines the Baptists are well established, and are consistent. They believe that no person can be a true Christian—a true follower of Christ until he is immersed; and that none have a right to the communion-table, but those who have been immersed. This is exactly my belief, and in this respect the faith, and practice of the Baptists are perfectly consistent.

Now, see how plainly the doctrine of consistency would lead to adopt the sentiment, that immersion is essential to salvation. For the true followers of Christ, and those who are qualified to partake of the Lord's Supper by immersion, only, are, and must be qualified by immersion to be saved. Nothing can be more clear than this, and the Baptists are beginning to see it. After the same manner I have reasoned with awakened sinners in seasons of special revivals, and often immersions. If awakened sinners would only submit to be immersed, after the example of Christ, by following him down into the water, and up out of

it, they would undoubtedly be saved without further trouble. And thousands of thousands have believed what I have told them, and after they were immersed they had no farther trouble about their souls, nor fears of being lost. See, then, how consistent, safe, and soul-comforting it is to believe, and be well established in the faith, that immersion is essential to salvation.

And, now, Old Man, it gives me much pleasure, that I have been commissioned from heaven to make you this visit, and for your sake I must admit that the Baptists, generally, are not consistent on the point of your present inquiry. They hold that immersion is the only scriptural mode of baptism; that none are the true followers of Christ but those who are immersed; and, consequently, that none but those who have been immersed are qualified for a seat at the communion-table. And some of the most learned are beginning to understand the doctrine of consistency, that immersion is essential to salvation.

The Baptists are not ignorant of the fact that immersion, and close communion, are the only essential ligaments that preserves the very existence of the Baptist church. If these cords were broken, the Baptist church would amalgamate with other denominations, who appear to be as good Christians as they are, and are agreed with them in doctrine, except the subjects and mode of baptism. It is not known to everybody, but I will assure you, Old Man, for your encouragement to become a consistent Baptist, that it has been altogether through my influence and super-

intendence, that the Baptists are so tenacious of their favorite sentiments of immersion and close communion. It is by clinging fast to these arterial essentials of the very life-blood of their existence as a denomination, that they prosper, and increase in number and influence, hard after the very church of Rome itself.

Respecting *immersion*—the mode of John's baptism—other denominations are not so tenacious, but that, in many instances, immersion is practised when required, as you have done ; and this innovation gives great umbrage to the Baptist denomination. Now, here again is something apparently inconsistent and against them, that they should be so confident that immersion is the only scriptural mode of Christian baptism, and yet be averse, even to asperity, if other denominations practice it. This, it is admitted, looks dark.

But that which worries them most, is to find arguments to sustain their unpopular sentiments of close communion. If this single point should be relinquished, it would operate like an incision made into the great artery containing the life-blood of the denomination. To save them from this tremendous break, I have suggested various plans to favor them ; and among others, I have introduced the new doctrine, that immersion is positively essential to salvation. Now, it will, doubtless, take a long time to get this new doctrine into vogue theoretically. But it can be done practically—in a manner that will multiply the denomination thousands upon thousands, and even

millions, by only adopting the following method of preaching, viz.: First. Let the doctrine of John's baptism by immersion, as the only mode of applying water in baptism, be the chief corner-stone of all argumentative preaching. Immersion must be proved alone by the Greek word *baptizo*, which must be insisted on, as having no correlative that can be translated consistent with the idiom of the language, into any other signification than the immersion of the whole human body under water, even if water should be represented as being applied by the hands only by *pugme*, as the Jews washed before eating. In plain English, this must be made to signify nothing less nor more than going down into the water and coming up out of it, which can mean nothing but immersion. This is the first step towards the top-stone of argumentative speculation on the mode of baptism. Immersion, the only mode of gospel baptism, is the foundation, the chief corner-stone of the distinctive theory of the Baptist denomination.

The second step is, to preach the doctrine of close communion as essential to the very existence of the Baptist church. This must be proved by the *assumption* that there are not, and cannot be, any true Christians and followers of Christ, but those who are baptized by immersion, witnessed by taking up the cross and following Christ down into the water and up out of it again, after immersion; for such only are fit subjects to partake of the Lord's Supper; and it would be gross presumption to commune with those

who were not immersed. Hence, it must be insisted on that Judas Iscariot, and all the apostles, were baptized by immersion, or Christ would never have communed with them! This is the second step.

And the third step is the cap of the climax, viz., the new-fangled doctrine just introduced by *myself*, that immersion is essential to salvation. This clinches the nail. Just as soon as people can be made to believe this doctrine, they will rush in thousands and millions down into, and up out of, the water: whether they are immersed in jails, in houses, on sick beds, in church fountains, or wheresoever they may be, depend on it, they will not fail to perform this most animating, delightful method of taking up the cross and following Christ into the waters of immersion, and thus secure their soul's salvation.

Now, Old Man, I should not have taken all these pains to instruct you into the most expeditious method of multiplying true Christians, if I had not full confidence to believe that by my instruction, and warning, and counsel, you might yet be saved in your old age from sealing your damnation, by signing your name to one of the blasphemous modes on the paper which contains the only mode of baptism by which you can be saved.

I hope you are now ready to make your glorious *disclosure*, which I have anticipated with so much pleasure. O, what a Baptist you will make! But I forbear by only suggesting how much good you may do in the world after you settle the question before

you by signing the paper as I have advised, which will be the beginning of days to you.

Old Man. I am now prepared to sign the paper with my own hand, and make my long looked-for *disclosure* on the blank portions of the paper, and other accompanying scrips. It only remains now to inquire your venerable name, residence, and office, and to be favored with the sight of your commission from heaven to me.

Messenger. My name is a secret, which I never reveal. My residence *was* in heaven long before I ever heard of you ; but, during the existence of *time*, it has been in the regions which are called atmosphere. My office is commander-in-chief of legions of angelic spirits, who are my servants at command, who go and come at my bidding, and are ever ready, at my call, to do my pleasure. The principal vocations of my office have been, for a long time, both for myself and agents, directed to the oversight and regulation of all matters relating to the state of religion and the church, consisting of all its different denominations. I am constantly engaged in attending to the state and circumstances of all ministers of gospel, to help them out of difficulty when they are in it ; and if I see any in danger, as I saw you with a difficult question which occupied your *noddle*, I am with them in an instant to afford all necessary assistance.

Old Man. Respecting your commission to me, I should be pleased to see it.

Messenger. I have a commission to you, indeed, but—but, is it important that you should see it?

Old Man. If it was important for you to be intrusted with it by a superior, the import of which was stated as having been directed to me, I should claim it as my privilege to be made acquainted with the authority vested in you, by a special commission to visit me on an embassy of no less importance than the estimated price of my soul. You have a superior, I presume to believe. Is it not so? Have I not a reasonable claim to an answer?

Messenger. Yes, I have a superior. What of that?

Old Man. Where does he reside?

Messenger. [Looks sour.] Everywhere, I suppose.

Old Man. What is his name and title of honor?

Messenger. It is no pleasure to me to mention his name, or to proclaim his titles of honor.

Old Man. Is he the Creator of the universe, and King of Heaven?

Messenger. You can call him what you please. But what of all this lingo?

Old Man. I am inquiring for the origin, state, and power of authority from which you received your commission to give all the important information, counsel, advice, doctrine, pointed reproof, and denunciations which you have so liberally dealt out to me, under color of a commission from heaven to treat with a human being on earth. Did you not state on

your introductory approach into my private apartment, that you was a Messenger from Heaven, commissioned to give me new and important information? Was that the fact? Was it true?

Messenger. It was true that I *told* you so.

Old Man. Had you, then, any special, written, or verbal commission from the throne of heaven, giving you instructions to communicate with me?

Messenger. You asked the question!

Old Man. Will you answer it yea or nay?

Messenger. Have you not promised to make an important disclosure? I expected to have witnessed your immersion before this time!

Old Man. This is the introduction of the *awful* and *important disclosure*, for which you have so long and impatiently been waiting. I trusted in your *word*, that you had a commission from heaven. Now, I demand that authority, and I have a right to demand and see it, or, on your refusal, to consider you an impostor. How long is it since you was in heaven?

Messenger. I have told you once, during the existence of time. I have long been expecting that you would make an important disclosure, sign a paper, be immersed, and become a Baptist!

Old Man. Am I to understand, that you received your commission from heaven, before the existence of time, to make this visit, to aid me in the solution of a question, which, if rightly answered, in accordance with your counsel, would result in making a Baptist

of me? Was this the sole object of your important commission from heaven, and visit to me? And do you think the Baptist people will thank you for your attempt to proselyte me on a false pretence of having a message from heaven to me, of nearly six thousand years standing? What say you to all this?

Messenger. I say, if you have any thing farther to say, say on.

Old Man. Then I shall take the liberty of asking you a string of questions, and give you to the end of time to answer them, if need be.

I have viewed you, since you entered this apartment, from head to foot. I have been a strict observer of your manner of appearance; your manner of address; your doctrines, advice, and all the subject matter of your professed commission. And now, I must be plain with you. Are you not the very same personage, who was once truly in heaven, a created, spotless adorer of the eternal Jehovah, the Creator, Sustainer, and sovereign Lawgiver of the Universe, where you might have been a happy worshipper till this time, and forever, had you not there been the instigator of insurrection, and the ringleader of discord, for which, yourself, and all the legions who then adhered to you, were expelled from heaven, and driven to bottomless perdition, at an infinite remove from the heaven of holiness, and happiness which you lost, irretrievably, and forever!!

Are you not the identical person, once metamorphosed into the likeness of a serpent, who tempted

Eve in Eden to eat the forbidden fruit, and give of the same to her husband, by which acts they both became sinners, attained the knowledge of evil as well as good; and from which visit of yours in Eden, may be traced, all the sin, and woe, and calamities, and death, that have ever come to pass in this apostate world?

Are you not the same tempter, who appeared to the despised and suffering Jesus in the wilderness, when he hungered; and gave him “new, and important information,” by which he might be fed on stones converted into bread—be preserved from death if he leapt from the pinnacle of the temple—and obtain a premium of all the kingdoms of earth, and the glory of them by one single act of adorable prostration at the feet of your infernal majesty, who then had as much title to the kingdoms of earth, as you now have to the kingdom of heaven?

Are you not now the instigator of all the wars among nations—of all the murders, piracy, drunkenness, licentiousness, dishonesty, desecration of the holy Sabbath, disobedience of children to parents, quarrels between husbands and wives, and of all the scenes of iniquity, and abominations of the earth? Did not the God who formed you an holy angel denounce you, after your apostacy, as a liar, and the father of lies?

Would the sovereign King of heaven, from the throne of his ineffable glory, commission such a wretch as yourself, to teach sinners of mankind how to be saved, and what are the essential conditions of the salvation

of the gospel of Jesus Christ? Never! never!! You came to me with a lie in your mouth. And if the contents of your self-created, forged commission, has been of as much advantage to yourself, as it will be likely to benefit me, by your attempts to make a close-communion Baptist of me, you can return to the place whence you came. Such is the length and breath, height, depth, and sum total of my awful disclosure for which you have so long and impatiently waited.

Messenger. You old beetle-head! You'll pay for this compliment, mark my word for it, if you ever add this chapter to your "signs of the times." And with these words, the messenger, who was once in heaven, but finds now, much to do on earth to make Christians believe more than the Bible teaches, finding himself rather in limbo, gave a most tremendous roar, and took his exist.

A SOLEMN SOLILOQUY.

Old Man. I am now alone again. Alone! No, indeed—not so. God is here with me. I am not alone. God has been my helper. Blessed be his holy name. Of the adversary who has just taken leave, I can say, good riddance! And a hopeful no return. But of God, who has been with me during the tremendous conflict with the adversary, and who is still with me, I will say, he, is my Rock—my Shield—my High Tower. In him is all my trust and hope of salvation.

The enemy of all good came in like a flood to destroy

me! But the spirit of the Lord has lifted up a standard for my defence. Praised be his name.

The Old Serpent under pretence of being a messenger from heaven, could not long conceal his plotted mischief. Undiscovered by the fiend, my blessed Saviour slipped into my hand, a celestial microscope, which enabled me in the twinkling of an eye, accurately, to scan the bold deceiver from head to foot, outside and inside.

A "*TEKEL*," was next, divinely handed to me (undiscovered,) by which I was furnished with means of weighing the *look*, the *words*, the doctrines, the arguments, the counsel, denunciations, and flatteries of the old impostor, and to reduce the whole compound of his counterfeit, philosophical, scientific, and theological profundities, for purposes of diabolical incantations, into first principles, and even into *motives*, secretly burning with infernal desires for the irretrievable ruin of the precious soul of the victim of his malignity. And I was made sensible of being that victim of infernal selection. Without help from God, what could I have done?

Who, but a combatant with the Old Serpent, can describe the perilous situation in which I have been placed? On the first assault, I found myself providentially in circumstances never before realized!—a question in my hand, alluding to supposed doctrines propounded by a Messenger from Heaven, requiring a positive answer on a specified condition which would hazard my hope of salvation! Retiring to consider

its contents, and pray for wisdom to guide me safely out of the entanglements of this emergency ; behold, in imaginary vision, the Messenger alluded to appears before me ; announces his commission ; commences an assault on the foundation of my hope in Jesus ; and by the very weapons of his warfare, soon proves himself to be the devil ! Now, the question is, what shall be done ? Shall I stand my ground, and fight manfully ? Or, shall I, in cowardice, yield up my hope to the will of the Adversary ; or attempt an escape by flight at the risk of being torn (if not soul and body into atoms,) into confusion, perplexity, and perpetual disgrace ? !

In this nick of time, an inspired apostle, commissioned as a ministering spirit, whispered in my ear, " Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." That prescription and result have been experimentally and successfully verified. By divine assistance, I have been enabled to resist the devil effectively, by a *long tug* of theological controversy, in a closet attack of the prince of hell, on one of the most important of all subjects, viz., the one thing needful for a sinner's salvation !

But the adversary has taken his flight, and I will sing :

The name of God be prais'd, the foe has fled
Without a victor's crown to grace his head.
Let God have all the glory evermore,
While, at his feet, submissive I adore.

CHAPTER IV.

Improvement of the Dialogue—Primeval Source of the Question which gave Rise to the Dialogue, and Forms the Basis of its Contents—John's Baptism Considered in Distinction from the Baptism comprised in the Divine Commission to the Apostles to Teach and Baptize.

ON a review of the whole subject, the origin of the above controversy must, doubtless, be traced farther back than has yet been considered. Its first visible appearance is well understood to have been hypothetically introduced by a mere question of a pious and unsuspecting young lady. Little did she then dream of the *real* origin, import, and result of that important question. But, providentially, a mere *supposition* was permitted to be moulded by the magic power of transformation, into a form of real existence. And from thence it became metamorphosed into a Satanic masterpiece of polemic ingenuity, which, after due preparation, broke out into a new measure, predicted long ago by an apostle, who declared, "The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the

latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." (1 Tim. iv. 1.) Nothing is more evident than the fulfilment of that prediction. Those "latter times" have arrived. Seducing spirits are prowling over the earth. Devils hold to doctrines, and teach them. Doubtless, the prince of devils is well versed in the whole system of doctrines which belong to his theological department. And, if Satan can succeed in convincing any of mankind that his doctrines are essential to salvation, and seduce them into the practice of his theories through life, he will be sure of their souls in the end. To carry out such important designs is, doubtless, the ultimate object of all Satanic devices.

In view of such considerations, we are prepared to search for the primeval cause of the foregoing controversy. What was it? Is it to be attributed to a mere supposable question, which suddenly popped into the mind of a pious and affectionate female friend? Now, whence came that thought into her mind—a thought so complex, so full of meaning, so profoundly theological, so full of interest, even to the price of an immortal soul, estimated by the Redeemer of souls to be of more value than the whole world of mere matter—a thought so replete with finished profundity; whence came it, we ask, suddenly and evidently unpremeditated, into the mind of that young lady? I asked her father whether he had not *conned* and prepared the question for her? He declared posi-

tively that such a thing had *never* come into his mind. Whence, then, came that thought into that lady's mind? Doubtless the thought, in all its complex profundities, was the production of the Old Dragon. The lady, into whose mind the thought came, had no evil design. She neither premeditated nor wished evil. The heart of her reverend father, and *his* heart to whom the question was asked, were allied in brotherly love, which, if not in degree, was of the same kind that once existed between Jonathan and David. The same Christian affection was apparent in all the movements of the pious daughter. Whence, then, could that thought have originated but from the Prince of Darkness, who had selected it from the budget of his infernal devices, and darted it into her mind, just before going to family prayers, that a question, on first appearance profoundly important, might unsuspectedly pop into existence, to give rise in the outset to an expression of different sentiments existing in the doctrinal views of the social circle—*such* as might easily be appealed up to the decision of his Satanic Majesty, and there be so managed as to give opportunity for the prince of devils to assail the Old Man's hope of salvation, merely because he had not been baptized by immersion.

But, whatever may have been the design of the movers of the waters of emulation, the question itself, considered in the *abstract*, comprises the following sentiments: 1st. That immersion is the *only* scriptural *mode* of Christian baptism. 2d. That none but

those who are *immersed* are true Christians. 3d. That none but those who have been immersed, have a right to the communion-table of our common Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And 4th. That *immersion* is essential to salvation!—a doctrine of Satan, but rejected in theory by evangelical Baptists. Such are plainly the doctrines comprised in the question which gave rise to this treatise on John's baptism. Such are precisely the doctrines which Satan is represented as advocating in the foregoing dialogue; and such, it is verily believed, are doctrines which Satan constantly preaches to mankind. Let it be considered,

I. Whether it is a *fact*, that immersion is the *only* scriptural mode of Christian baptism.

The burden of this inquiry is not whether immersion is *a* scriptural mode of gospel baptism; but, is there positive proof from Scripture that Christ was baptized by immersion? Is there positive proof that Christ commanded that all who believe in his name unto salvation shall be baptized by immersion, or otherwise, their faith in him shall be of no effect? Is there positive proof that the baptism of Christ by John, was divinely ordained as an example for all believers in his name to follow, precisely in all its circumstances, as the only infallible proof of true faith, true discipleship, and interest in the ordinances of his Church on earth, and heirship to the heavenly inheritance of the saints in glory? Let the foregoing points be examined, and see whether such proof ap-

pears in favor of immersion as the only mode of Christian baptism.

That Christ was baptized by John, *in* or *at* the river of Jordan—that Christ and John went down *to*, or *into* the water—that they both came up *from*, or *out of*, the water of Jordan, (in either of which the original may be rendered in all the descriptions of that ceremonial ordinance, and *is* evidently so rendered in various other portions of Scripture;) and that, when John and Christ were both of them *at* or *in* the water of Jordan, Christ was baptized by John, *with* or *in* water, by *sprinkling*, *pouring*, or *immersion*, to fulfill the righteousness of the ceremonial law, which Christ had not yet abolished; and that all this was done as a legal consecration to his priesthood, preparatory to the effectual abrogation of the ceremonial law, and its ritual ordinances of circumcision and the passover, to make way for the divine establishment of the gospel ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, under the new dispensation of the gospel of Christ, are all, and singular, evidently, Bible truths, not *one* of which can be denied without a rejection of some portion of the word of God. It is readily admitted, it must be admitted, that all parts of the above sentence is God's Bible truth.

But, the amount of this admission does not begin to prove, nor to admit that immersion is the only mode of Christian baptism. It is not certain; but, rather, very doubtful, that Christ was baptized by immersion. This appears from the very reason which

he assigned to John for coming to him to be baptized. John commenced preaching in the wilderness of Judea near the river Jordan, but a little time before Christ commenced the work of his ministry. They were cousins—both of Jewish descent—both born and brought up in poverty in the land of Judea—and both, most probably, commenced preaching about the age of thirty years, the period of life ceremonially allotted for the consecration of the Jewish priesthood by sprinkling, at the door of the tabernacle. Thus Moses was divinely commanded to “wash them with water. Thus shalt thou do unto them to cleanse them; sprinkle water of purifying upon them.”*

In fulfilment of divine predictions, by Jewish prophets, hundreds of years before they were born, John was the forerunner to prepare the way of the Lord Jesus, who immediately followed in the great work of establishing the Gospel Kingdom of Heaven upon earth that men might be saved through faith, in “God manifest in the flesh.” In what manner, or by whom, John was consecrated to the office of the Priesthood, the Scriptures are silent. Jewish prophets once foretold, that such a messenger would come to prepare the way of the Lord; that he would be “a voice crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a high way for our God.” We read the apostolic history of his conception and birth less than a year before the birth of Christ, and that he

* Vid. Exodus xxix. 4, and Numbers viii. 7.

was in the deserts of Judea till the day of his shewing unto Israel."

Thus, while Jesus was in Nazareth, fulfilling his thirty years, ceremonially allotted before he entered upon his public ministry, John, being the eldest, entered first into the field of his public labors, as Matthew informs us. "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Then was fulfilled the prediction of the prophet Isaiah more than seven hundred years before, as Matthew declares, "for this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness; prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. 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."

Under such circumstances, Jesus came from Galilee to Jordan, unto John to be baptized of him." To this, John objected. "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" The reply of Jesus was, "suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." The righteousness, which it became both John and Christ to fulfil at that time, was, evidently, a divinely-required Mosaic ceremonial rite of consecration, preparatory to entering upon the office of the Jewish priesthood, by cleansing with water, which was expressly commanded by the Al-

mighty to be performed by the "sprinkling of purifying water," as has been previously quoted.

Now, under all these ceremonial circumstances, what reason can we have to believe that Christ was immersed? There is not the least shadow of proof, from Scripture, that Christ was immersed, except the fact stated, that the water of the Jordan river was used by the baptizer. The mere circumstance that John and Christ both went to the river Jordan to perform the ceremonial Jewish rite of consecration to the office of the priesthood by "sprinkling the purifying water upon him," most assuredly affords no proof, not the least shadow of proof that Christ was immersed. Nay, so far from this, is the most probable fact, that without a shadow of doubt, Christ was ceremonially consecrated to his holy office by the sprinkling of the water of Jordan upon his sacred body, by John the Baptist. And even this mode of the application of water, was not to cleanse him from sin, for Christ had no sin to be washed away; neither was he baptized unto repentance, for the same reason, he had no sins to repent of. His baptism was in accordance with a Jewish ceremonial rite, which required the application of water by sprinkling, and this was done to fulfil the righteous requirement of God's ceremonial Law, which was then in full force and virtue, and so remained, until Christ was nailed to the cross of Calvary, when, and where, ceremonial ordinances were abrogated by a divine constitutional change into gospel ordinances under the Christian dispensation :

Suppose, now, that it be admitted, that John commenced baptizing in Jordan, by immersion—that the thousands, who came to his baptism “unto repentance,” were immersed on their confession of sin. This, would not prove that Christ was immersed, nor that John’s baptism was of the same import, as that which Christ instituted and commanded after his resurrection, as the sealing ordinance of the righteousness of faith. Whatever may be said to the contrary, notwithstanding, there is, positively, a scriptural distinction between John’s baptism, and the gospel ordinance of Christian baptism which Christ instituted.

John’s preaching was “repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven—(i. e. the kingdom of Christ—the gospel dispensation of faith in a crucified Redeemer,) is at hand. John confessed the inferiority of his baptism compared with that of Christ. “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance ; but he that cometh after me shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.” The baptism of John was, indeed, from heaven, because it was foreordained of God, and foretold by the holy prophets that he should appear in the land of Israel as the forerunner of Christ, and to prepare the way for the dissolution of ceremonial rites, and the permanent establishment of gospel ordinances in the Church of God under the gospel dispensation. But John preached repentance, and baptized unto repentance all that came to him for that purpose, to prepare the way for Christ, after his crucifixion, to preach salvation to all true believers in his gospel ; and the baptism which

ordained, and commanded, was the seal of the righteousness of faith, to be applied by the water of purification, instead, of the bloody sign of circumcision.

That John's baptism was different in its import from the sealing ordinance which Christ instituted after his resurrection, is evident from a *fact* recorded in the apostolic age. The Apostle Paul found several persons in Ephesus who professed faith in Christ, and yet confessed their ignorance of the doctrine of the very existence of the Holy Ghost, the third person of the adorable Godhead, and the comforter of all Christians! When Paul inquired whether they had received the Holy Ghost since they believed, their reply was, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost!" Knowing that gospel baptism was divinely commanded to be administered in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost—one God, Paul inquired of them, "Unto what, then, were ye baptized?" They answered, "Unto John's baptism." This answer explained the mystery to the apostle. They were evidently among the number of John's disciples, who had been baptized by him *with* the water of Jordan unto repentance. And as John evidently did *not* baptize in the *name* of Jesus nor of the Holy Ghost, Paul thus instructed them to understand, that although they had been baptized unto repentance by John, yet they had not been baptized with the gospel baptism of salvation, through faith in Christ the crucified and risen Redeemer. Paul's words were, "John verily

baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." The inspired historian informs us, "When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And all the men were about twelve."

Advocates of immersion, as the only mode of Christian baptism, make no distinction between John's baptism and the baptism which Christ instituted after his resurrection. Hence, they understand that those men of Ephesus were not re-baptized. The following is their exegesis of the passage: "When they heard this (Paul's words), they learned that John had baptized them in the name of the Lord Jesus." Who ever heard before that John baptized in the name of Jesus? Christ must then have been baptized in his own name. And if John baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost also, how came it to pass that none of those twelve men "had so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost? The *fact* is stated by the inspired historian, that after hearing Paul's distinction between John's baptism unto repentance before Christ was crucified, and the divinely-instituted ordinance of gospel baptism after the resurrection of Christ, which was commanded to be administered in the name of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, those men who had been baptized unto John's baptism only, were verily baptized by apostolic authority—consecrated hands were laid on them—the Holy Ghost came upon them—they were endowed

with the gift of tongues, and prophesied." And nothing yet appears to prove immersion to be the only mode of Christian baptism, nor even that Christ was baptized by immersion.

Suppose, even, that it be admitted that Christ was baptized by immersion. Would this settle the point that immersion is the only mode of Christian baptism? Certainly not, unless it can positively be proved from Scripture that Christ did then and there, or subsequently and elsewhere, proclaim the doctrine that his baptism was designed to set an example of a cross-bearing mode of baptism by immersion only, for all his subsequent believers and followers to the end of the world. And that this *mode* should hence, while the world stands, be the *sine qua non* of true discipleship—a sign, and the only infallible sign and visible token by which alone his true and only followers should henceforth and forever be distinguishingly known. And farther, that no person could be an acceptable follower of Christ unless baptized by immersion, precisely after his example of submission to the identical *mode* of John's baptism.

Now, if all the above correlatives can be expressly found in the positive injunctions of Christ, constituting the mode of baptism by immersion after his example, as the indispensable and only sign of regenerating grace—of an interest in Christ by faith—of purification from the guilt of sin—of deliverance from the condemnation of endless death, and heirship through Christ, *with* him and *in* him, to an inheri-

tance in the kingdom of glory ; then, and not otherwise, could immersion become the *mode*, and the only scriptural mode, of Christian baptism !

But all readers of the Bible may be challenged to produce such divine injunctions. It cannot, then, be true that immersion is the *only* scriptural mode of Christian baptism.

Thus, in the absence of positive Scripture proof, it is still urged that Christ was baptized by immersion by John in Jordan ; and, therefore, to be true followers of Christ, all believers must follow his example. And that none can be considered in the judgment of charity as being true Christians, entitled to divine ordinances, nor interested in the covenant blessings of salvation, unless they are baptized as Christ was baptized by immersion. Much is said about following Christ's *example* in the mode of baptism. Now, if none can be considered as true followers of Christ, unless they follow his example in all circumstances relating to his baptism, what will be the amount of testimony to prove Christian discipleship ? The items of such infallible marks of discipleship would be something like the following, namely :

First. As Christ was about thirty years of age when he was baptized to fulfill a Mosaic ceremonial rite of consecrating the Aaronic priesthood, so believers in Christ, to follow his example of *time*, must be about thirty years of age when they are baptized by immersion.

Secondly. As Jesus was baptized in the river of

Jordan, so, to make sure of discipleship by precisely following his example as to the *place* where Christ was immersed, they will find it essential to be immersed in the same river of Jordan, and in the same place where John immersed Jesus after all the people had been immersed there.

Thirdly. As there is no Scripture proof that John the Baptist was ever immersed by any person; and as Christ humbled himself to be baptized by a person who was never baptized himself, so, to follow Christ's example of humility, all believers who cannot conscientiously be baptized in any other mode than immersion, will find themselves under the necessity of submitting to be baptized by a person who was never immersed, as was the fact in the case of Mr. Rodger Williams.*

Fourthly. As there is no Scripture proof that John baptized Christ in the name of the Lord Jesus, and the other divine persons of the Holy Trinity, hence, those who insist on following Christ's example to an *iota* in baptism by immersion, must not be immersed in the name of Christ, the Son. John's formula must be sought, found, and practised, whatever it might have been, or those who are immersed after the example of Christ in the mode of John's baptism will fail in one essential *sign* of true discipleship. And,

* Mr. Williams was the first Baptist minister in America. A Mr. Ezekiel Harriman, a layman, immersed him! because "No ordained minister could be found in America, who had been immersed on a profession of faith!"—*Hagues' Historical Discourse*.

Fifthly. Christ, at his baptism, was favored with a divine sanction, by the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him, and a voice from the Father in heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Now, who among the sons and daughters of men can say, "We are the *only* true followers of Christ, for we have followed his *example* in all practical circumstances, and, especially, we have been baptized by immersion, which is the only scriptural mode of gospel baptism." Let those who can thus believe and feel, say, "We—*we* have done it; and *we*, and other exemplars of our order, are the *only* followers of Christ's example !

CHAPTER V.

The Basis of Anabaptist Close-Communion—Four Propositions Considered Jointly and Disjunctively to Prove the Capital Errors on which Close Communion is Based.

II. THE doctrine of *close communion* is the next point proposed for consideration.

The doctrine of close communion is based on two points, both of which are presumed to be infallibly true. First. That immersion is the only infallible *mode* of Christian baptism. And, secondly. That those *only* who are immersed, give evidence of being real Christians, true followers of Christ, and heirs with him to the kingdom of glory.

Now, if these two affirmative propositions are infallibly true, namely, that immersion is the only mode of gospel baptism; and that none but those who are baptized by immersion are true followers of Christ; then, all who thus believe, to be consistent, must also believe, and practise close-communion, for the following reasons: First. That the Lord's Supper was divinely ordained by Christ for his true followers. And

Secondly. None but the true followers of Christ have a right to participate in the memorial elements of the Lord's Supper. Those who partake unworthily, eat and drink judgment to themselves, or to their condemnation.

As the foregoing affirmative propositions are, in the strictest sense of the word, the unequivocal sentiments of all who profess to be evangelical orthodox Baptists Christians; before another step is taken, or word added, let the propositions be collected, and placed together, that they may be seen at one view, that any defect, or discrepancy may appear at first sight, if any deficiencies exist.

It is averred, that all professed evangelical Baptists inflexibly hold the following to be Bible doctrines:

1st. That immersion is the only scriptural mode of baptism.

2d. That none but those who are baptized by immersion are true followers of Christ.

3d. That all true followers of Christ, and none others of mankind have a right to the communion-table of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, on the most critical review of the foregoing connected propositions, it must be admitted, that, if the Baptists are right, in the first proposition of the train, they are right in the second and third, and all arguments to prove the contrary must be futile and vain. Thus much must be conceded to the Baptists.

But such a concession amounts to nothing in their favor, if the first proposition is not true, but false!

And, if the three propositions are infallibly true, another proposition must, unavoidably, be added, as infallible truth, which must inevitably *overthrow* the whole system of the Baptists' theory of denominational existence.

The falsity of the first proposition, namely, that immersion is the only scriptural mode of Christian baptism, has been fairly, and convincingly, and conclusively argued, and shown, and it is presumed to be believed to have been done satisfactorily to the general community of mankind, except the Baptists. The author of this treatise has had so long and intimate acquaintance with the Baptist people and their sentiments, that he has no confidence to believe that a single argument which he has adduced to show the fallacy of their cherished system of theology on baptism, will have the weight of a feather to convince one who has been immersed of the errors attached to the Baptist theory. It is not for them he writes; but for the millions of those whose minds may yet be open to conviction of the truth. Hence, if the Baptist people are not satisfied with the foregoing arguments to prove the falsity of the sentiment, that *immersion is the only scriptural mode of baptism*; then, let all who will, give ear to a fourth proposition which stands unavoidably connected with those above stated, to which the Baptists uniformly and inflexibly adhere. Consider the

4th Affirmative proposition. *Immersion is essential to salvation.*

This doctrine is infallible, if the three foregoing affirmative propositions are true. To demonstrate this fact, will now be conclusively shown.

To demonstrate a thing, requires positive, infallible proof. E. G. To demonstrate the mathematical fact, that $6 \times 9 = 54$. Take six measures, each containing nine peaches, empty the peaches into one large measure, counting them one, by one, and the whole number of peaches found in the large measure will be fifty-four. The same process will demonstrate, that nine measures, each containing six peaches, will number 54.

Now it is averred, that the mathematical demonstrations, on paper before us, are no more certain, than the following doctrinal facts will appear by a process of demonstration.

Let the 1st Proposition be admitted as infallible—that immersion is the divinely required, and the only designated and divinely commanded mode of Christian baptism, and the only infallible badge of true Christian discipleship.

Then it infallibly follows as equally true, that 2nd. All who are immersed are true disciples of Christ—followers of his example, are his sheep,—heirs of his kingdom of grace and glory—and, none but those who are immersed are Christ followers, his sheep, his people in a gospel sense, nor interested in any of his gracious promises of salvation.

Then it follows again, as infallibly true that 3d. All who are immersed, have a divine right to the

sacramental table; for them, the memorials were exclusively prepared. And all who are not immersed are divinely excluded—and those who are immersed, are justified in refusing to commune with the unholy.

Now, to demonstrate the certainty of a fourth proposition, as an infallible deduction, from the three foregoing propositions, if true, let the three above propositions be reduced into one compound proposition, (like the six or nine baskets of peaches, counted, one by one, to ascertain, demonstratively, the whole number of peaches in one basket,) and by such an infallible process of demonstration, a fourth proposition, equally infallible, will be found to result from the complex proposition.

DEMONSTRATION.

Three Propositions in the Abstract, compounded into one.

First Proposition. Immersion is the only scriptural mode of Christian baptism. Admit this, and the next must be admitted as equally infallible, and united will form two parts of the compound. Thus,

First and Second Propositions in Compound. All who are baptized by immersion after the example of Christ, are the true followers, and the only true followers, of Christ! Hence, if the two parts of this compound proposition be admitted as true, then a third ingredient may be added equally infallible. Thus,

First, Second, and Third Propositions in Com-

pound. All who are baptized by immersion after the example of Christ, and are the true followers, and the only followers of Christ, have an exclusive divine right to the sacramental table of the Lord's Supper; for them, and them *only*, even the true followers of Christ, the sacramental supper was divinely prepared, and none but those who, in the judgment of charity, by a sound profession, and corresponding life of godliness, are the true followers of Christ, and have a divine invitation to the Lord's table. Surely, then, the true followers of Christ are justified in refusing to commune at the Lord's table with the unholy, who have no right themselves to commune at the Lord's table, and who, if they *did* commune "unworthily, would eat and drink *damnation** to themselves, not discerning the Lord's body." Such is the compound of first, second, and third propositions. Now, if this compound proposition be admitted as infallibly true in the whole, and in all its several ingredients, then a fourth proposition must, consequently, be added to the compound, the truth of which must be equally infallible, and cannot, by any correct rule of reasoning, be otherwise. Thus,

First, Second, Third, and Fourth Propositions all one Compound, Affirmative Sentence. Thus the four in conclusion.

All who are baptized by immersion, after the example of Christ, are the followers, and the only true

■ *Krima* Judgment, condemnation. Vide 1 Cor. xi. 29, 32.

followers of Christ, have an exclusive right to the communion-table of the Lord's Supper, and are *exclusively* the heirs, and the *only* heirs of salvation!

No demonstration can be more certain and infallible, than the conclusion drawn from the foregoing compound proposition, the sum total of which is reduced to a sentence, namely, that if *immersion* is the *only* scriptural *mode* of Christian baptism, then immersion is positively, and infallibly, essential to salvation.

The question to which we have now arrived, by the foregoing demonstration of a connected chain of professed theological sentiments, is as follows, viz.:

Are the foregoing demonstrated propositions taken either in the *concrete* or in the *abstract*, true, or are they *false*?

Who will answer the above question? Who—who—who—who—who will answer it?

While waiting somewhat impatiently for an answer, who should pop through the key-hole of my study door, into the presence of my imaginary optics, than a queer-looking fellow, with a paper in his hand, which he hastened to present, as he said, from the King his Master! Taking the paper, the contents were found to be in the following words, viz.:

“Old Man, being otherwise engaged at present, I have sent an answer to your present question, by one of my confidential understrappers, who will answer any other inquiries you may please to make.

“I hasten to add, that your whole string of pro-

positions, to which your last question alludes, whether considered in the *concrete* or the *abstract*, are demonstrably true! You got highly offended with me, a short time ago, because I used the very same doctrines that you have now strung together, to persuade you to become a Baptist. You opposed me in every one of the four ingredient propositions which *now* you have proved to a demonstration to be true if the *first* is admitted. This encouraged me to hope that you would make an excellent Baptist after all; for truly you are teaching even the Baptist Doctors of Divinity how to demonstrate the great theological truth, that immersion is essential to salvation—*infallibly* so, and cannot be otherwise if the First Proposition of your compound be admitted, namely, that immersion is the scriptural, and the *only* scriptural mode of Christian baptism. This is a doctrine which the Baptists universally believe as firmly as I believe it. And they must all be convinced, sooner or later, if that important point be clearly understood in all its bearings, that immersion is, indeed, the *only* scriptural mode of baptism; then, it must be infallibly true, as you have demonstrated, both with logical and mathematical accuracy, that immersion is essential, (and I will take the liberty to add,) the *only* essential condition of salvation. Adieu."—*Messenger*.

Understrapper. Do you wish anything of me? If you do, my Master gave me orders to afford you every assistance in my power, for he is very confident that you will yet make a very logical and demonstrative

Baptist, capable of teaching the very literati of that denomination how to string together and demonstrate the truth, both of the articles of their own creed, and also many of the infallible doctrines of my Master. If you have any commands, please say on.

Old Man. I have but one command, and that is, that you hasten, without a moment's delay, back through that key-hole of the door, to the place whence you came; and the only compliments I have to send to your Master in return for his and your intrusion are, that it is my desire that both he and all his understrappers will, in future, keep out of my study.

OLD MAN IN SOLILOQUY AGAIN.

He is gone. Good riddance to him, as well as to his Master. But, although Satan meant not so, yet one thing I have learned, even by this obtrusion of his proxy, which is, that Satan is making rapid progress in disseminating his infernal theology among all classes of mankind. And if he is proud of boasting that his sentiments accord with the doctrines of any professed evangelical denomination of Christians, it might be of use to them, humbly and prayerfully to inquire, and carefully to examine into the matter, and see whether the *facts* exist; and if they do, surely if an alarm trumpet is not sounded, the blood of souls will be required from some quarter!

Hence, whatever Satan's doctrines may be, let the question be resumed. *Viz.:* Are the above demon-

strated propositions in whole, or in part, true, or are they false? Who answers?

If no other one answers, I will take the burden upon myself to answer the question, and show obvious reasons to prove, that compounded or abstracted, every proposition in the series of process above stated, and demonstrated, is false as Satan, and liable to evil tendency!

It is a well-known axiom, and a true one, *viz.* "that, which proves too much, proves nothing at all." The witness who testifies to a known falsehood, destroys the validity of his testimony, even to that which is true. Nothing more than the application of the above axiom will be needed to prove the falsity of the foregoing propositions. Let the trial be made.

Take the first proposition of the train. "Immersion is the only scriptural mode of Christian baptism." If this be admitted, then demonstration proves infallibly, that immersion is essential to salvation, and all the power of logic may be challenged to disprove it.

But, before I proceed farther, on the merits of this important point, I wish to premise a few things to prevent misunderstanding, unfounded prejudice, and false apprehensions of a want of charity toward real Christians belonging to different departments of the Church of Jesus Christ. The prayer of my inmost soul is, that I may not write any thing to offend, or annoy one of God's hidden ones who believe in Jesus, and have a "good hope through grace" of a blessed immortality. This I have no doubt is true of thou-

sands, who belong to evangelical Baptist churches, and other denominations of evangelical Christians. God forbid, that I should write, or speak, or do any thing, to give needless pain to the feelings of one of God's dear children for whom Christ died, and whose name is written in His book of life.

The things which I would premise are the following. *Viz.*: That it is the errors, only, which prevail in the Church of God, against which my animadversions are exclusively levelled. The true Church of God on earth is one: and every true member of it is interested in its covenant blessings, through faith in the Lord Jesus, and the purification of that blood which "cleanseth from all sin."

But, the adversary, who tempted Eve to sin, and through the whole progress of time has plotted the destruction of all her posterity, has, in these latter times of the earth's existence, adopted various new measures to defeat God's purposes, and destroy the souls of men, by a complicated system of counterfeiting, and perverting the very word, and doctrines and means of grace, which God has appointed, foreordained and revealed, as the only method of fallen man's redemption from the curse of endless death, and recovery to divine favor on earth, and the possession of an eternal inheritance in heaven, by virtue of union with Him who died to save lost men. The above premonitory notice I desire may be kept in mind, as applicable not only to all that has been written in this treatise; but, also to all that remains to be presented

on this most painful subject. And if this notice is strictly regarded both by the writer and readers, the author has nothing to fear from the opposition of any others of God's creation, than Satan, and his angels, and all those classes of mankind who are combined with the powers of Anti-Christ against God, against the Bible—against the religion of the Lord Jesus, and the people of his love.

With such preliminary observations in view, I proceed to show that the four compound propositions above demonstrated, (three of which have been unequivocally adopted by the close-communication Baptists, as the foundation of their distinctive denominational existence, and the other which Satan knows they cannot avoid by any human artifice whatever, because it is the cap of the climax—the top-stone of his artifice to deceive,) are, each and all of them, *false*, and tend only to the destruction of immortal souls.

The first of the fourfold train of propositions unto the root of which the *axe* of divine truth is now to be laid, is, that *immersion is the only scriptural mode of Christian baptism*.

This is the capital error, which lies at the foundation of the whole system of falsehood which, after various ascents, terminates in the apex of salvation to all who are immersed! Like a wrong figure at the commencement of an arithmetical process, the error accumulates every step in advance, and would thus continue to increase in geometrical proportion, if the whole was not abandoned, and the error cor-

rected at the beginning. So is the error of the doctrine now under review.

The application of the *axiom* to prove its falsity will show the following positive absurdities, all of which are anti-scriptural, and tend to subvert the very foundation of gospel truth.

1st. The doctrine of immersion, the only mode of Christian baptism, is magnified to a degree of superiority above justifying faith in the efficacy of the atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Is this denied? Let the point be tested by a supposed case. A sinner of Adam's lost race, under full conviction of his guilt and desert of endless punishment, falls at mercy's feet, confesses guilt, demerit, and the justness of his condemnation, and with a *death grip* of unwavering faith in Jesus, the Mediator, and in the efficacy of his blood of atonement, cries, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The prayer for mercy is heard in heaven, pardon is granted, the soul of the rebel is blessed with peace and joy, which the possession of earth could not give, followed with a desire to glorify God in life, in death, and forever.

Now, this man, (suppose of forty years of age,) with a wife and family of children around him, to a babe in the mother's arms, wishing to unite all his household with him in the service of God, calls them all together around his fireside, declares to them what the Lord had done for his soul; prays with, and for them, for the first time; and the wonderful result is, that under his first prayer, his wife, and every son

and daughter, from the eldest down to the child of seven years of age, (leaving but three in infancy,) are struck under conviction. And in less than one month (suppose) this man is blessed with a church in his own house, consisting of himself, wife, three sons, and four daughters, all happy and rejoicing in the pardoning love of Jesus, whose precious blood, applied by the washing of regeneration by the power of the Holy Spirit, had hopefully cleansed them all through faith, from the guilt and condemnation of sin.

Let it be farther supposed, that this man, and his wife had been baptized in infancy by sprinkling—were both trained up around the family altar of prayer, but after leaving the paternal roof, had lived for years within the bounds of a close-communication Baptist Congregation, where they often heard immersion extolled to the skies, and “baby sprinkling and sprinklers” described as unworthy of a name on the records of Christianity. Still the man and his wife, described above, as new converts to the faith of atoning blood in Christ Jesus, had unwaveringly through the former years of life retained a solemn veneration for the ordinances in which they had been consecrated, and instructed by pious parents, and considered them now more endearingly than ever.

Now, we will farther suppose that this man, his wife, and seven children, after having frequently related to their neighbors the wonderful love and mercy of the Lord to their souls, signify their desire to the minister and members of the Baptist church in the

neighborhood, to become members upon the condition that the parents be received on the profession of their faith in the atoning blood of Christ, and a personal recognition of their infant baptism; and also that all the children of the household be baptized, the seven professors according to their desires, by sprinkling, and the three youngest infant children according to the desire of the parents who considered it an indispensable duty to dedicate their infant children to God in his holy ordinance of baptism. What would be the result of such a request? Doubtless, every practicable argument and solicitation would be used to proselyte them all to the doctrine, that immersion is the only mode of Christian baptism. But if this could not be effected, they would have to remain out of the pale of the visible church till *doom's day*, before a close-communication Baptist church would receive them into their number. But why? Because, no experience of union to Christ by faith in his atoning blood would be considered of any avail to give evidence of vital piety, short of baptism by immersion. Thus, immersion is magnified above atoning blood.

The 2d. proposition in the Baptist theory, which comes in order under this review, is the sentiment, that immersion is the only scriptural badge of the true disciples of Christ.

The amount of this assumptive claim is, that immersion is the only door into the only true Christian Church on earth. In other words, all who are immersed, are true disciples of Christ; followers of his ex-

ample—are his sheep—heirs of his kingdom of grace and glory. And none but those, who bear his cross of immersion, give evidence that they are Christ's followers, his sheep, or people in a gospel sense, or that they are interested in any of his gracious promises of salvation. Hence, none but those who are immersed can be admitted as members into the close-communication Baptist church, for the reason that immersion is the only door into the church of that denomination.

The falsity of this assumption is detected by the anti-scriptural absurdities with which it stand infallibly connected. This presumptuous proposition, cannot be otherwise than true, or false. There can be no alternative. The *postulate is*, that the close-communication Baptist church is the only true Church of God on the earth—that immersion is the only door of admission into this only true Church—and that all who are immersed by baptistical authority are followers of Christ's example, and are, in fact, his only true disciples !

That immersion is the only door of admission into the close-communication Baptist church, will not be disputed. But, that this is the only true Church of God on earth—and that its members, admitted by immersion, are the only true followers of Christ, are points of the aforesaid assumptive claim of the close-communication Baptists, which it is averred, are either true or false, and cannot be otherwise. Let these points of assumptive claim be tested, as metals are tried.

If the close-communication Baptist church is the only true Church of God on earth—and its members, are

the only true followers of Christ, then, it would follow, unavoidably, as infallible truth, that there have been no true Christians on the earth, since the days of John the Baptist, and are no true Christians on the earth at the present time, except those belonging to the close-communion Baptist church! No true baptism but immersion! No true Church of God, but the close-communion Baptist church! No true Christians, but close-communion Baptists! Such are the sentiments of close-communion Baptists. We have been baptized by immersion, the only scriptural mode of baptism! We belong to the only true Church of God, for there is not now, and never was, since the days of John the Baptist, any true gospel Church, but the close-communion Baptist church. And we are the only true followers of Christ for we have followed his example, "down into the water, and up out of it," by immersion, and we are the only sect of true Christians in the world.

If the above doctrine be true, then, all the Churches of Jesus Christ from the Church of the apostles in Jerusalem, including all the churches in Judea, Asia Minor, even all in Christendom until A. D. 1520, were all heretical churches, embracing the fundamental error that men might "fear God, work righteousness, be accepted with him," and be regular members of Christian churches, and yet be baptized otherwise than by immersion! And since A. D. 1520, when the Baptist denomination first made their appearance in Germany, all the evangelical churches of different denominations of Christians, (except the close-commu-

nion Baptist,) are heretics—not Churches of Jesus Christ—not true followers of Christ—not true Christians, because they do not believe that immersion is the only mode of baptism, and that immersed persons only are true Christians!

Now let it not be said, that the close-communication Baptists unchurch all the churches of all other denominations of professed evangelical Christians; but let it rather be said, (in softer words, and harder arguments, to convince them of the palpable errors which lie at the foundation of their presumptuous claim of ecclesiastical priority—superiority, and exclusive possession of the whole kingdom of heaven on earth,) that all other churches on earth of every evangelical denomination unchurch themselves, (if the Baptist doctrine of baptism be true) by obstinately refusing to believe the Baptists when they honestly declare that they believe that John baptized Christ by immersion, that immersion is the only mode of gospel baptism—that the Baptist church is the only true Church of God on earth; that its members are the only true followers of Christ; and that all other professed Christians are heretics. For such is the amount of their theological system of close-communication!

The 3d predominant sentiment, which grows out of the Baptist doctrine, that “immersion is the only mode of baptism,” is, that all who are immersed, have a divine right to the sacramental table, and that all who are not immersed, are divinely, excluded from the holy Supper.

This doctrine is confessed to be the legitimate result of all the foregoing preposterous claims of the Baptists, which, if true, would doubtless give them the exclusive right to the table of Him who instituted the ordinance of the holy Supper, for all who are divinely washed from sin and guilt in his atoning blood. To all such, and such only as are born of the Spirit, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, Christ says, "This do in remembrance of me."

Now, if the Baptists can prove that they are the only class of mankind, who are born of the Spirit, who are washed from sin and guilt by the heart-cleansing blood of Jesus, and that their regeneration, and consequent exclusive title to a seat at the communion-table of Christ, are in consequence of their faithful performance of immersion, as *one* sole condition of their title to exclusive church membership, and the ordinance of the Lord's Supper; then, most assuredly, all evangelical Christians on earth, who are *not* immersed, will be laid under the painful necessity of being excluded from the close-communion Baptist table of the commemorative supper of the common Lord of all, whose names are in the book of life, as the heirs of salvation!

But if it is true that churches of evangelical Christians existed throughout all Christendom, during more than fifteen hundred years before a Baptist church existed on the earth, as was the incontestible *fact*—if

it be true that the apostolic church in Jerusalem, consisting, primarily, of men who partook with Christ of the Lord's Supper, when first instituted, on the very night in which he was betrayed into the hands of his enemies for crucifixion—if it be true that this very church of Jesus Christ, after his ascension, was blessed with the out-pouring of the Eternal Spirit in such a reformation, that three thousand souls were added to their number in *one* day, all of whom were baptized (not after John's preparatory ceremonial ordinance, but) in the name of Jesus Christ, in accordance with Christ's commanded gospel ordinance of the administration of the *sign* and *seal* of the righteousness of faith; and, if it be true that the *same* church of Jesus Christ continued, extended, and spread among various nations of the earth, to the same degree that Christendom extended its borders during all the evolutions of time to the present generation, under the auspices and protection of the Supreme Head of the Church, of whom it was once declared by an experienced and inspired apostle, "God is no respecter of persons; but, in every nation, he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him;" then, surely, a sect of *professing* Christians, of less than three hundred and fifty years standing, since the first church of the order was organized on earth, must be considered as very arrogant in their assumptions; palpably erroneous in doctrine, which gave rise to their distinctive existence; and presumptuously *false* in the claims of their exclusive possession, and worthy par-

icipation of all the ordinances, immunities, and blessings appertaining to the Church of Jesus Christ!

The fourth proposition, unavoidably resulting from the foregoing sentiments of the Baptists, is, that *immersion is essential to salvation*.

This point, it is but justice to say, the Baptists, as a denomination of professed Christians, do not receive as an article of their faith, but, in general, professedly discard it in their theory. But why, in the name of common sense, do they discard the doctrine which is the very cap of the climax—the very top-stone of all that they profess to believe—of all that they labor to obtain—of all they hope to enjoy as the endless reward of all they seek and pray for during their earthly pilgrimage? They openly profess their belief, and preach it, and labor to proselyte the world of mankind to their avowed faith, that *immersion* is the only scriptural mode of gospel baptism—that immersion is the true badge of the true followers of Christ, and the only badge by which the only true followers of Christ are to be known and distinguished from all other professors of Christianity. They avow the doctrine that those who are immersed, and those *only*, have a right to the communion-table of the Lord's Supper. And thus, the thousands of members of the close-communication Baptist churches, live and die in the unwavering belief, that they have entered in at the only true door of immersion, into the Baptist church, the *only true Church of Jesus Christ*—that they are the only class of professed Christians on earth, who are followers of

Christ's example in the *essential sign* and *token* of true religion ; and yet, professedly, have the imbecility to believe, that the very doctrine of immersion, which has so distinguishingly given them the assumed pre-eminence over the whole Christian world, and made them what they are—the only true disciples of Christ, and professed privileged heirs of the kingdom of eternal glory, is not, nevertheless, a doctrine *essential* to salvation ! How perfectly inconsistent is this disavowal of the essential, yea, *most essential*, properties of immersion ! According to this imbecile deficiency, *immersion*, which is first and last, and the all-absorbing doctrine of all the distinguishing evidences of worthiness for church membership, turns out, at last, in the professional view of its distinguished admirers, advocates, and devotees, to be calculated only for purposes of this life, and this life only, not being essential to the salvation of the soul !

Such being the estimated amount of *immersion*, in view of Baptists themselves, we are now prepared to consider the dilemma into which the Baptists *must* be involved, *whether they believe it or not*—the only alternative of their escape from the dilemma, whether they believe it or not, and the consequence of their refusal to escape from impending danger, whether they believe, see, feel, or fear it or not !

The dilemma into which they have brought themselves, or, into which they have *been brought* by the device of an Adviser, is this, viz. to make choice be-

tween two proposed doctrinal subjects and their consequences.

The doctrinal subjects, to the admission of one or the other of which the Baptist must unavoidably be compelled to make, is, first, the unequivocal belief and admission of the *consistent* doctrine to which all the preliminary sentiments of their cherished theory indispensably tends, viz., that *immersion is essential to salvation*. Or, secondly, to abandon, *in toto*, the error which evidently lies at the foundation of all their preconceived ecclesiastical exclusiveness, and which, according to their present conception, appertain only to this life. The consequences of adopting the one or the other of the above-stated doctrinal subjects, will be the following :

If this doctrine be admitted, and adhered to, that *immersion is essential to salvation*, then it must be clearly understood as a close-union Baptist sentiment, that all who have been, or shall be immersed, have been, or will be saved, safe in heaven. And, that all who never were immersed, or shall not hereafter be immersed, have been, or will be cast into hell, into the fire that never will be quenched ! Consequently, all professed Baptists, who have ever lived on earth, and died in the faith of immersion, are safe in heaven. And even if *Judas Iscariot* and *Simon Magus* were baptized by immersion, as the Baptists believe they were, they, too, must be in heaven, if *immersion is essential* to salvation !

On the contrary, if *immersion is essential to salva-*

tion, (as the Baptists must necessarily hold to be consistent,) then all mankind, since the days of John the Baptist, who have not been immersed, without exception, whether they have been professors of religion or not, or washed from their sins in the blood of atonement or not, or lived and died preaching, praying, praising God, and hoping for heaven or not, both they and *all their children*, even those who have died in infancy, including, also, all the infant children of all the Baptists who were careful to secure their own salvation by *immersion*, but left their infant children to perish without the *essential* mark of *immersion* upon them, to secure their salvation; yea, awful as the result may appear to be, if immersion is essential to salvation, then all who are not immersed, whether male or female, old or young, bond or free, professors of religion or non-professors, all must be *damned* if immersion is essential to salvation. And, it is confidently averred, without fear of refutation, that no close-communication Baptist can be consistent in the baptistical sentiments and practices which he has adopted, unless he adopts the sentiment, also unavoidably connected, that *immersion is essential to salvation*, whatever may be its concomitants, or consequences!

Now, if the close-communication Baptists are not prepared to adopt this *highest degree* in their "lodge of perfection," and ecclesiastical exclusive privileged claim of superiority, then, then, there is left but one method of escape from the dilemma, and that is without an alternative, viz: the one method of escape is,

to retrace their steps to the foundation of all their arrogated claims of ecclesiastical superiority, and correct the *error* of the outset of their denominational career, by a total abandonment of their favorite doctrine, that *immersion is the only mode of gospel baptism*. And, by adopting the same sentiments which the gospel church of Jesus Christ believed and practised during more than fifteen hundred years previous to the existence of the Anabaptist denomination, viz: that the water of purification as a sign and seal of the righteousness of faith, may be officially applied, with equal propriety and validity, either by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion, if the administration be made by proper authority to proper subjects, and in the name of the adorable Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

This humiliating step would correct the erroneous figure in the outset, and bring millions of evangelical Christians upon a *par* in labors, in love, communion, peace, and prosperity, where emulation, strifes, division and contentions have long separated spiritual members of the same spiritual body, even the Church of the ever-living God.

Now, if this can be done, well; but if not then the consequence of their refusal to escape from impending danger, must be plainly told. Painful as the task may be, the truth, the whole truth must be exhibited.

CHAPTER VI.

Origin of the Fundamental Error of the Baptists.

THE first capital error upon which the whole distinctive theory of the Baptist denomination is founded, is, that *immersion is the only scriptural mode of baptism*. This starting point was evidently the work of Satan, in the very commencement of his rage against God, at the breaking out of the Lutheran and Calvinistic Reformation, when the Old Dragon was cast out of his Papal Heaven* by the power of divine truth, in the early part of the sixteenth century.

Of this period of time, it was said, in the the Book of Revelations, "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea, for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." For more than half a score of previous centuries, Satan, at the head of all the combining powers of Anti-Christ, had been leading the whole Church of Rome into a state of apostacy from

* Vide, Revelations, chap. xii. 9, and context

God, by the Papal usurpation of both ecclesiastical and secular tyranny, by which the adherents of Roman Catholicism were influenced "to depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron."*

During that period, Satan had little else to do than to proceed on quietly, in the work of seducing souls to destruction. But when the Protestant Reformation drove him from his stronghold by the power of naked truth, the next work of the adversary was the long foretold device to "scatter the power of the holy people," before the end of God's wonders should be finished by the overthrow of Anti-Christ, and the conversion of the world to the obedience of the Lord Jesus.† The wrath of Satan was then leveled at the Protestant Church of Jesus Christ, and various measures were plotted for its destruction. When it was found that *this* could not be done by persecution, the next resort of the adversary was the perversion of God's truth into lies, for the purpose of dividing the Church into various sects and departments, each of which should be distinguished from all the others by some peculiar external form of doctrine, or mode of worship, not expressly designated, commanded, nor implied in the word of God as *essential to salvation*; but such as would have the appearance of some plausible advantage for the promotion of a favorite system of professed religion. The prime object of the

* Vide, 1 Tim iv. 1.

† Daniel xii. 7.

grand inventor of mischief, appears to have been, to pervert the essential doctrines of gospel salvation into mere modes and forms, which, by Satanic management, could be rendered pleasing to the carnal mind, or amusing and fascinating to the volatile, or blended with politics, combined with worldly splendor, a substitute for vain amusements, or, in short, a popular religion, designed solely for the honor, emolument, happiness, and interest of its votaries in this life, *whether there should chance to be any other state of existence hereafter or not!*

Such we hesitate not to denominate a device of Satan, based on a *perversion* of God's truth, and plotted by the adversary of all good, as a substitute for Papacy, designedly calculated to deceive and destroy the souls of mankind, by multiplying, as formerly, millions of *Christless* professors of the Protestant Christian religion, not one of whom will ever be able to obtain entrance into the kingdom of heaven, because their religion consisted solely in *self-righteous bigotry*.

The whole subject of the foregoing controversy has been founded on what Satan advocates as the *one thing needful*—the one point of doctrine which is laid as the chief corner-stone in the foundation of all that is essential to the formation of one sect of Christians, namely, (comprising *all* who can be proselyted to the faith,) that *immersion* is the *only* scriptural mode of baptism. This, it is averred, (although *one* of the celebrated doctrines of a numerous and highly-re-

spected Protestant religious sect,) is, nevertheless, as evidently one of the "doctrines of devils," originating from Satan, the Prince of Darkness, opposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ, tending to division, emulation, and strife in the Church, and resulting in the multiplication of "foolish virgins," to the fearful loss of innumerable souls!

The catalogue of foregoing absurdities, unavoidably connected with it, shows conclusively that it is a doctrine of the Prince of Devils. That it is opposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ, is evident, because it sets up the mere mode of an *external application of water* to the human body by *immersion*, to be of *superior* importance in relation to the verity of the personal possession of true Christianity, qualification for church-membership, title to privileged ordinances, and the very foundation of a blessed hope of immortality, than all the doctrines taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles as essential to the salvation of lost men! *Immersion* will entitle its votaries to all the exclusive privileges of a Baptist church, and to the hope of a blessed immortality beyond the grave. But a profession of "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," confessed with the mouth, and believed in the heart, that Jesus is the Christ, that God raised him up from the dead, and that his blood alone "cleanseth from all sin," (all which are essential doctrines of salvation, so taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles,) would avail nothing—no, not the weight of a feather, to evince the reality of a personal

possession of vital piety or qualification for church-membership, or title to the communion-table of the Lord, although such a profession was sealed by the official administration of water-baptism, by sprinkling the conscientious believer with the water of purification, the gospel *sign* and *seal* of the righteousness of *faith* in a crucified, risen, and glorious Redeemer! All this would avail nothing without *immersion*, to introduce a person within the pales of a Baptist church, and to the privileges and hopes of a true Christian.

Hence, such a doctrine must be from Satan, in opposition to the doctrines of Jesus Christ and his apostles, which are essential to salvation. And hence, also, appears the momentous contrast existing between the essentials of salvation, as taught by Christ and his apostles, on the one hand; and on the other, the *one thing needful*—the essential condition of salvation, as taught in the system which Satan advocates.

By the temptation of Satan, all mankind have sinned against God, and by sin have fallen under the curse of endless death. “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.”

God manifest in the flesh, has made atonement for sin, and offers mercy freely to the world of rebellious sinners on specified conditions or terms,* which are essential to salvation. The conditions are “*repentance* toward God and *faith* toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” The proclamation of the gospel is, “Repent,

* Nothing more is meant by *condition* of salvation, than the terms on which salvation is offered in the gospel.

for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. He that believeth not shall be damned. If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him up from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Such are the terms on which salvation is offered.

Repentance toward God is proved to be genuine by turning from sin. Faith on the Lord Jesus Christ is proved to be genuine, by works of love and obedience. All true penitents and believers are saved by grace, through faith, and *that* not of themselves; for repentance, and faith, and salvation, are all the gifts of God by his grace, and according to his own eternal purpose of mercy.

And all who reject the grace of the gospel by an obstinate refusal, or neglect of the conditions of salvation, on which divine mercy is freely offered to guilty rebels, remain under the condemnation of *endless death*, and must inevitably suffer the consequences.

Such is a summary of the doctrines preached by Christ and his apostles, as *essential to salvation*.

But, what is a *summary* of the "doctrines of devils" in relation to the essentials of salvation?

One short sentence answers this question, viz., ■
perversion of God's truth, by "changing it into ■
lie!"

The Holy Bible comprises a divine charter of all the

covenant blessings which God has bestowed, or reserved in store for man ; and all that the Lord God requireth of man as his rational, dependent, and accountable creature. Every word, sentence, or paragraph of the Bible, which is distorted by Satan from its true meaning, end, or purpose, which it was divinely designed to accomplish, so as to render it subservient to the accomplishment of Satan's devices, to corrupt and turn men out of the way in which God, by His truth, requires all mankind to believe and walk, is a perversion of God's truth, by "changing it into a lie."

To do this very thing for the purpose of destroying the souls of men in the spirit of malignity towards God and his works, has been the assiduous employment of Satan from the hour of his serpentine visit to Eve in Eden, to the present day. By a perversion of a portion of God's truth into a lie, Satan tempted Eve to aspire after the knowledge of "evil" as well as "good," which resulted in her apostacy from God, as the beginning of all the sin, and woes, which have deluged this earth with evil from that ill-fated moment to the present time.

Hence, it may be observed, in sketching an epitome of the "doctrines of devils," that the doctrines of the Prince of fallen angels, are the doctrines of his legions of devils, which are denominated "seducing spirits." It is expressly revealed by the Holy Ghost, that in the latter times of the world's existence, devils would become teachers of doctrines, and their doctrines must

be understood as perversions of God's truth into lies for the purpose of deceiving mankind out of the salvation of their souls. In the prosecution of this infernal work of deception, every precept of the divine law is perverted by Satan into some doctrine of devils, to deceive and destroy the souls of men. Every doctrine, and ordinance, and precept, and promise, and threatening, which Christ commanded his apostles, and ministers to teach, and preach for the conviction, conversion, and salvation of mankind, is perverted by Satan into systems of deception, and lies, to prevent mankind from conviction of sin and danger, until their day of grace is past, the door of mercy shut, and their souls are lost for ever.

The innumerable idol gods of the heathen world, and all the abominations of idolatrous worship, are in accordance with the "doctrines of devils," and are founded on a perversion of God's truth into lies, for the Satanic purposes of deception, and the destruction of the souls of mankind.

The substitution of the Mahometan Koran for the Bible, has furnished a system of Islamism, "doctrines of devils," which for many ages past, has resulted in a tide of emigration of deceived souls from the earth by anticipations of a celestial paradise of licentiousness, into the bottomless pit, whence, the "doctrines," which deceived and destroyed them, originated.

A Satanic perversion of the doctrines of the "cross" of "Christ crucified," into the papal system of ecclesias-

tical tyranny, usurpation, political intrigue, abominable licentiousness, a sordid love of gold, the spirit of persecution, and a systematic method of changing the grace of God into worldly honor, grandeur, gain, self-indulgence, sensuality, and thirst for human glory in the achievements of military fame; forms another extensive system of "doctrines of devils" devised for the destruction of millions upon millions of the souls of mankind.

So, also, the Satanic perversion of Divine truth into a system of emulation, for the purpose of "scattering the power" of the Protestant gospel Church of Jesus Christ, into indivisibility, if possible, is the result of the promulgation of the "doctrines of devils." Hence, among evangelical Christians, the seeds of discord have been successfully sown, and have taken deep root. Contentions about external modes and forms of worship; and "strifes about words to no profit," have rent the church into sects, and parties; while the popular displays of the "doctrines of devils," have been furnishing graceless professors of religion with a mere pass-word for safe conveyance across the fords of the Jordan of death! There, millions, of self-confident, proud-hearted, flaming zealots, and bigots of professors of the religion of Jesus, will not be able to frame the pronouncement of the "shibboleth of grace, grace, by grace we are saved," the only safe pass-word into heaven! But, by their lisp of a sibboleth of self-righteousness, will prove, that by the seducing wiles of the "doctrines of devils," they fail in the true pro-

nunciation of the pass-word of grace ! and there, at the awful billows of the Jordan of death ! for the first time, they will learn, to full conviction, that something more than a mere sibboleth, has been wanting, to secure a pass-port into the kingdom of heaven.

Thus, the masterpiece of Satan's perversions of divine truth is to fill the earth with "seducing spirits," that, by the promulgation of their "doctrines," the Church of Jesus Christ may be scattered, divided, enervated in its power to do good by the spirit of emulation ; and crowded full of graceless professors, each of whom shall be furnished with a sibboleth of self-righteousness, as the only pass-word essential to their salvation ; while the enemy of God, and the deceiver of mankind, knows, that every such pass-word from the "doctrines of devils," will inevitably land the soul of its possessor into the bottomless pit of endless despair.

Now, whatever may be the Satanic sibboleth, furnished for the deception, and destruction of souls, in churches of other denominations of evangelical Christians, I feel providentially constrained to sound the alarm trumpet on the walls of that department of the Zion of God, denominated "close-communication Baptists." And, I do this from a consciousness of the fact, that from the inexhaustible budget of the "doctrines of devils," Satan has furnished that highly-respected denomination of Christians, with a deceptive "sibboleth !" which portends the ruin of millions of souls, who, by it may be decoyed into a mere profes-

sion of religion without saving grace, and like the foolish virgins without oil, will find the door of heaven shut upon them forever!

And, I can assure my Baptist friends, that my professed consciousness is no chimera—no false alarm of the sound of the trumpet. An enemy is concealed in ambush! And from thence, undiscovered, he is constantly shooting poisoned arrows of death, the discovery of which can only be made by the victim, when the divine pass-word shall be called for, at fords, where a mere “sibboleth will discover, both the Satanic deception, and the irretrievable loss of the soul together!”

Hence, the alarm trumpet must be sounded, or the blood of souls will be divinely required at the watchman’s hand. In view of such consequences, no apology is offered—no favor is solicited—no bribery will purchase desistance—no opposition is feared—the truth must be told!

The truth alluded to, is not to denounce *immersion*, as not being a scriptural mode of gospel baptism. All who believe in the ordinance of Christian baptism, admit that immersion is *a mode* of applying the water of purification to the human body as a sealing ordinance of the righteousness of faith in Christ Jesus. And it is presumed to believe, that no denomination of evangelical Christians, would desire the Baptists to do otherwise, than to baptize their members by immersion, if by the application of this mode, they can best “answer a good conscience.” Consequently, the whole

controversy, so far as the mode of baptism is concerned, is not, whether the Baptists shall enjoy their liberty according to the dictates of their conscience to baptize believers in Christ by immersion, as the initiatory ordinance of membership in the Church of God; and, that all other denominations of evangelical Christians shall enjoy the same liberty of conscience, to baptize the proper subjects of baptism by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion: All this might be done, without controversy, if the true spirit of the gospel prevailed, and all the members of the Church of Jesus Christ, in the enjoyment of the same liberty of conscience, in the observance of modes of worship and ordinances, not essential to salvation, might, nevertheless, all love one another, worship together, commune with each other, and walk together as heirs of the grace of life, in the unity of gospel faith, in the way to heaven, and eternal glory. But, alas!

Such unity of the family of God—of the members of the body of Jesus Christ—of the *church* purchased with the blood of atonement, has evidently been uprooted by the spirit of discord! Like the Ishmaelites of old, the hand of the close-communication Baptists is against every other denomination of evangelical Christians, and the hand of every other denomination of evangelical Christians is against the close-communication Baptists. The origin of the disunion, we have found to be the promulgation of the “doctrines of devils!” The subject of debate, which lies at the foundation of the disunity of the whole evangelical Christian

Church—the close-communion Baptists on *one side*, and *all* other evangelical Christians inhabiting this globe of earth on the *other side*—is found to be not even the *mode* of an external ordinance, (which *mode* itself is not expressly designated in Scripture, nor divinely commanded,) but, *merely*, the *exclusiveness* attached by the Baptist to *immersion* as a favorite *mode* of applying water in baptism.

To give the *subject* of such a vast and complicated disunion, all the consequence it can consistently merit or successfully claim, let both sides of the question in controversy be dispassionately analyzed.

1st. By the primitive church.

Water baptism was instituted by the Lord Jesus as a gospel sign, and seal of the covenant of grace, divinely appointed for both sexes under the Christian dispensation, in the room and stead of the divinely-abrogated ceremonial Mosaic rite of circumcision, which was divinely restricted (by the very nature of the ordinance as well as the express command of God) to the male sex only.

The commission to baptize was given by the crucified and risen Saviour, to his apostles and their successors in the ministerial office, to the end of the world. Four things are divinely required to constitute a scriptural administration of the holy ordinance of Christian baptism; and nothing farther in relation to circumstances of *time*, *place*, or *mode*, is made essential to the ordinance by divine authority, namely, 1st, Christian baptism is to be administered by an officer

in the church of God, clothed with ministerial authority. 2d. To all proper subjects of Christian baptism, viz., believers in Christ and their infant children. 3d. By the application of *clean* water applied for holy cleansing. And, 4th. Baptism is thus to be administered by express divine command, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Gospel baptism is the divinely-appointed *sign* and *seal* of the righteousness of faith in Jesus Christ. And, if it is administered to proper subjects, by the authority and formula above specified, and by the application of water to a portion, or the whole, of the naked body, either by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion, the official act constitutes gospel baptism, and need not to be repeated, as was the case of the twelve men of Ephesus, who had been baptized unto John's baptism, and were, subsequently, "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Gospel baptism, thus administered, is now required of all professors of faith in Christ, as the gospel *sign* and *seal* of their profession of faith in Christ; and of the righteousness of that faith which they profess; and also, as the divinely-appointed *badge* of discipleship, by a profession of faith in Christ, by which, in accordance with a correspondent life of godliness, they are to be known as proper subjects of membership and fellowship in the Christian Church of God, and divinely entitled to all its ordinances, and privileges, and blessings, which God has vouchsafed to the

whole household of faith under the gospel dispensation.

Such are the New Testament designations of the nature, design, and administration of the divine ordinance of Christian baptism. In its most *extensive* or *restricted* application, it is, in fact, nothing more nor less than *God's mark*, divinely required to be set upon the subjects of His designation, that by this visible sign and seal, the people of His love may be known in distinction from the wicked world, as professedly belonging to the household of faith, the Church of the living God.

Such were the uniform views of gospel baptism, as a divine ordinance of Jesus Christ, from the apostolic age to the Lutheran Reformation, about A. D., 1520, (excepting a period of about fifty years of the twelfth century, when the doctrine of infant baptism was strenuously opposed by the preaching of Peter De Bruys and his followers, who also insisted that *immersion* was the *only* scriptural mode of baptism, to be applied only to adult believers in Christ.)

Now, it is averred, "without fear of refutation," that the divine ordinance of gospel baptism has been perverted by the adversary into a system of discord, which, for about three centuries past, has been growing into importance, until (if not yet admitted by its votaries to be essential to salvation) the *facts exist* that infant consecration to God, in baptism, by Christian parents, is branded with the stigma of *anomalous*

innovation; immersion is preached as the only *mode* of water-baptism, warrantable in the Scriptures—the only *badge* by which true Christians can be distinguished from all other men of the earth—by which *alone* the *only* true Church of God on earth is designated—by which alone the only worthy participants of the Lord's Supper are to be distinguished from all other professors of Christianity the world over, and by which alone an indefeasible title to an heavenly inheritance can be realized by a good hope on a bed of death! And surely, then, *immersion* must answer all the purposes that can be *essential* to true religion in life or death, which amounts to the same, as being essential to salvation.

So Satan believes and preaches. So close-communication baptist elders *virtually* believe and preach. And some of them hesitate not to declare, that all true religion now on earth, is to be found only in the Baptist church; and the destruction of Anti-Christ, and the conversion of the world, will consist in the total extermination of all systems of religion but the Baptist, and the exaltation of that order of Christians to universal prerogatives and predominance. To use the express language of *one* celebrated divine, “In the Millenium, there will be but ‘one Lord, one faith, one baptism,’ because all the inhabitants of the earth will then be Baptists.” Such were his words. And such is the *amount* of the doctrine of *exclusion*, which the close-communication Baptists attach to a mere

external mode of applying water in the ordinance of Christian baptism.

Hence, the *pivot* on which the momentous *scale* of controversy between the Baptists and all other professed Christians of the earth turns, is found to be, not merely whether *immersion* may be conscientiously practised in common with all other Christians on earth, *who* as conscientiously practise sprinkling or pouring; but the whole controversy turns upon this point—shall immersion *exclusively* be practised in the Church of God, and all other modes of applying water in Christian baptism be denounced as marks of Anti-Christ, and all who bear the mark of the water-baptism in any other mode than *immersion* be anathematized as the accursed enemies of God? On this *one point*, according to the Baptist sentiment, salvation or damnation must turn. For, if *immersion exclusively* is the mode of baptism, divinely *designated* by the word *baptizo*, and divinely *commanded* when the commission was given by the risen Saviour to baptize; and if this exclusive designation and divine command to be immersed, are to be understood as determining the only essential *mark* of justifying faith in Christ, so that none can be pardoned without *immersion*—that none can be true followers of Christ without *immersion*—that none can belong to the true Church of God without *immersion*—that none can be worthy partakers of the Lord's Supper without *immersion*; and, that *none can possess a well-founded Christian hope of heaven, on the bed of death, with-*

out immersion; then, surely, the close-communion Baptists must be *right* on the subject of *exclusive immersion*: and all the rest of mankind, professors of religion, or non-professors, all infants included, even all the infants of the Baptists, dying *unimmersed*, of course must all perish eternally, on the Baptist system of *exclusive immersion*!

CHAPTER VII.

Anabaptist Opposition to the Lutheran and Calvinistic Reformation.

BUT, on the other hand, while the following averred facts are not disproved by scripture, nor by any authentic history of the Church of Jesus Christ, namely, that immersion was not specifically designated by Christ's example—nor expressly commanded in his commission to baptize ; that there is no scripture proof that the apostolic churches of Judea, Asia Minor, and elsewhere, held to immersion as the exclusive mode of Christian baptism ; and that the most authentic history of the Christian Church, for more than eleven hundred years after Christ's ascension, gives no intimation of any schism in the Church of God on account of the uniform practise of the baptism of infant children, or, of the claims of any one exclusive mode of the application of water in gospel baptism ; then the conclusion must be incontestible, that the Baptist subject of controversy, which now denounces infant baptism, and all adult baptisms by sprinkling or pouring, as accursed

marks of Anti-Christ ; and claims immersion to be the only commanded mode of Christian baptism, to the exclusion, of even Christian charity in the hope of salvation for those who are not immersed ; must have had its origin, wholly, subsequent to the twelfth century, and, principally, since A. D. 1520.

That such was the fact will appear from the following testimony, selected from authentic histories of the Church of Jesus Christ.

The following is from Buck's Theological Dictionary. "ANABAPTISTS ; those who maintain that baptism ought always to be performed by immersion. The word is compounded of "*ana*," "new," and *Baptistees*, "a Baptist ;" signifying that those who have been baptized in their infancy, ought to be baptized anew. Not satisfied with Luther's plan of reformation, others undertook a visionary enterprise to found a new church entirely spiritual and divine. Their progress was rapid ; for in a very short space of time, their discourses, visions, and predictions, excited great commotions in a great part of Europe. The most pernicious faction of all those, which composed this motley multitude, was that which pretended that the founders of this new and perfect church were under a divine impulse, and were armed against all opposition by the power of working miracles. It was this faction that in the year 1521 began their fanatical work under the guidance of Munzer, Stubner, Stork, &c. These men taught, that neither the laws of nature, nor the precepts of the New Testament had prohibited polyga-

my—that the ministry of Luther, and other reformers, was detrimental to their cause; they then madly attempted to propagate their sentiments by force of arms. Munzer and his associates in the year 1525, put themselves at the head of a numerous army, and declared war against all laws, governments, and magistrates of every kind, under the chimerical pretext, that Christ himself was now to take the reins of all government into his hands; but this seditious crowd was routed and dispersed by the elector of Saxony and other princes, and Munzer their leader was put to death.”

“ Many of his followers, however, survived, and propagated their opinions through Germany, Switzerland, and Holland. In 1533 a party of them settled at Munster under two leaders of the names of Matthias and Bockholt. They made themselves masters of the city; deposed the magistrates; invited the Anabaptists in the low countries to settle at Munster, which they called Mount Zion, that from thence they might reduce all nations of the earth under their dominion. Matthias was cut off by the bishop of Munster’s army; Bockholt was proclaimed king of Sion and invested with legislative powers like those of Moses. The city of Munster, however, was taken after a long siege, and Bockholt punished with death. Of these commotions, a great part were Anabaptists—a great part, also were Roman Catholics—and a still greater part of those, who had scarcely any religious principles at all. In these in-

surrections it is reported that 100,000 fell by the sword."

[The Anabaptists in the days of Martin Luther, however, were not the first class of this order of professed Christians in Christendom. The first class of Anabaptists designated in ecclesiastical history as having made a formidable opposition to infant baptism, and to the mode of sprinkling in baptism, were the Petrobrusians of Languedoc, by Peter de Bruys in A. D. 1110, about 410 years before Munzer and his accomplices commenced their career—AUTHOR.] "These were not without a mixture of fanaticism. The doctrine of their founder was "that no persons whatever were to be baptized before they were come to the full use of their reason." He also taught in opposition to Popery, "That churches were to be pulled down and destroyed; that the crucifixes, as instruments of superstition, deserved the same fate; that the real body and blood of Christ were not exhibited in the eucharist, but were merely represented in that ordinance; and that the oblation, prayers, and good works of the living, could be in no respect advantageous to the dead."

Peter de Bruys, the founder of this sect of Anabaptists,] "after a laborious ministry of 20 years was burnt, A. D. 1130 by the enraged populace, set on by the clergy," (Roman Catholic of course) "whose traffic was in danger from the enterprising spirit of this new reformer." [It is said, that soon after the death of the founder, this whole sect became extinct, or was lost in history.]

The following extracts from the celebrated Dr. J. H. Merle D'Aubigne's History of the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, will designate the rise, progress, and result of the Anabaptists under Munzer, the opposer of Martin Luther and the Reformation :

“ The pretensions of fanatics to divine inspiration added to the danger. Those enthusiasts rejected the authority of Scripture, began to speak only of an inward word—an internal revelation from God ; abandoned themselves to the intoxication of spiritual pride, and imagined themselves to be saints. The sacred writings, said (Luther,) were treated by them as a dead letter, and their cry was, ‘ The Spirit ! the Spirit ! ’ May God in His mercy preserve me from a church in which there are only such saints. I wish to be in fellowship with the humble, who know and feel their sin, and sigh and cry continually to God from the bottom of their hearts, to obtain comfort and deliverance. These words of Luther, said the historian, show how opposed the religious principles of the rebels were, to the religious principles of the Reformation.

“ The most noted of these enthusiasts was *Thomas Munzer*. Wanting in true humility, he was taken up with the desire of reforming the world, and like the generality of enthusiasts, forgot that it was with himself he should begin. Certain mystical writings, which he had read in his youth, had given a false direction to his thoughts. He made his first appearance

in public at Zwickau ; quitted Wittemberg on Luther's return thither, not satisfied to hold a secondary place in the general esteem, and became pastor of the small town of Alstadt in Thuringia. He publicly charged the reformers, by their adherence to the *written word*, with forming churches which were not pure and holy. He considered himself as called by God to remedy this great evil. The revelations of the Spirit, according to him, were the means by which the Reformation he was charged with, should be effected. 'He who hath the Spirit,' said he, 'hath true faith, although he should never, once, in all his life, see the Holy Scriptures. I have received from God the commission to gather together His elect in a holy and eternal union.' The agitation and ferment which were working in men's minds, were not a little favorable to the spread of these enthusiastic ideas. Men love the marvellous and whatever flatters their pride. Munzer having inoculated with his own views a portion of his flock, abolished chaunting and all other ceremonies annexed to public worship ; then setting off at the head of his parishioners to a chapel in the neighborhood of Alstadt, totally demolished it. After this exploit, being obliged to leave the country, he wandered from place to place in Germany, and came as far as Switzerland, everywhere carrying with him, and communicating to all who would give ear to him, the project of a general revolution. Wherever he went, he found men's minds prepared. His words were like gunpowder cast

upon burning coals, and a violent explosion quickly ensued.

“ Happily for the social order, the Gospel kept Luther from falling into this error. He wrote to the Elector—‘ It gives me indescribable satisfaction, that these enthusiasts themselves boast, to all who will give ear to them, *that they do not belong to us.*’ On the 19th of July, 1524, the insurrection commenced in the districts of the Black Forest, near the sources of the Danube ; a country that had been often the theatre of popular commotions. The Thurgovian peasantry rose against the Abbot of Richenau, who had refused to appoint over them an evangelical preacher ; thousands collected ; the insurrection spread with inconceivable rapidity from Suabia as far as the Rhenish provinces, Franconia, Thuringia, and Saxony. In January, 1525, all these countries were in a state of open insurrection. The peasantry put forth a declaration in twelve articles, each backed by a passage from the Bible, concluded with the words—‘ If we are wrong, let Luther set us right by the Scriptures.’ Melancthon and Luther each gave his judgment separately. The peasantry were public criminals ; the bishops caused the revolt ; the Christian conflict is not to be carried on by sword ; but by endurance and the cross. Christ, their captain, would not have his servants smite with the sword—he was hanged upon a tree.

“ But in vain did Luther inculcate these Christian precepts. Instead of subsiding, the insurrection grew more formidable. Count Louis of Helfenstein, and

seventy men under his command, were doomed to death. The wife, holding her infant in her arms, implored them, on bended knees, to spare the life of her husband. All perished. Luther denounced the rebels with all the energy of his character. 'The peasantry,' said he, 'are guilty of three horrible crimes against God and men: and thus deserve the death of the body and that of the soul. In the first place, they rebel against their rulers, to whom they have sworn allegiance; next, they rob and plunder convents and castles; and, to crown all, they cloak their crimes under a profession of the gospel! Throughout the empire a wide-spreading revolution was in full career. In the most flourishing and populous districts of the empire, the traveller was horror struck with the sight of heaps of dead bodies and smoking ruins. Fifty thousand had perished; and almost everywhere the people lost what little liberty they had previously possessed. Such, in Southern Germany, was the dreadful result of the revolt.

"Munzer turned his steps toward Saxony. Some townsmen of Mulhausen in Thuringia, elected him as their pastor. The town council having offered resistance, Munzer degraded it, appointing another in its stead, composed of his own friends and presided over by himself. Contemning the *Christ full of grace* whom Luther preached, his cry was—'We must exterminate with the sword, like Joshua, the Canaanitish nations. Munzer (wrote Luther to Amsdorff, on the 11th of April, 1525,) is king and emperor of Mul-

hausen, and no longer its pastor.' The lowest classes ceased to work. If any one wanted a piece of cloth, or a supply of corn, he asked his rich neighbor; if the latter refused, the penalty was hanging.

"Munzer exerted himself to raise the peasantry. 'When will you shake off your slumbers,' said he, in a fanatical address; 'Arise and fight the battle of the Lord! The time is come. France, Germany, and Italy are up and doing. Forward, forward, forward. Dran, dran, dran! Heed not the cries of the ungodly. They will weep like children; but be you pitiless. Dran, dran, dran! Fire burns; let your swords be ever tinged with blood! Dran, dran, dran! Work while it is day.' The letter was signed, '*Munzer, God's servant against the ungodly.*' The country people, eager for plunder, flocked in crowds to his standard. Terror spread far and wide! The doctors who had not feared emperors nor pope, felt themselves tremble in presence of a madman. Curiosity was all alive to what was going on, and watched every step in the insurrection. Melancthon wrote—'We are here in imminent danger. If Munzer be successful, it is all over with us; unless Christ should appear for our deliverance. Munzer's progress is marked by more than Scythian cruelty. His threats are more dreadful than I can tell you.'

"The pious elector (Frederick, the aged elector of Saxony,) had hesitated long what steps he should take. Munzer had exhorted him, as well as the other reigning princes, to be converted; 'For,' said he, 'their

time is come;' and he had signed his letters—'Munzer, armed with the sword of Gideon.' It was Frederick's earnest desire to try gentle methods for reclaiming these deluded men. Dangerously ill, he had written on the 14th of April (1525) to his brother John. [This was a letter of a pious Protestant prince on his dying bed, and nothing but the spirit of pacification flowed from his pen. But, it was found that such a destructive insurrection must be met by a superior power of arms; and thus it came to pass.—*Author.*]

“Philip, the young Landgrave of Hesse, was the first of the reigning princes who took up arms. His knights and retainers swore to live or die with him. Having put the affairs of his states in order, he moved towards Saxony. On their side, Duke John, the Elector's brother, Duke George of Saxony, and Duke Henry of Brunswick, advancing, effected a junction with the Hessian troops. As the combined force came into sight, the peasants, in alarm, took their station on a hill, and without observing any discipline, set about constructing a sort of rampart composed of their waggons. Munzer had not even provided powder for his immense guns. No help appeared; the troops hemmed them in, and a panic spread through the rebel host. The princes, from motives of humanity, proposed to them to capitulate, and they showed signs of willingness to do so. Then it was, that Munzer had recourse to the most powerful lever of enthusiasm. 'This day,' said he, 'this day we shall behold the mighty arm of God, and destruction shall fall upon

our enemies!' Just at that moment a rainbow was seen in the clouds, and the fanatic multitude, whose standard bore the representation of a rainbow, beheld in it a sure omen of the divine protection. Munzer took advantage of it. 'Never fear,' said he, to the burghers and peasantry, '*I will receive all their balls in my sleeve,*' and at the same moment he gave direction that a young gentleman, Maternus Geholfen, an *envoy* from the princes, should be cruelly put to death, in order that the rebels might thus know themselves beyond the hope of pardon.

"The Landgrave harangued his soldiers. 'I know well,' said he, 'that we princes are often to blame—for we are but men; but it is God's will that the powers that be, should be respected.' Let us save our wives and children from the fury of these murderers. The Lord will give us the victory, for hath he not said, 'He that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God.' Philip then gave the signal for the attack. It was the 15th of May, 1525. The army put itself in motion—but the crowd of peasants, standing still, struck up the hymn, 'Come, Holy Spirit,' expecting, heaven to interpose in their behalf. But the artillery soon opened a breach in their rude fortification, and scattered confusion and death in their midst. On this, their fanaticism and resolution at once forsook them; a panic spread throughout their hosts, and breaking from their ranks they fled in the utmost disorder. Five thousand were slain in the pursuit. After the battle, the princes and their victo-

rious troops entered Frankenhauseu. A soldier, who had mounted to the loft of the house in which he was quartered, perceived a man crouching in concealment. 'Who are you?' demanded he; 'Are you one of the rebels?'—then catching sight of a writing case, he opened it, and found therein letters addressed to Thomas Munzer. 'Is that your name?' inquired the trooper. 'No,' answered the sick man. But the soldier, uttering dreadful threats, Munzer—for he it was—confessed he was the man. 'You are my prisoner,' rejoined the other. Being taken before Duke George and the Landgrave, Munzer persisted in maintaining that he was justified in chastizing the nobles, since they were opposers of the gospel. 'Wretch,' said they, 'think of those whose death thou hast occasioned.' But, he made answer, *smiling in the midst of his anguish*, 'They would have it so.' He took the sacrament under one kind, and was beheaded on the same day. Mulhausen was taken and the peasants loaded with chains. What remained of the rebellion was quenched in blood. In the states of the elector, there were neither executions nor punishments; God's word, preached in its purity, had been proved sufficient to control the tumultuous passions of the people. Luther had from the beginning withstood the rebellion, which to him appeared the forerunner of final judgments. He had spared neither advice, entreaties, nor irony. When the confusion was at its height, he left Wittemberg, and traversed some of the districts where the agitation was the greatest. He preached, he labored

to soften the hearts of his hearers, and being strengthened from above in his work, he guided, quieted, and brought back unto their accustomed channels, the impetuous and overflowing torrents. The reformed teachers everywhere exerted a similar influence.

“Such was the part taken by the Reformers and the Reformation during the continuance of the revolt. They contended, as far as they were enabled, by the *sword* of the *Word*, and boldly asserted the principles which alone have power at all times to preserve order and subjection among nations. Hence, we find Luther asserting, that if the wholesome influence of sound doctrine had not withstood the madness of the people, the revolt would have extended far more widely, and would everywhere have overturned both church and state.

“The troubles we have been narrating, left a deep and enduring impression on the minds of that age. The popular passions were quelled, and passed away. But the Reformation did not pass away. The *revolt* was a thing of earthly origin; the *Reformation* was from above. Some cannon and soldiers sufficed to put down the former; but the latter never ceased to grow and strengthen, in spite of the reiterated assaults of the imperial or ecclesiastical powers.

CHAPTER VIII.

FURTHER PROOFS OF THE ORIGIN, NATURE, AND TENDENCY OF THE FUNDAMENTAL ERRORS OF THE BAPTISTS.

[From the Apostolic Age to the Lutheran Reformation, or, at least, during more than a thousand years after the Divine Commission was given to Apostles to preach the Gospel and Baptize in the name of the Holy Trinity, no record appears of any schism in the Gospel church, in relation to either the Subjects or Mode of Christian Baptism. This fact proves to demonstration, that during the first Millenary of the Church of Jesus Christ, after His Ascension, it would not have been composed of Close-communication Baptists, for the reason that all the Baptists of the present age are unable, from their own authentic records, to show when, where, and by whom the professed innovation of Adult and Infant Baptism, by Sprinkling, was first introduced into the Gospel Church; and who, when, and where were the first defenders and opposers of the assumed innovation.]

LET it be kept in mind that opposition to infant baptism, and the *exclusiveness* attached by the Baptists to *immersion* as the only *mode* of Christian baptism, are the *fundamental errors* now under consideration. The Baptists claim that the origin of their sect, their exclusive mode of baptism by immersion

and all their consequent exclusive superiorities over all other denominations of Christians, originated from the baptism of Christ by His forerunner, John the Baptist. To show that their whole *chain* of sectarian exclusive claims is predicated on *unfounded assumptions*, and, consequently, is of *evil nature*, and *tends to evil*, is the burden of the present disquisition on the arrogance of baptistical postulates.

The extracts of the foregoing chapter show, that in the early part of the twelfth century, the doctrine of infant consecration to God by baptism, was assailed as an unwarrantable innovation into the Church of God, and *immersion* preached as the *only mode* of Christian baptism. And that, subsequently, in the former part of the sixteenth century, during the progress of the Lutheran Reformation from Popery, the Anabaptists' sentiments and controversy kindled into a flame of *insurrection* under Munzer, which spread terror, carnage, and desolation in wild fanatical confusion, over a great portion of the states of Germany, which was quelled only by the arms of the combined Protestant princes of Germany, after the sanguinary waste of some hundred thousands human lives!

The subject of this chapter will be to show that no authentic history appears to prove the rise, progress, or prevalence of Anabaptist sentiments, or controversy in the Church of God, on the subjects of *infant baptism* or *exclusive immersion* from the commencement of the Christian dispensation, during a period of more than eleven hundred years—that no formidable oppo-

sition was made to infant baptism, nor to the modes of sprinkling and affusion, nor adherence to exclusive *immersion*, till the preaching and insurrection of Munzer, about A. D. 1520; and from about the period of Munzer's death to the present time, (viz., the middle of the nineteenth century,) the origin and fundamental principles of the Anabaptist sentiments and controversy, have remained virtually the same, both with respect to nature and tendency. This will appear from the following extracts, selected from various authentic histories of the Church of Jesus Christ, from the apostolic age to this boasted *age of reason*.

The first point to which attention is invited, is to show that Anabaptist sentiments, in opposition to *infant baptism*, and in favor of *immersion* as the *exclusive mode* of baptism, were unknown as subjects of controversy in the Christian Church for more than eleven hundred years after Christ, during which period no complaint is known to have been made against innovations of Pedobaptist sentiments in doctrine or practice in the Church of God, although it is *certain* that such doctrines and practice did exist and prevail.

“Although there were several Baptists among the Albigenses, Waldenses, and the followers of Wickliffe, it does not appear that they were formed into any stability until the time of Menno, about the year 1536. [Eleven years after the death of Munzer.] About 1644, they began to make considerable figure in England, and spread themselves into several separate con-

gregations. They separated from the Independents about the year 1638, and set up for themselves under the pastoral care of Mr. Jesse ; and having renounced their *former baptism*, [by sprinkling,] they sent over one of their number to be immersed by one of the Dutch Anabaptists of Amsterdam, that he might be qualified to baptize his friends in England in the same manner." [Hence the propriety of the following definition in the "Theological Dictionary."] "*Baptists*, a denomination of Christians, who maintain that baptism is to be administered by *immersion* and not by *sprinkling*." [Vide *Baptists and Baptism*, *Buck's Theological Dictionary*.]

"The Anti-Pedobaptists hold that *believing adults* only are proper subjects, because Christ's commission to baptize appears to them to restrict this ordinance to *such only* as are *taught*, or made disciples, and that, consequently, infants, who cannot be thus taught, are to be excluded. They contend that infants can receive no benefit from it, and are not capable of faith and repentance, which are to be considered as pre-requisites."

The following extracts are from Benedict's celebrated "*History of all Religions*."

"*Baptists*. This denomination claim an immediate descent from the apostles, and assert that the constitution of their churches is from the authority of Jesus Christ himself, and his immediate successors. Many others, indeed, deduce their origin as a sect from much later times, and affirm that they first sprang up

in Germany in the sixteenth century. This denomination of Christians is distinguished from others by their opinions respecting the *mode* and *subjects* of baptism. Instead of administering the ordinance by sprinkling or pouring water, they maintain that it ought to be administered only by immersion. Such, they insist, is the meaning of the Greek word *baptizo*, to wash or to dip, so that a *command* to *baptize* is a *command* to *immerse*. This denomination allege, that baptism ought not to be administered to children or infants at all, nor to adults in general; but to those only who profess repentance for sin, and faith in Christ.

The Baptists claim as their brethren and friends, many of the seceders from the Greek and Roman churches, in the dark ages of the world, of which we have but little information, except what has been communicated by their own prejudiced historians." [Here it may be noted, that by the "dark ages of the world," may be understood, that period, when all Christendom, even the whole Church of God, *en masse*, was under the despotism of the Popes of Rome, from about the middle of the eighth century under Pope, and King Stephen II., to the twelfth or thirteenth century, or till the Protestant Reformation, a noted period of several hundred years.]

"Mosheim has conceded that the true origin of that sect which acquired the denomination of Anabaptists is hid in the remote depths of antiquity, and is, of consequence, extremely difficult to be ascertained.

Before the rise of Luther and Calvin, they lay concealed in almost all the countries of Europe, particularly in Bohemia, Moravia, Switzerland and Germany, from whom the Moravians descended and no inconsiderable part of the Waldenses, Albigenses, Petrobrusians, Lollards, and Wickliffites.* [Here, again it may be noted, that the Moravians, Waldenses, Albigenses, Petrobrusians, Lollards, and Wickliffites, all had their origin in different parts of Europe, and in the latter part of the noted darkest ages of Popery, between, A. D. 1160, and 1315. Of course, these, all had their "rise, before the rise of Luther and Calvin," and, in a certain degree, "lay concealed in almost all the countries of Europe." Hence, "The Anabaptists are acknowledged both by friends and foes to be the descendants of the Waldenses, Petrobrusians and other ancient and eminent sects, whose origin, according to Mosheim, "is hid in the remote depths of antiquity," [which antiquity, however, could not have preceded the existence of the sects from whom, it is acknowledged on all hands, that the Anabaptists derived their origin, none of whom existed prior to eleven hundred years after the commencement of the Christian era, in the midst of the darkest ages of Popery.]

"The terms German Anabaptists, Mennonites, and Dutch Baptists, have successively been given to the same denomination of Christians. They began to be denominated Anabaptists or re-baptizers, about the time of the Reformation, and this name, according to

* Eccl. His., vol. iv. p. 224.

Robinson, was given to them by a Swiss pedant, who could not be easy without letting the world know that he understood Greek." The peculiar sentiments of this denomination having spread so much among people of all opinions, to affirm that a man is a Baptist, proves nothing more than that he rejects infant baptism, and holds to believer's baptism by immersion; he may be a Calvinist, or Armenian; a Trinitarian, or Unitarian; a Universalist, or Swedenborgian; for some, of all these classes, come under the broad distinction of Baptists."

Now, let it be considered, whether the claims of the Baptist denomination to apostolic origin—to continued progressive existence and predominance during all the ages of Christianity—and that infant baptism, and sprinkling instead of immersion, have been innovations into the Baptist church, the only true Church of Jesus Christ! or, whether the above designated Baptist claims are mere assumptive postulates, which have no foundation in truth.

One syllogistical argument, with each proposition founded on known facts, is sufficient to overthrow the boasted bulwark of the foregoing Baptist claims. And it is averred, that such an argument is at hand, and can be set up and maintained on the verity of the following well known and incontestable facts. *Viz.:*

1st. Infant baptism, and the mode of sprinkling, in the purifying ablutions of Christian baptism, are known to have been practised in the Church of Jesus Christ, during hundreds of years, before any Christian

sect on earth was known by the appellation of Anabaptists.

2d. The true Church of Jesus Christ, from the Apostolic age, to the middle of the dark ages of Popery, a period of at least one thousand years, had no schism, nor controversy on account of opposition to infant baptism; nor on account of sprinkling, instead of immersion. On these subjects the church were in peace.

3d. Therefore, the true Church of God, during that period of the first millenary of the Christian dispensation, could not have been a Baptist church, inflamed with a bigoted zeal for the prevalence of Anabaptist sentiments, or they would have made and preserved an accurate record of the rise, progress, and whole scene of innovation and controversy, in relation to all the circumstances of the time when, the place or places where, and the person or persons, sect or sects, who disturbed the peace of the Church by Pedobaptist innovations.

Now, who among the human race will dare dispute the verity of one of the foregoing propositions? Should this be done, the proof of each proposition is at hand from the positive existence of the facts stated; each of which bids defiance to the authentic records of earth to prove the contrary! The first or major proposition affirms, that hundreds of years before any Christian sect on earth was known by the appellation of Anabaptist, infant baptism and the mode of sprinkling are known to have been practised by the Church of Jesus Christ. That such were both the doctrines and practise

of the primitive Christian church from the Apostolic age during the first millenary of the dispensation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, will appear from the following authentic records of the Church of God.

“The Pedobaptist,” (says Buck,) “believe that as the Abrahamic and the Christian covenants are the same, Gen. xvii. 7. Heb. viii. 10th. ‘And I will establish my covenant,’ (said God to Abraham,) ‘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: For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:’ That as children were admitted under the former; and that as baptism is now a seal and sign, or confirmation of this covenant; infants have as great a right to it, as the children had a right to the seal of circumcision under the law. Acts ii. 39. ‘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.’ God did constitute in his church the membership of infants, and admitted them to it by a religious ordinance, Gen. xviii. Gal. iii. This right of infants to church membership was never taken away. This being the case, infants must be received, because God has instituted it; and since infants must be received, it must be either without baptism, or with it, but none must be received without baptism, therefore,

infants must of necessity be baptized. Hence, it is clear that under the gospel, infants are still continued exactly in the same relation to God and His Church, in which they were originally placed in the former dispensation."

"That infants are to be received into the Church, and, as such, baptized, is also inferred from the following passages of Scripture. Gen. xvii. 10: 'This is my covenant which ye shall keep, between me and you, and thy seed after thee. Every man child among you shall be circumcised. It shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. He that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations must needs be circumcised, and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. The uncircumcised man child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people: he hath broken my covenant.' [See the whole chapter.] Also, Isa. xlv. 1—3: 'Hear, O Jacob, my servant, and Israel whom I have chosen. Thus saith the Lord that made thee, I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.' Matt. xix. 13—15: "Then were there brought unto Him little children that He should put His hands on them, and pray; and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' Chap. xviii. 1—4: 'At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child

unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me.' 1 Cor. vi. 14: 'For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.' "

On the last quoted passage of Scripture, Dr. Scott, in his celebrated commentary, gives the following exposition of this noted passage of Scripture:

" Christians, indeed, ought not to marry unbelievers; yet, if that relation had been entered into, either before conversion, or through inattention to this rule, it would cause great confusion and scandal to dissolve it on that account. The Christian, who was married to an unbeliever, whether a heathen or a Jew, who chose to live with him, notwithstanding this difference of religion, should not put her away, as the Jews, for reasons peculiar to their situation, were required to do by their idolatrous wives. The same held good in respect of a Christian woman, who had an unbelieving husband that chose to live with her. Nor ought any person to suppose, that this union, as one flesh with unbelievers or idolators in lawful marriage was inconsistent with being one spirit with the Lord, as fornication had been declared to be, for the unbelieving

husband or wife was sanctified to the believer by the appointment of God, so that their marriage was holy and honorable. If this had not been so appointed, but Christians had been commanded to put away their unbelieving partners, as the Jews did their idolatrous wives, the children of *such marriages* would have been accounted *relatively unclean*, and so excluded from baptism, as those of the Jews in the above-mentioned case were from circumcision. But, on the contrary, they were accounted holy in the Christian churches, and thus admitted among them as a part 'of the visible kingdom of God.'

“ This exposition of the Scripture before us, has, indeed, been much controverted; and some have explained *holy* or *unclean* to mean *legitimate* or *illegitimate*. But, in all the places where these words are found in Scripture, there is not one that will fairly admit of this sense. No doubt the children of heathens, who were lawfully married, were as *legitimate* as those of Christians; yet, they are never said to be *holy*. Something more must be meant by the believer *sanctifying* the unbelieving party, than merely legalizing their marriage; for that would have been the case if *both* had been unbelievers, and the children would not really be more *holy* in respect of their nature if one parent was a believer, than if both were unbelievers. But the word *unclean* is frequently used in a relative sense, denoting unfit to be admitted to God's ordinances, and *holy*, the contrary, as in this sense the male children of the Jews were *holy*, and

so partakers of circumcision, while those of the Gentiles, and even such as had one idolatrous parent were *unclean* and excluded from circumcision ; so I cannot but conclude, after long attention to the subject, that the baptism of the infant offspring of Christians is here referred to, as at that time *customary* in the churches, and that the Corinthians knew that this was not objected to when only one parent was a Christian. Hence, then, the argument for infant baptism runs thus : If the holy seed among the Jews was, therefore, to be circumcised, and to be made *federally* holy, by receiving the sign of the covenant, and being admitted into the number of God's holy people, because they were born in sanctity, or were *seminally* holy, (for, the root being holy, so are the branches also ;) then, by like reason, the holy seed of Christians ought to be admitted to baptism, and receive the sign of the Christian covenant, the laver of regeneration, and so be entered into the society of the Christian Church."—*Whitby. Scott's Notes on 1 Cor. vii. 10—14.*

Let it not be slightly overlooked, nor forgotten, that Dr. Scott has said, "that infant baptism, in the apostolic age, was customary in the Christian churches, and that the Corinthians knew that this was not objected to when only one parent was a Christian." This is what the Baptists uniformly deny, or explain away. But let us see and hear what the celebrated Charles Buck says on this point in his "Theological Dictionary."

“ If infant baptism had been a human invention, how would it have been so universal in the first three hundred years, and yet no record left when it was introduced, nor any dispute or controversy about it? Jesus Christ actually blessed little children, and, it would be hard to believe that such received his blessing, and yet were not to be members of the gospel church. If Christ received them, and would have us receive them in His name, how can it be reconciled to keep them out of the visible church? Besides, if children were not to be baptized, it would have been expressly forbidden. None of the Jews had any apprehension of the rejection of infants, which they must have had if infants had been rejected. As whole households were baptized, it is probable there were children among them. From the year 400 to 1150, no society of men in all that period of seven hundred and fifty years, ever pretended to say it was unlawful to baptize infants; and still nearer the time of our Saviour, there appears to have been scarcely any one [except Tertullius] that so much as advised the delay of infant baptism. Irencæus, who lived in the second century, and was well acquainted with Polycarp, who was John’s disciple, declares expressly that the church learned from the apostles to baptize children. Origen, in the third century, affirmed, that the custom of baptizing infants, was received from Christ and His apostles.” [About the middle of the 3d century, a question arose whether infants ought not to be baptized on the eighth day of life, in conformity with the

divine ordinance of circumcision, from which the baptism of infants was derived. This question agitated the Church to such a degree, that a general council of bishops was called to decide the matter.] “Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, and a council of ministers, (held about the year 254,) no less than sixty-six in number, *unanimously agreed* that children might be baptized as soon as they were born. Ambrose, who wrote about two hundred and seventy-four years from the apostles, declares that the baptism of infants had been the practice of the apostles themselves, and of the Church till that time. The general Church everywhere declared, says Chrysostom, (the patriarch of Constantinople, in the fifth century,) that infants should be baptized. Augustin (the celebrated bishop of Hippo, about the beginning of the fifth century) affirmed that he never heard or read of any Christian, Catholic, or sectarian, but who always held that infants were to be baptized. There is not a single instance recorded in the New Testament, in which the descendants of Christian parents were baptized in adult years.”—*Theo. Dictionary.*

That infants are not proper subjects for baptism, because they cannot profess faith and repentance, is an objection as much against the divine ordinance of circumcision, as infant baptism, since they are as fit subjects for the one as the other. It is generally acknowledged that if infants die, (and a great part of the human race do die in infancy,) they are saved. If this be the case, then why refuse them the sign in infancy,

if they are capable of enjoying the thing signified?"— [If infants are proper subjects when they die, to be received into heaven, to be trained in the celestial choir to sing the praise of the eternal Jehovah, who shall forbid the sprinkling of clean water upon their bodies, as God's gospel seal, and sign of the subjects of his love and grace, redeemed with blood and purified and fitted for admittance into the kingdom of glory? And let it be particularly noticed, that during the first thousand years of the existence of the Christian Church, sprinkling or affusion was the uniform mode of Christian baptism in the general Church; and that this whole period of 1000 years at least, expired before any authentic account appears in the history of the Church of the existence of a single sect, designated by name, doctrine or practise, as Anabaptists, who denied baptism to infants, or made claim to the superiorities attached to immersion as the exclusive mode of baptism. Hence it is averred, that the first proposition of the foregoing syllogistical argument is thoroughly and incontestibly proved by recorded facts in the history of the general Christian Church during the first thousand years of its existence. And it is also averred, that the existence of the same facts, which have been adduced to prove the first proposition of the argument, equally proves the second, namely, that the true Church of Jesus Christ from the apostolic age, to the middle of the dark ages of Popery, a period of at least one thousand years, had no schism nor controversy on account of opposition to infant baptism; nor on account of sprink-

ling instead of immersion. On these subjects, the Church was in peace. It only remains to account for that fact that the Church was in peace on the ground of the Baptists assumptive claim, that the true Church was then, as now, Anabaptist.

On the supposition that the Baptist's claim be true that the Christian Church was Anabaptist in its origin in the apostolic age, and ever after, and that in after ages of the Church, innovations were made upon the doctrines and practice of the true Christian, "Anabaptist church," by the promulgation of the Anti-Christian doctrine and practice of infant sprinkling, and adult sprinkling, calling them baptism! how came it to pass that no record was made in the professed Baptist church for a thousand years, less or more, of the rise and progress, controversies, and troubles on account of such professed Anti-Christian innovations? Such a notorious omission of most incumbent duty on the supposed premises, cannot be accounted for, on any other principles, than yielding the point in controversy and confessing that no Anabaptist church existed on earth during the first 1000 years of the Christian era, and that the facts of infant baptism, and adult baptism by sprinkling, affusion or immersion were preached and practised by the Pedobaptist Church of Christ, from the days of the apostles, without opposition or controversy, until the dark ages of Popery were past, and the glimmering light of the Reformation began to dawn in the East, and Satan commenced his stratagems of fanaticism, world-disorder, insurrection,

and destruction of human lives, and souls to bring the reformation into contempt and confusion!

Such has evidently been the origin of the fundamental errors of the Baptist denomination, and those errors lie at the foundation of all the Anabaptist claims of priority, and exclusive superiority of greatness, and goodness, by keeping commands, and following examples which will entitle the claimants, doubtless, in their estimation, both to the right, and left hand seats of the greatest in the kingdom of heaven! The progress, nature, and tendency of their primary errors remain to be considered.

For further progress of the sect of Anabaptists after the death of the fanatic, and insurrectionist, Munzer, we are referred, in the history of the Christian Church, to the "Mennonites, a sect in the United Provinces, who had their rise in A. D. 1536, when Menno Simon, a native of Friesland, who had been a Romish priest, and a notorious profligate, resigned his rank and office in the Romish church, and publicly embraced the communion of the Anabaptists. About the year 1537, Menno was solicited by many of the sect to assume the rank and functions of a public teacher, and he yielded to their entreaties. He travelled from one country to another exercising his ministry, with remarkable success, and added to his sect a prodigious number of followers. Hence he is deservedly considered as the common chief of almost all the Anabaptists, and the parent of the sect that still subsists under that denomination. Menno was a man of genius

—he retained the doctrines of the Anabaptists—modified in such a manner as rendered them agreeable, made them appear inoffensive, which gave a high degree of credit to the religious system of the famous teacher among the Anabaptists, so that it made a rapid progress among that sect. And thus it was in consequence of the ministry of Menno, that the different sects of Anabaptists agreed together in excluding from their communion, the fanatics that dishonored it, and in renouncing all tenets that were detrimental to civil government. A Mennonite minister has published their history, and maintains that they are not Anabaptists. “But ‘Buck’ affirms that nothing can be more certain than this fact, that the first Mennonite congregations were composed of the different sorts of Anabaptists—of those who had been inoffensive, and of those who before their conversion by the preaching of Menno, had been seditious fanatics: besides, it is alleged, that the Mennonites do actually retain at this day, some of those opinions and doctrines, which led the seditious and turbulent Anabaptists of old to the commission of so many and such enormous crimes.”

From the days of Menno, (who died A. D. 1561,) to the middle of this nineteenth century, the Baptist denomination have prevailed throughout Christendom, until they have assumed the superiority over all other denominations of Christians as the only existing sect of professing Christians on earth, who constitute the true Church of Jesus Christ; who have a right to the participation of his communion-table; and impliedly,

the only heirs, (in the present generation,) of the covenant blessings of eternal salvation; because they reject the Anti-Christian innovations of "sprinkling infants, to make baby Christians," and of baptising adults by sprinkling instead of immersion!

Benedict's HISTORY OF ALL RELIGIONS, gives an account of the Baptist denomination, under fifteen divisions, with their distinctive appellations, number of churches ministers, communicants and probable computation of their whole population. Their distinctive names are "particular Baptists in Europe and India—General Baptists—Baptists in Ireland and Scotland—Mennonites of Holland and other parts of Europe—Associate Calvinistic Baptists in America—General Baptists of America—Seventh Day Baptists—Six principle Baptists: Mennonites of America—Tunker Baptists—Free-will Baptists—Christian Society Baptists—Emancipator Baptists—Free communion Baptists—And the Rogerenes or Quaker Baptists, as they are often called. [This sect took its rise at New London in Connecticut, about the year 1674. Their language and some other peculiarities resembled the Quakers. They employ no physicians, nor pay any regard to the Sabbath.]"

The foregoing fifteen divisions of Baptists are all uniform in their opposition to the baptism of infants, and adherence to immersion as the only mode of Christian baptism, with the exception of some who are free communionists. The total number of their churches are 5,594; of their ministers, 4,842; of their communicants, 407,684. "There are besides many

churches and ministers of the Baptist persuasion, who are not connected with any of the parties above-named, and the whole population of the denomination may be computed at over three millions."

Now, were it not for their arrogant claims of exclusive rights to the divine ordinances of the Church on earth, and to pre-eminence in the kingdom of heaven, merited by opposition to *infant baptism*, and bigoted adherence to *immersion*, as the superlative qualification for the kingdom of heaven, their prosperity and increase might be hailed with acclamations of pious joy, by all friends of true religion. But the nature and evil tendency of their *exclusive claims* may, at least, be considered as ominous of great disappointment to thousands and hundreds of thousands of foolish virgins, who sing of glory on earth, but alas! will be left in darkness and confusion when the midnight cry shall be made to meet the heavenly Bridegroom, and it shall be found that their "*lamps are gone out,*" because "they took no oil in their vessels with their lamps!"

CHAPTER IX.

The Nature and Tendency of Fundamental Baptist Errors.

WE are now prepared to describe the *nature* and *tendency* of *opposition to infant baptism*, and a bigoted adherence to *immersion* as the only mode of Christian baptism, which comprise the *fundamental and capital errors* of the Baptist denomination. Taken together, the errors above named, are nothing less nor more in their *nature*, than “Tares sown among wheat;” and their *tendency* is to *corrupt the Church of God with false doctrines*, to the destruction of all who make those errors the great subject of their *preaching*, or the amount of their Christian *faith*. Ever since the days of Abraham, the parental consecration of infant offspring to God, by *circumcision* under the Jewish dispensation, and by *water baptism* in the Christian Church, has been a divinely-ordained religious institution; a standing ordinance in God’s Church, expressly designated, commanded, and required of all the generations of God’s worshippers, as the signs and

seals of God's gracious covenant with the people of his love; the special means of divine appointment to perpetuate God's church of *holy people* on the earth in distinction from all heathen nations; and for the express purpose of promoting the divine praise and glory from generation to generation, by training up a holy seed in the knowledge of divine truth, under the influence of divine institutions, and in preparation for the glories of a heavenly state, when life, on earth, shall be no more.

The divine injunction of infant consecration to God is evidently predicated on the fact of the universal contamination of the whole posterity of Adam by original sin. All the human race were in the loins of Adam when he sinned, and fell under the curse of God. Consequently, all the posterity were constitutionally involved with the first parents of the human race in all the evils of that fall. Hence the deplorable facts come to pass in every age and generation of mankind, that all are born under the dominion of sin; under the curse of a holy law; exposed to all the evils, sickness, pain, and death incident to this life; and to all the evil that is comprised in the denunciation of the death of soul and body in a future state of endless existence after the day of judgment.

But, as it pleased the infinite God, to reveal his eternal purpose of mercy to the fallen parents of mankind, through the efficacy of the fore-ordained Mediator, whose essential incarnation would constitute Him the *seed* of the fallen woman; hence the covenant of grace,

which subsequently was made and confirmed to Abraham, was evidently based on this principle, that as the sinful fall of a parent entailed the divine curse upon all his posterity, so, by a divine constitution, parents were required for the security of their own salvation from the curse of endless death, to believe in the promise of God to save fallen man by the vicarious atonement of the Eternal Son of God, who, by incarnation would become the seed of the woman to bruise the serpent's head, and as means of securing the salvation of their infant offspring to *consecrate them to God*. On this foundation the promise of God was made to Abraham and his infant seed, who were divinely required to be consecrated to God by believing parents, by causing to be placed upon the bodies of their infant offspring the divinely specified *sign* and *seal* of God's covenant of mercy. And that this should be a standing ordinance in his church during the existence of time, as the foundation of all subsequent parental duties of training up children in the fear, nurture, and admonition of the Lord.

Hence, under the whole Jewish economy, parents were divinely *commanded* to circumcise their male children. If this divine ordinance was neglected, the curse of God rested on both parents and children thus in default, and individual, family, or national judgments were inflicted on that account; for the Jews often provoked the Almighty by their sins. They said —“It is *vain* to serve God; and what *profit* is it, that we have kept his ordinance?” Hence, about

seventeen hundred years after Abraham, Malachi, the last Old Testament prophet, was divinely directed to close the canon of Jewish scriptures thus—"Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

Here is a positive declaration of the Most High, that the reciprocal duties of parents and children, which God had before commanded, (although *virtually* changed in their *mode*,) should remain in full force and virtue, under the gospel dispensation, during *Messiah's* reign as prophet, priest, and king of Zion on earth. Consequently, when John, the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth was born, the child was circumcised on the eighth day of life, (and the blasphemous question is not to be found in all the New Testament records of the book of God, "Why did God require *males* only to be circumcised?) The child was circumcised, and his name was called John. This was the Elijah, divinely promised, and foretold by the God of Abraham from the mouth of his prophet Malachi. Thus the father of the child prophesied, when the child was circumcised and named John. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited his people, and raised up a horn of salvation for us, as he spoke by the

mouth of his holy prophets, to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant, the oath which he swore unto our father Abraham, that he might serve him without fear, in holiness, and in righteousness before him, all the days of our life. And thou child shall go before the face of the *Lord* to prepare his way ; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins through the tender mercy of our God." Thus, a male infant of a priest of the Jews, (whose lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord,) yes, a man child of this Jewish priest was consecrated to the Lord by *circumcision*, in accordance with the express command of God.

A few months after, Mary, a virgin in the land of Israel, (espoused to Joseph, a Jew, of the house and lineage of David,) gave birth to a man-child, in conformity with a previous message of the angel Gabriel, who was sent to her from God to reveal to her an eternal purpose of mercy, for the accomplishment of which she was a divinely appointed agent. This babe was born when the mother was on a journey from home, was wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger, because there was no room for them in the house of entertainment in Bethlehem. There, Christ, the Lord was born. There, angels saw him. There, country shepherds watching over their flocks by night, heard the voice of an angel of the Lord—"Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the city of David,

a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. This shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger." Instantly, "A multitude of the heavenly host," sang "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth, peace, good will towards men." There the shepherds found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger; and to that ever memorable *stable* the star of Bethlehem directed Eastern sages, *via* Jerusalem, where they found the young child and mother; and worshipping, presented to him the richest gifts of their country's produce. This was not all. "When eight days were accomplished for the *circumcising* of the child, his name was called *Jesus*, which was so named of the angel before he was born.

Here, then, we have a New Testament account of *two male children of Jewish descent*, both parentally consecrated to God in His holy ordinance, at eight days old, viz., John, the forerunner of our Lord, and Jesus, the only Saviour of sinners. Both of these children were trained up in the land of Judea, under pious instruction. When arrived at manhood, both became preachers of righteousness. John the forerunner, commenced first, and fulfilled his ministry by preaching repentance for the remission of sins, and by baptizing all who came to him confessing their sins, and bringing forth fruits meet for repentance. Thus he prepared the way of the Lord, by turning the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers, in the reciprocal

duties of parents and children, such as God required of them respectively in His covenant of peace and salvation. The Reformation in the land of Judea was wonderful. Jesus was baptized among the rest, (not in His own name, nor unto repentance, for He had no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth—He needed no remission,) but, He was baptized as a Jew, under the Jewish economy, in fulfillment of a ceremonial requirement in the divine law given to Moses, the righteousness of which, required Jehovah Himself, the Supreme Lawgiver of the universe, *incarnate*, to respect his own laws in a case provided for the legal induction of a Jewish priest into the sacred office of the priesthood. And before he opened His mouth to preach to sinners for their salvation, He submitted to baptism as a legal consecration to His sacred office of priesthood—next preached His own gospel—called disciples to follow Him as pioneer-members of His gospel church—instituted the ordinance of the Holy Supper, to be observed in commemoration of His death—submitted to the ignominious death of the cross—made atonement for lost sinners—arose from the dead—commissioned His apostles and successors to preach and baptize in the name of the Holy Trinity, and ascended to His mediatorial throne to intercede for His people, and make preparation for the judgment of the great day.

Thus, John and Christ were both circumcised in infancy—both preached the doctrine of repentance

for the remission of sin, and both suffered martyrdom. After the resurrection of Christ, circumcision, as a sign and seal of God's covenant, was no more preached by the authority of Christ or His apostles. But water-baptism was divinely commanded as a perpetual ordinance in the Christian Church, as the sign and seal of the covenant relation between God and His church under the gospel dispensation, without any other specific designation than the nature of the case required, viz., that believing adults should be baptized as the *sign*, *seal*, and *token* of their faith in a crucified and risen Saviour, the only Redeemer of lost sinners. And that, thus believing, and setting to their seal that Christ is "the way, and the truth, and the life," the only name given under heaven among men by whom sinners can be saved, and the only foundation of a good hope through grace of a blessed immortality beyond the grave, they are qualified by gospel faith to consecrate their infant offspring of both sexes, male and female, to God in baptism, as the gospel sealing ordinance of the covenant of grace.

In this view of the subject, how *pertinent* is the parable of the tares of the field to illustrate the *nature* of those Anabaptist *errors* which set at nought infant *consecration* to God by the application of the sign and seal of his covenant of mercy, and which insist on *immersion* as the *only mode* of gospel baptism, while it proves to be *essential only* to create and perpetuate the most deplorable *schisms* in the Church of God!

The parable of the "tares" was evidently designed to represent the gospel church, its preachers, doctrines, effects on the human family, and the final results of the whole dispensation of the gospel on the generations of mankind, from its first promulgation to the judgment of the great day. Thus, by "the kingdom of heaven," understand the gospel dispensation—the gospel church, from its commencement to its final consummation. By the "man who sowed good seed in his field," understand Christ and all His true ministers of the gospel—preachers of the word to all generations, the world over, which is Christ's gospel field. By the *good seed*, which is called *wheat*, understand God's truth, Bible truth, producing regenerated souls, converts to the gospel plan of salvation, true believers in Christ, "children of the kingdom," and heirs of heaven, as it is said in the parable of the sower, [Mark iv. 14,] "The sower soweth the word." So here it may be understood that the "*good seed*," the "*wheat*," the "*word*," sowed by Christ and all His true ministers, is God's holy truth, comprising all that is essential to be known, believed, and practised by sinners of mankind, to secure their reconciliation to God on *His* terms of mercy, and thus to love, serve, please, obey, submit to His rod, and observe His ordinances, the amount of all which is to glorify God on earth by preparing to glorify and enjoy Him forever in heaven. Thus the wheat, the good seed of eternal truth sown, produces fruit to God's glory, and life eternal in all true believers in Christ, children of the

kingdom, and heirs of eternal glory. Christ is the divine seedman, Bible truth is the seed sown, the field is the world, and true Christians are the fruit for the harvest.

By the *enemy* that sowed tares among the wheat by night in the same field, understand the devil, his angels, and all false teachers of perverted truth, or rejected truth of every description. By the *tares* sown among the wheat, understand all the perversions of divine truth that Satan *has* devised, or shall hereafter devise, and all Satanic stratagems to prevent the success of the gospel of Jesus Christ, by filling the world with heretics, hypocrites, anti-Christians, enthusiasts, and self-deceivers of every denomination and nature bearing the Christian name merely, for the promotion of self-interested purposes, while the devil marks them out for his prey when they are fitted for destruction, and then, to endless perdition they will go without fail.

By the question of the servants to the owner of the field, for permission to pull up the tares from the wheat while both are growing together in the field, and the householder's answer to the servants to let them alone till the harvest, lest the wheat should be rooted up also in attempts to gather up the tares, understand that Christ, who is best acquainted with the stratagems and works of Satan, and how to defeat and destroy them, has given instruction by this parable to all his faithful friends on earth, that such is the imperfection of real Christians in the Church of God ;

and such the accuracy of Satanic counterfeit *zealots* and *bigots* for external modes and mere forms of religion, that all human sagacity would be baffled in attempts to make an accurate and thorough discrimination of the *evil* from the *good*, the *righteous* from the *wicked* in this life. Hence, although incorrigible offenders are to be excluded from the Church by the rules of discipline given by the Supreme Head of the Church for that purpose, yet, in general, the *wheat* and the *tares*, the children of the kingdom of heaven, and the children of the wicked one, resembling each other in outward profession, and commingled in professional modes and forms of worship, in zealous opposition to what other professors of religion believe to be the truth and will of God, *must be let alone* till the great harvest-day at the end of the world, when *all* will be called to give an account, each for himself to God, resulting in the final and eternal separation of the righteous and the wicked.

This parable shows the origin of all true doctrine, and of all soul-damning errors by a perversion of God's truth. Christ the owner of the gospel field, the Seedman of all truth, the discriminating judge between truth and error, good and evil; and the sovereign awarder of the destinies of all the race of Adam, requires, that the gospel of "Christ crucified" should be preached to all the world as the only foundation of salvation by grace, and that all who preach, and hear, should consecrate themselves and infant children, even their whole households to the service of God, and like

Abraham, of old, "command them to keep the ways of the Lord." This is the good seed of the word, which John, the Elijah of the New Testament, preached—the "good seed, which Christ and his apostles preached—which St. Paul preached, and determined to know nothing else, as the predominant subject of his ministry—and this is the seed of the word, which God requires all his ministers to sow, as the only seed which will bring forth the fruit of eternal life.

But, alas! in the night season of carnal security among men, a seed-man from the world of "darkness visible," appeared in the dark ages of Popery, "while men slept" the sleep of spiritual death, under the dominion of the powers of darkness, and sowed the whole field of Christendom with Tares, "and went his way," well knowing, what fruit would be brought forth, if his seed took root in men's heart, and was permitted to germinate into a system of "doctrines" for the promulgation of his ministers in opposition to his eternal foe, who had turned him and his legions out of heaven. This sower of tares was the devil. And among his innumerable budgets of Satanic perversions of God's truth, the following seed was sown at that time, the germination, and blade, of which soon appeared conspicuous in the gospel field. Two points only, of Satanic wisdom set up in opposition to the wisdom of God, constituted this kind of tares. *Viz*: infants are not proper subjects to be sprinkled, or baptized in any mode, for they cannot repent, nor

believe, nor be taught, and it must be ridiculous, in the extreme, to attempt to make baby Christians of them, before they "can speak or go alone!" Such is one point of Satanic doctrine, backed up and proved by Satanic wisdom! The next point is, "immersion is the only mode of gospel baptism, for the Greek word βαπτίζω means nothing else but to immerse the whole human body under water; and those who will not submit to this commanded mode, are no Christians—not worthy to commune at the Lord's table—and never can be saved, for immersion is essential to salvation! "Such are the tares sown by the devil, and such are the "doctrines" of Satan, and the "doctrines" of all the legions of devils under the Prince of Darkness.

What, therefore, must be the result of the final account of 4,842 professed Baptist ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ, all engaged in sowing tares in the gospel field of the world, by preaching "doctrines of devils" in opposition to the doctrines of Christ, the supreme divine owner of the whole gospel field of salvation? Will none of them be saved? Will none of the 407,684 members of their churches be saved, who are opposed to infant baptism, and believe that immersion is the exclusive mode of gospel baptism? We repeat the question in a condensed form. Will none of the thousands of Anabaptist ministers who preach "doctrines of devils," nor hundreds of thousands of the members of their churches be saved? The decisions of the great Harvest, when angels will be com-

manded to gather tares for burning, and wheat for the Divine Garner, will decide, who, of Adam's race, will be saved, and who will be lost. Doubtless, however, some of the thousands of Anabaptist ministers will be saved, notwithstanding their errors, for they preach "Christ crucified," and the doctrines of grace in connection, as essential to salvation. And some of the hundreds of thousands of the members of their churches will doubtless also be saved, because they believe in the crucified and risen Saviour—trust in his grace alone for salvation; and bring forth the fruits of repentance, faith, love, and submission to God's government, and God, if he please, can pardon their sins of error, and save them by his grace; not because they opposed infant baptism, nor because they were immersed; but because "God has mercy, on whom he will have mercy, and compassion on whom he will have compassion."

When such Baptist preachers of "Christ crucified," the only foundation and way of life eternal; and their members of churches, thus believing in Christ; trusting in his grace alone for pardon and the hope of salvation; and wearing the badge of love to God and man, as the token of interest in the mercy and compassion of God to pardon all their sins, and to consume the "hay, wood, stubble" and dross of all their errors, into which they have fallen, (even to the sowing of tares,) through the wiles of the great adversary of God and man; when they, thus prepared, shall be called to pass the billowy foras of the Jordan of death

their pass-word will be the shibboleth of grace, which they will be able to "pronounce" without a lisp, thus, Lord, Lord—Father, Son, and Spirit, we were lost; but thy grace has found us! "The law of the Spirit of life, has made us free from the law of sin and death. The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Not unto us, not into us; but to thy name, O Lord, be the glory. For by grace we are saved, through faith, and that, not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Unto Him be glory—world without end, Amen."

Such is the true Christian's password, prepared by the grace of the Lord Jesus, to be presented at the fords of the Jordan of death, to ensure a safe passage across the billows of that dread fording-place, into the heavenly Canaan, the promised land of eternal rest.

But, alas, will *all* who reject infant baptism, and are immersed professedly after the example of Christ—who preach zealously, and believe bigotedly, that infant baptism *ought* to be *rejected* as a human invention to make "baby Christians," and who preach and believe that *immersion* is the only scriptural *mode* of gospel baptism—the only infallible sign of true Christian discipleship—the only gospel badge which entitles any person living (whatever be his profession or character) to a seat at the sacramental table of Him who died for sinners—who invites all His friends to

come to His table, and commune with Him, and with one another, and commands them, "This do in remembrance of me," will *all*, who thus preach, and believe, be saved? Will *all*, who discredit infant baptism—who believe in all the *exclusiveness of immersion*, and are themselves immersed, be admitted as worthy members of Christ's family into the kingdom of heaven, the New Jerusalem of everlasting peace, and rest, and blessedness, and glory? This is an important question, and needs due consideration before it is answered in the affirmative. But who can answer it in the affirmative? Who can answer this question? Who—who?

"I can, if you will write it down," [vociferated a visionary sound through the key-hole of the door, from the old Satanic ventriloquist without,] "I can answer that question in the affirmative, old fellow. And I can *prove* the fact by millions of witnesses, who left the world rejoicing that ever they saw the folly of "baby-sprinkling" by old-fashioned Calvinist priests—that ever they were taught that the true meaning of the Greek word *baptizo* is *immersion* of the whole human body under water, and nothing else—that this is the only Bible mode of baptism—the only mark of a true Christian qualified to commune at the Lord's table, and the only essential qualification for salvation, as I have told you to your head before. I have heard your pitiful moans about how few will be saved. And, no wonder that but few such Christians will be saved, as hold to "infant

sprinkling," and washing the whole bodies of adults, with a few drops of water on their forehead!

As you have honored me with the title of "first seedman of tares" in the gospel field, and as you have assumed the responsibility of even inquiring whether those Anabaptist preachers, and members of churches, who are the legitimate fruit of the *seed* of my tares, will ever be saved! I have honored myself with another visit to your old, incredulous "baby sprinkling" saintship, to inform you that there is no fear but that the *converts* of my "tare seed," will all, collectively and individually, find a safe conveyance over the fords of the Jordan of death. And I take the more pains to give you this information, that if your password of grace (as you call it) should fail, you may know yourself where, and how, to obtain an Anabaptist password, which never fails. I have invented a stereotype Anabaptist experience, which has been committed to memory, and brought millions into the Baptist churches since the days of my old friend, Thomas Munzer, who was persecuted to death for his zeal against "baby religion," only about seven hundred years ago. And what is still more expedite, viz., the same experience that fills Baptist churches with innumerable members, converted to the faith a fruit of my tares, affords each member thus converted with an infallible password for the fords of the Jordan of death. To my certain knowledge *not one* has ever failed.

As you, Old Man, (who once turned me out of doors,

and my servant also, but cannot prevent me from talking through the key-hole of the door,) are not yet too old to become ambitious to belong to the most popular and numerous class of religionists, I present you verbally with a copy of *experience* of my invention, which you are at liberty to commit to writing, and use for the benefit of yourself or others at discretion, with this only proviso, that you always allow me the credit of being the inventor of the article thus entitled, "*Experience Prepared by the Superior Seedman of Tares,*" designed for the *use and benefit* of all who wish to become members of Anabaptist churches on the *tare system*, comprising a *new and safe password* for an infallible passage over the fords of the Jordan of death, with directions for the benefit of passengers over the fords.

EXPERIENCE.

I began to feel the happiness which I now enjoy, when I witnessed the *immersion* of more than forty happy souls in the river *Blank*, that appeared to me just like the water of Jordan. O, what preaching I heard that day about immersion before we went to the river! But my mind was full of vanity then, and I thought light of the preaching. But when I saw such a large procession on the way to the water, singing about baptism, I thought it was superlatively delightful indeed! And when I saw so many prepared in their India-rubber water-dress for immersion, all looking perfectly happy, I began to think more of the subject.

Before any of them were baptized, the minister (whose voice was melodious as the roaring of a lion) made a most wonderful address, to show that "infant sprinkling" was nothing but a device of man to make "baby Christians"—that *immersion* was the only mode of believers' baptism, and that he could prove it by Christ's example. "He went down into the water, and came up out of it. And *none* but such as take up their cross and follow him, (as *these*, more than forty, are about to do,) after his example, although they may be sprinkled, or have water poured on their head, by those who were never immersed, are not baptized, for none are baptized but those who are immersed. *None* are true followers of Christ but those who are immersed. *None* have a right to Christ's communion-table but those who are immersed. And, if any of mankind can be saved without being immersed, let them prove it by the Scriptures if they can."

So said the minister to the multitude. And then, taking one of the candidates for immersion by the hand, he said to them all, "Come ye highly favored of the Lord, who are not afraid nor ashamed to let the world know that you can follow Christ down into the water and be buried, as he was buried into it, for Christ's example is the only way to heaven and to glory."

So saying, he walked quickly into the water, and plunged one after another in quick succession, as they were handed to him, all of whom were immersed in a

very few minutes, to show, as the minister declared, that the three thousand converts on the day of Pentecost could have been immersed by *two* of the apostles in less than one day!

There I looked into that water, and O! how beautiful it did appear! And *there* I formed the resolution, that I would be immersed the next opportunity, which soon came to pass, and I was the wonder of everybody that saw *me* go down into the water, and *my* example was followed by hundreds. This was my *experience* when I came before the Church to let them all know that I was determined to take up my cross and follow Christ down *into* the water and up out of it; and O, what rejoicing was there! I went round the whole neighborhood proclaiming the good news of my glorious resolution, and I was the means of persuading many, who all joined in persuading others to submit and "*take up the cross,*" and thus there was a great and most wonderful reformation; many were immersed.

The following is the password and happy passage over the billows of the Jordan of death.

PASSWORD.

No Infant Sprinkling.—Immersion the only mode of Baptism.

Directions for the management of dying believers who are the legitimate fruit of my seed of Tares:

Employ no physician but one in favor of *Tares*. To prevent a word being spoken to them about *sin* or the law of God; or being born of the Spirit; or the nature

of saving faith ; or the foundation of a Christian hope through grace ; or any other preparation for death than what is contained in their experience and password ; let no one visit them except those who depend solely on their experience and password for safety across the fords of Jordan in conformity with the doctrines of *Tares of the field*.

On the last scene of preparation to pass the *fords*, let them utter, with as audible a voice as possible, this last ceremony, comprising their password, thus :

“ Lord, Lord, I have been immersed after thy example, the only badge of a true Christian, the only token of worthiness to sit at thy communion-table, and the only essential qualification for an exalted seat in the kingdom of heaven. I have arrived near to my glorious home in Canaan ! I can begin to see the glory that is laid up for me as a reward of my steadfastness in the faith, that immersion will secure happiness on earth, and an honorable seat in heaven. And now Lord, I have only to pass over these fords of the Jordan of death, and I shall be in glory. Here is my password, which I have repeated hundreds of times, and now for the last, be it remembered by all who hear of my wonderful happy entrance into glory, that my password at these fords of the Jordan of death is—*No Infant Sprinkling—Immersion is the only mode of baptism essential to salvation*. Lord, Lord, I have been immersed, I have followed thee *down into* the water and up *out of* it. I have ate and drank at thy communion-table in thy presence, while millions who

were too proud to take up the cross and follow thee by *immersion*, were not admitted to thy table for want of the badge of true discipleship. Now Lord, with this soul-cheering, heart-reviving *Sibboleth* for glory, let me pass over this Jordan of death, the rolling billows of which, at these fords, look very much to me like the bright sparkling water of the river in which I was immersed."

Now, Old Man, I have answered your question *by showing that all the baptist fruits of my tares* will find a safe passage over death, without fear or trouble, if such crazy heads, as *yourself* will only let them alone. Adieu to your old *Sprinklingship*.

CHAPTER X.

Fundamental Errors of the Baptist syllogistically confuted by a quotation from a reputed printed letter of the celebrated Rev. Andrew Fuller to a friend in vindication of Close-Communion, or reasons why Anabaptists cannot commune with Pedobaptists.

THE important question still pending, in its most laconic form, is—*Will all who are immersed be saved?* The preliminaries of this question have been lengthened out for the reason of its *importance*, and that every portion of its concomitants might be perfectly understood. For, if the Baptist doctrine be true, that *immersion* is essential to gospel *baptism*, then Satan's doctrine is equally true that *immersion* is essential to *salvation*, and that all who are immersed will be saved. And, if Satan's doctrine be *false* that immersion is essential to salvation, and *equally false* that all who are immersed will infallibly be saved, then why do the Baptist make *immersion* essential to communion at the Lord's table? Why do they make it essential to church membership? and why make it essential to gospel baptism?

It must now be perceived, that *conflicting points*,

essentially connected with the question pending as unavoidable concomitants, cannot be settled otherwise than for or against Satan the sower of *tares*; or for or against the Anabaptist fruit of the tares sown by the adversary; or for or against both the *seedman* of tares, and his *converts*, the fruit of his labors. Reasons are the following: Satan, the *sower of tares*, has set up for *doctrines* the following perversions of God's truth, that *infants* are not proper subjects to be consecrated to God by baptism, and that *immersion* is the only mode of gospel baptism. On these points there is no disagreement between Satan and the Baptists. The reasoning of Satan, the sower of tares, is—that if *immersion* is the only *commanded mode* of gospel baptism, then *immersion* is the essential and *only* infallible mark or sign of a true Christian, and the essential token of a worthy partaker of the Lord's supper at the communion table of his true disciples. Thus far there is no disagreement between the *seedman* of tares and the legitimate Anabaptist fruit of his labor. So far the *seedman* and all his *converts* agree to a punctilio.

Now, comes the *tug of disagreement* between “*the father of lies*” and a portion of converts to the foregoing sentiments of his system of divine ordinances perverted. For the further doctrine of Satan, the *sower of tares*, is that *immersion is essential to salvation*. This he proves, *a priori*, thus—if all the prior, essential points of the system of Anabaptist theology, as above stated, and fully agreed to by all his Anabaptist

converts as infallibly true, then it must be equally true that *immersion is essential to salvation*, and consequently, that all who are *immersed* will obtain a triumphant passage over the fords of the Jordan of death into glory. This sentiment is professedly rejected by the Baptist denomination generally, who preach and believe, experimentally, that the doctrines comprised in "*Christ crucified*," are alone the "*Way, the truth, and the life*" of all that is essential to the salvation of the soul. There is, however, *one* known and important exception even in this case last mentioned, which is so pertinent to the subject, that it must not be omitted.

The following extract is from a published letter of the Rev. Andrew Fuller, to a friend, in vindication of close-communion, or reasons why Anabaptists cannot commune with Pedobaptists. "*Immorality, or dangerous heresy, or omission or essential corruption of instituted worship*, ought to exclude real Christians from communion. They are a kind of *lepers*, whom the people of God should require to be without the camp."

Everybody must understand Mr Fuller to mean, that all professed Christians who have not been baptized by *immersion*, in the firm belief that this is the only scriptural mode of applying water in Christian baptism, are not baptized—have no right to the communion table of our Lord; but as gospel *lepers* are to be excluded from the Baptist communion table for "*omission or essential corruption of instituted worship*."

Now, any person advocating the above sentiments, will please answer the following questions :

1st. Ought not qualifications for communion at the Lord's table to be such as are essential to salvation ? yea, or nay.

2d. Do not the Anabaptist rules of Church government exclude from their communion-table real Christians, because they have not been baptized by immersion, although they profess to have been conscientiously baptized on the profession of their faith in Christ by sprinkling or pouring ? And 3d. If so, on what ground do the Baptist deny, (as they positively do,) that in their system of theology, immersion is not essential to salvation ?

If the first question is answered in the affirmative, (which will be in accordance with the dictates of common sense, and common Christianity, under the illumination of the whole system of Bible theology,) then, it may be put down as the major proposition of ■ syllogism. Thus

MAJOR PROPOSITION.

Qualifications for communion at the Lord's table, (in obedience to the divine command, " This do in remembrance of me,") ought to be such as are essential to salvation. Proof. The Lord's table is spread for all real Christians, professing the religion of the gospel, and whose life and conversation agree thereto, and for them only ; and not for the unregenerate, the impenitent, unbelieving, and perverters of God's ways.

Hence the divine direction is, "let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh, *krima*, damnation, (or judgment,) to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."

The following sentiment on the same subject is quoted from the writings of the celebrated Robert Hall:

"There should be no terms of communion but what are terms of salvation; the man who is good enough for Christ, is good enough for me."

MINOR PROPOSITION.

All Pedo-baptists are deemed unqualified for communion with the Anabaptists at the Lord's table, for the reason that they have not been baptized by immersion.

PROOF FROM REV. ANDREW FULLER'S WORDS.

"Immorality, or dangerous heresy, or an omission, or essential corruption of instituted worship, ought to exclude real Christians from communion. They are a kind of lepers, whom the people of God should require to be without the camp," even all real Christians who are not immersed?

The plain construction of the above words, must be, that real Christians, who are guilty of either of the above disqualifications, *viz*: "Immorality, or dangerous heresy, or a perversion of baptism, by substituting sprinkling or pouring for immersion, are unworthy to

commune at the Lord's table with the Baptists, "the people of God," distinctively ; but are to be excluded from their holy communion for want of scripture qualifications for the divine ordinance of communion, viz. : immersion : just as the lepers of ancient Israel, being ceremonially unclean, were divinely stationed without the camp, lest the Israelites should imbibe the contagious and awful disorder of leprosy, which none but God could cure.

CONCLUSION.

All true believers in Christ, real Christians who are not baptized by immersion, are by the Baptist articles of faith excluded from the Lord's table, as unqualified for the participation of the Holy Supper in remembrance of Christ, for want of a qualification which is deemed essential to salvation, i. e. for want of being baptized by immersion according to Christ's positive command and example, which is considered as an essential qualification for communion at the Lord's table ; but, say the Baptists generally, not essential to salvation.

Now, in this particular the evangelical orthodox Anabaptists generally disagree with the sower of tares. And hence, the amount of the question now pending is, whether Satan is not more logically consistent than the Baptist ? And in short, whether the Baptists, to be as consistent as Satan, will not find themselves eventually compelled to comprise in their articles of faith, the whole chain of connected doc-

trines, in conformity with the sower of tares, *viz.* : that infant baptism is out of the question, so ridiculous and absurd, that it ought never to be named ; that immersion is the only mode of gospel baptism ; the only infallible sign of a true follower of Christ ; the only true token of a worthy qualification for communion at the Lord's table ; that immersion is a commanded ordinance essential to salvation ; and that all who are immersed will be saved ? Or abandon Satan's system of the perversion of God's truth, into "doctrines" of lies, for the promulgation of "seducing spirits," for the destruction of all bigoted graceless adherents, and thus escape the fatal snare of the destroyer.

Satan's device to sow Christ's whole gospel field of the world with tares, was evidently ■ stratagem of the old serpent to pervert God's word and ordinances, into ■ variety of counterfeit systems of false doctrines ; plotted, for the express purpose of preparing millions of *Sibboleths* for travellers in the broad way to destruction, merely as quietisms to guard against, and prevent the fears and terrors of death. Satan knew, full well, that not one such counterfeit, deceptive password to drive away fears, and give ■ false glare of triumph in death, would ever be accepted at the gate of heaven, through which all are required to pass who "enter in through the gate of the city," into the New Jerusalem, the metropolis of the celestial paradise of God ; and that all who fail of obtaining entrance there are doomed to an endless residence in the bottomless pit of perdition.

To warn mankind of the danger of Satan's wiles to deceive and destroy souls, our blessed Saviour has declared, "not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, we have eaten and drank in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. Then will I profess unto them I never knew you, depart from me, ye workers of iniquity."

Our Saviour's parable of the "ten virgins," shows that a vast proportion of professor of Christianity will find the door of heaven shut against them, for want of the grace which they neglected to seek, and for which all their self-righteous forms and ceremonies were substituted. The foolish virgins through life, trusted in mere forms of worship without grace; doubtless, triumphed in death; but at the gate of heaven they were left hopeless. Satan prevented them from seeking for grace in season, by amusing them with mere forms of religion to their destruction. Matt. xxv. 1-13.

So also, in the parable of the sower, the seed, which fell by the way-side—upon stony places—and among thorns, was all lost. The wicked one, by his alluring wiles prevented its growth to maturity, and no seed, but that which fell on ground divinely cultivated, brought forth fruit unto salvation.

As also, a net, cast into the sea, gathered of every kind, the good of which was gathered into vessels, and the bad cast away; "So," (we are told,) "so shall it be at the end of the world; the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be weeping, and gnashing of teeth."

Hence, by the process we have taken, to ascertain the truth on this important subject, we have arrived at a point of certainty, that immersion is not the only mode of gospel baptism—nor the only badge of true Christian discipleship—nor the only scripture token of a worthy qualification for admission to the communion-table of our Lord—nor the only essential condition of salvation. These all belong to the theological system of the "doctrines of devils," originating from a Satanic perversion of God's truth, by a capital device of Satan for the deception and destruction of souls. And there is much reason to believe that many will lose their souls through the influence of this Satanic perversion of God's word and ordinances under consideration. Whatever may be their triumphs in the passage over the Jordan of death, yet, when they arrive at the gate of the city of the New Jerusalem with no other certificate of their preparation to enter into heaven, than "Lord, Lord, we have been immersed, after thy example, we have borne the sign of thy true disciples—the only badge of worthiness as guests at thy table, where we have often eat and drank in thy presence;" alas! alas! such sibboleths will never be

accepted at the gate of heaven by a heart-searching God. Millions of such applicants, (if such there be,) will receive in answer, "I never knew you, depart from me, ye workers of iniquity."

Before the subject of this chapter is dismissed, we take the liberty to state farther. There is no reason to believe that the Baptists, as a denomination, believe that immersion is essential to salvation. Yet, it must be confessed, that there is great reason to wonder why they have not, long ago, unequivocally adopted the sentiment that immersion is *essential to salvation*, and cannot possibly be otherwise, if their cherished doctrine be true that immersion is the only Scriptural and divinely-commanded mode of gospel baptism! Hence, our Baptist friends must not be offended when it is stated as a fearful fact, that by a Satanic perversion of God's Word and ordinances, there are within the pales of the Baptist Church, (as is also the fearful case of other denominations of professing Christians,) a proportion of foolish virgins; if not five-tenths, the estimated proportion which Christ has revealed in the parable of the ten virgins, "five wise and five foolish," yet many foolish virgins, who take no oil in their vessels with their lamps, are professed members of churches, and zealous for peculiar modes and forms of worship, even to bigotry. These, whatever the proportion may be, or whoever they may be, of whatever age, character, profession, or influence, are, in reality, *all* of them the children of Satan, and under his guidance, dictation, and influence. This awful

truth cannot be denied. Many of them might have been under deep and genuine conviction of sin. But, if they have become members of the church, without the oil of divine grace in their hearts, there can be no question of the sandy foundation of their profession, and the sinful rottenness of their hearts to the very *core* in the sight of God, whatever their appearance may be in the sight of men. Such is the true character of all "foolish virgins," in all departments of the Church of God on earth.

Now, it must be admitted that *all* of this class and character, within the pales of the Baptist communion, have been baptized by *immersion*. And still being *foolish virgins*, whoever they may be, or whatever proportion they may constitute of the Baptist Church, they are, in reality, mere *graceless, Christless professors* of Christianity. Like Simon Magus, the sorcerer, it may be said of them all, "They have neither part nor lot in the matter, for their hearts are not right in the sight of God."

These are the persons, the very identical persons, the men and women, the young men and maidens, the preachers, deacons, learned and unlearned, the poor, the rich, and the influential men among all others, who have been persuaded by Satan and his "doctrines of devils," promulgated by infernal "seducing spirits," to believe, and feel, that if they are only baptized in the *manner* that Christ was baptized by John the Baptist, i. e. by *immersion*, of course, that this is the door into the Baptist Church. Thus they

enter. And now the sole object of Satan will be answered, if he can keep them quiet in the full belief that their bodies bear the only true mark of the true followers of Christ—that they are among the number of the only “worthy and well-qualified” communicants at the Lord’s table, and that the essential condition of their salvation has been complied with by their *immersion*. Here they will be likely to rest through life—to sing unholy joys and triumphs in death, and, at the midnight cry, to find themselves destitute of oil, their lamps “gone out,” the door of heaven shut upon them forever, and their souls ingulfed in endless perdition, as the “wages” obtained by trusting in Satan’s perversion of God’s truth, comprised in the system of “doctrines of devils.”

This is confessed to be an awful portrait of any professed Christians. But it is no more awful than true of all Satan-deceived persons, who infest the Church of the living God. It is, hence, very easy to account for the fact, that Satan may be truly charged himself with the infernal hypocrisy of professing to be a Messenger from Heaven, to give information, not only to old Congregational ministers, but to thousands and millions of others, of all descriptions of mankind, boldly declaring that they cannot be saved unless they are immersed, as John baptized in Jordan; and that this act of taking up their cross and following Christ down into the water and up out of it, *is the essential condition of their souls’ salvation!* So the adversary preaches.

This is, doubtless, the sibboleth which Satan has invented to enlist "foolish virgins" into the ranks of Anti-Christ, under the banner of an honorable profession of Christianity within the pales of the close-communion Baptist Church of Christ—a highly-respected denomination of acknowledged evangelical Christians, (with the exception of the foundation of their exclusive claims of superiority,) who are exerting a powerful influence throughout Christendom, and especially on many of the strongholds of idolatry in the heathen world. And their rapid increase of number and influence may, (for ought that human sagacity can divine,) be the very reason why Satan has summoned all the counsellors of the bottomless pit into the council-chamber of Pandemonium, to devise ways and means of preparing an infernal sibboleth for the Baptist denomination, to aid them in multiplying their number rapidly, by millions of flaming zealots, professional bigots, foolish virgins, known to be so by Satan, and designed by him for the sole purpose of using them as agents of "seducing spirits," to promulgate the "doctrines of devils," for the promotion of the cause of Anti-Christ in the world in these last "signs of the times," in preparation for the great battle day of the Lord in the valley of Armageddon.

Nothing is more certain than that the Church of Jesus Christ once comprised but one sect of Christians. And that sect was united in sentiment on all the divinely-prescribed ordinances, modes, and forms of Christian worship. Neither is anything more certain

than that the divisions of Christ's Church into almost innumerable discordant sects, whose sentiments are diverse on various doctrines of Scripture—on modes, forms, and even on the authenticity of divine ordinances, are all the works of Satan, the noted sower of tares in the night, who has scattered his infernal seed of discord over the whole gospel field of Christendom, for the purpose of producing millions of graceless professors of Christianity into criminal maturity for the torments of hell, to assist Satan and all his legions in hating and cursing the Triune Lord of the Universe of grace and salvation while eternity continues, and while Jehovah reigns on the throne of heaven to punish His inveterate foes who hate Him without a cause !

And nothing can be more desirable than that the whole Church of Jesus Christ, comprising evangelical orthodox Christians of every denomination, should unite to "Cast off the works of darkness—to put on the whole armor of light," and concentrate their force and power within the fortress of united Christian love. That they should adhere not only to the example of Christ's love to his little family of apostles, but to his *general command* to the whole Christian family, the Church bought with his blood, *all of whom* are included as *subjects*, to whom the following sovereign orders of the Head of the Church, the King of Heaven, are given thus—"This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you. I command ye that ye love one another." The same divine injunc-

tion, also appears in Christ's prayer to his Father for all the spiritual members of his Church in connection with the apostles thus—"Neither pray I for these *alone*; but for them also who shall believe on *me* through *their* word. That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. That the *world* may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one."

All that is required and desired of the evangelical close-communion Baptist Church, to be *one* with all other orthodox evangelical Christians, is merely to *abandon the Sibboleth* which Satan has devised to swell their number with "*foolish virgins!*" And to unite with other evangelical denominations in the use of that *mode of baptism*, which the answer of a good conscience demands. If it be *immersion*, use it; and allow other evangelical denominations the same liberty of conscience to apply the baptismal water in the mode which *their* conscience demands, whether by *sprinkling*, or *pouring*, or *immersion*.

And, instead of wasting time and talents to increase the number of foolish virgins, graceless professors among the different denominational sects of Christianity, by the use of *Sibboleths* which Satan, by infernal ingenuity has furnished for them all; let them *all* be *wise* to "Cast off the works of darkness, and put on the whole armor of light," by uniting their strength, efforts, and prayers to destroy the works of

the devil—to search out and defeat his devices—to purify the *Church evangelical* from the contamination of anti-Christian members, power and influence—and to seek by all possible means to promote the true spirit of *love*, and all the Christian graces. Let Christians of evangelical denominations love one another, unite in prayer meetings, exchange pulpits, commune at the Lord's table together, endeavor to drive Satan out of thought, out of the closet, from the family altar, from the prayer meeting, from the sanctuary, and especially from the heart.

Such a union of evangelical Christian love and efforts to increase the number of "*Wise Virgins*" in the the *Reformed Church of God* in the middle of the nineteenth century, would make Satan's kingdom tremble—expose the magic fallacy of the "*doctrines of devils,*" *promulgated in darkness*, to the *glare of divine truth*, and to the explosion and extermination of the discordant devices of Satan from the Church of God united, and thus preserve the Church of Christ from being used as an engine of Satan, to promote his anti-Christian stratagems for the destruction of millions of souls through the influence of *infernal perversions of Church membership!*

For doubtless, there is not a denomination of evangelical Christians on the earth, for which Satan has not devised a *sibboleth* for the purpose of collecting as many "*foolish virgins*" into the Church as possible, whose sole dependence for salvation is the token of their *sibboleth* as the password to ensure a peaceful passage through

the valley and across the billows of the Jordan of death ; and the only essential *word necessary* for their anticipated, *honorable and triumphant entrance* into heaven ! This is a mere *matter of course* among *anti-Christian unregenerate religionists*, whose anxiety to get into heaven without holiness, proves to be the *infallible road* to “*everlasting punishment.*” Such are the devices of the adversary under the specious “*signs of the present times.*” Let none be ignorant of Satan’s alluring snares for the entanglement and destruction of immortal souls !

CHAPTER XI.

Answer to the Original Question categorically, by the signature of the name of the Author of this Treatise to the Mode of Sprinkling, with reasons assigned for so doing, copied *verbatim* from the paper on which the Question was originally presented.

THUS, by divine assistance, I am now prepared to give my decided opinion of the nature of the original question, which gave rise to this treatise on the *mode* of baptism, and subscribe my name to it as a *true copy* of the original paper containing the question, accompanied with illustrations, reasons, and remarks, all which I wish to be considered as a *collateral appendix* to all that is contained in the foregoing reasons in detail, for giving an answer to such an extraordinary interrogatory, subjoined with a pertinacious request for a categorical answer, with equal inflexibility, from a highly esteemed friend and brother, whom I love as a fellow-laborer in the gospel field of the world.

To Brother — I owe the following apology for the *consequence* I have given to the question proposed by his daughter. Most probably I should have thought

little more of the question, than that it was a remarkable production of a female mind, which, if answered, might result in controversy ; but, if prudently evaded, or avoided, might pass into oblivion and forever be as though it had never existed ; all which, doubtless, would have been the result of the *question*, had it not been for the manner in which a categorical answer was urged, repeated, and peremptorily demanded of me ; the refusal of which, I was led to believe, would be highly disreputable to a gospel minister, from whom decision of character is reasonably expected.

I certainly was averse to controversy. And I must confess that I feared an attempt to answer the question proposed might lead to disputation, and this is my only apology for evading it. But when an answer became indispensable, without the forfeiture of self-respect, and the decision of theological sentiment—after a single glance at the import of the question, I considered it as *providentially* thrown into my way, for the trial of my faith and for the benefit of others. And I can assure you, my very dear brother, that the investigation and improvement which have been made of the subject, in connection with the answer of the question of your highly-esteemed daughter, have been done solely for the purpose of doing good, in the way of duty and in compliance with what I have believed to be the truth of God, and have testified it as such during more than half a century. Such is my apology. Please accept it.

The original question, as has been stated above, I

consider to have received existence from the Prince of Darkness, of which I entertain not a doubt. Hence, of the nature of the question thus brooded in Satan's mind for mischievous purposes, I shall take liberty to speak freely. I consider the question in the *abstract* to be a hypothetical absurdity, implying a positive falsehood, masked in disguise, to hide the venomous cup of fulminating *poison*, which, if it had been inadvertently taken, would have resulted in as complicated odium of Christian character, as the question itself was full of anti-Christian policy in disguise. Doubtless, this was undesigned by the unsuspecting and friendly movers of the question. But as, doubtless, the question, in all its perilous bearings and pernicious designs, was the work of him who hates Christian unity and love, and to prevent their existence is constantly engaged in sowing the tares of discord, by the perversion of God's Word, and works, and ways!

The following is hereby *certified* to be a true copy of the original question of Miss —, as presented in the handwriting of her reverend and venerable father, under the signature of the initials of his name, together with the signature of my own name in a *categorical answer* to the question in form of the written request, accompanied with as much illustrative matter as could be written on the blank portions of the slip of paper on which the question was written, commencing at the top blank space over the question, and so continuing from blank to blank on both sides of the paper, till the whole was filled in a very small

handwriting, and agreeably to request was returned to the writer of the question.

THE QUESTION.

“BROTHER LEBBEUS ARMSTRONG.—If a Messenger from Heaven should be commissioned to inform you, that you could not be saved unless you were baptized in the same way that Christ was baptized by John the Baptist, which of the three following practices would you choose ?

1st. Immersion.

2d. Pouring.

3d. Sprinkling.

Be so good as to write your name opposite to the mode you would choose, and return this paper to me.

Signed, _____.”

“ANSWER.

“N. B. If any Messenger should profess to come from Heaven to me with a problem so anti-Christian and unheavenly as the one presented in this little scrap of paper, I should consider the very problem itself a sufficient proof of the imposture of the Messenger.

I regard this problem as implying the belief, that immersion is the only scriptural mode of Christian baptism. That none but those who are immersed, have a right to the communion-table of our common Lord and Saviour. And that immersion is to be considered to be as essential to the salvation of the soul, as it is to communion at the Lord’s table. From all

the above implications I am bound to dissent, and do therefore conscientiously subscribe to the mode of

I. Immersion.

II. Pouring.

III. Sprinkling. Thus Lebbeus Armstrong was baptised by sprinkling, on a public profession of faith in Christ, November 23, 1797, nearly fifty-three years ago; and has never doubted the validity of his Christian baptism for the following reasons: The gospel ordinance of *water baptism* is the divinely instituted seal of the righteousness of faith. The design, and import are the same in the gospel church, as the design and import of *circumcision* were in the Church of God under the Jewish dispensation.

Abraham received circumcision as the sign and seal of the righteousness of his faith, constituting him the father of all believers in Christ to the end of the world. All true believers in Christ receive water baptism as the divinely appointed seal of the righteousness of their faith in Christ. The bloody sign of circumcision, under the Jewish dispensation, was typical of the blood of atonement, by which the redemption of all souls was purchased, that will ever be saved. Water baptism, under the gospel dispensation, is the anti-typical *rite* in the Church of God, which is both the sign and seal of the righteousness of justifying faith in Christ, implanted in the soul of all believers by the "washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Hence, Christian baptism is a purifying sign and

seal, designed to represent the *modus operandi* of the purification of man's heart by the Holy Ghost in regeneration. Now, the scriptural representation of the Holy Spirit's operation on man's heart is, (not by immersion into the blood of purification, but,) by pouring, or sprinkling the blood of atonement on the heart. This is represented by pouring or sprinkling of water on the forehead, [place of the seal,] and hence the *mode* of *sprinkling*, "clean water," in the name of the Holy Trinity is to be "preferred" in Christian baptism.

N. B.—The above quotation to the word "preferred," with the signature of the author's name of this treatise, placed in conformity with the desire of the writer of the question above stated, may be found on the original paper in the possession of Rev. Mr. ———, in the city of New York. The paper was not dated; but, was deposited as above, some time in the month of September, 1849.

GENERAL REMARKS.

On a review of the whole subject, we are led to see the importance of unity in the household of faith. The Church of God is His building. The foundation was laid by His grace in His eternal purpose of mercy to redeem a people from the ruins of Adam's lost race, to fill the vacant seats in heaven, which were thus left when angels rebelled, and were thrust out of heaven by Omnipotence, into the abyss of bottomless perdition. And the superstructure of God's wonder-

ful building is composed of materials of His selection out of all generations, nations, languages, and people of the world, brought together by the Omnipotent power of His Spirit through regenerating grace, and by justifying, sanctifying, and preserving grace, all the redeemed subjects of His true Church on earth, are fitted for their respective seats in the mansion house prepared for them by their Redeemer in the kingdom of eternal glory. Hence, in the great mystery of God's work of redemption, there is, in reality, but "one Lord," [the triune Jehovah,] "one faith," [which works by love, and binds all its possessors in love one to another, in obedience to the commands of their Redeemer,] "one baptism," [which cleanseth from all sin by the sprinkling of the blood of atonement, of which the baptismal water is the token of saving purification,]—*one way to heaven*, i. e. the narrow way of holiness, in distinction from the broad way of original depravity and practical wickedness; and but one heaven of endless holiness and happiness, which is the kingdom prepared for the righteous from the foundation of the world. All who will finally be saved were given to Christ by the Father in the covenant of redemption; and none but such as God saves by His grace will ever be saved, for the reason that all others to whom mercy is *freely* offered, will not seek an interest in His gospel salvation.

How important, then, is it, that all professors of evangelical religion should evince their interest in the kingdom of heaven by their union, communion, Chris-

tian fellowship, love to one another, as Christ commanded when He said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Without such union there can be no true Christianity. So ought the household of faith to be united in love.

The following extract comprises selected portions from the introduction of the Rev. Dr. John M. Mason's "Plea for Sacramental Communion on Catholic Principles," published in New York, A. D. 1816. The Doctor, it appears, was the pastor of the Third Associate Reformed Church in the city of New York. That Church, he states, "Had been strict and even exclusive in her communion. When there exists serious doubts, whether certain practical opinions which influence habit among Christians, are really serviceable or injurious to the interest of pure Christianity, an opportunity of bringing their propriety to the test, instead of being lamented as an affliction, should be welcomed as a benefit. Such doubts have long been entertained of the Associate Reformed Church respecting Christian communion. It has been more than doubted whether the rigor of her restrictive communion corresponds with the genius of the gospel. The writer of these pages confesses that such has been long the state of his own mind, at least on some occasions, in expressions of love which he was compelled to deny even to those who bore the image of Christ.

The following is a note in the work from which the preceding is an extract :

“One of these occasions it is impossible for him to forget. He had been distributing tokens of admission to the Lord’s Supper. After the congregation had retired, he perceived a young woman at the lower end of an aisle, reclining on a pew, in a pensive attitude. As he approached her, she said, ‘Sir, I am afraid I have done wrong.’ ‘Why, what have you done?’ ‘I went up with the communicants and received a token, but am not a member of your church, and I could not be at rest till I spoke to you about it.’ ‘To what church do you belong?’ ‘To the Dutch Church, and, if you wish it, I can satisfy you of my character and standing there.’ ‘But what made you come for a token without mentioning the matter before?’ ‘I had not an opportunity, as I did not know in time that your communion was to be next Lord’s Day. I am sorry if I have done wrong; but I expect to leave the city on Tuesday, and to be absent, I cannot tell how long, in a part of the country where I shall have no opportunity of communing; and I wished, once more before I went away, to join with Christians in showing forth my Saviour’s death.’ He consulted a moment with the church officers who were still present, and it was thought most expedient not to grant her request. He communicated this answer as gently as possible to the modest petitioner. She said not another word, but with one hand gave back the token, and with the other, putting up her kerchief to her eyes, she turned away, struggling with her anguish, and the tears streaming down her cheeks. How did his heart smite him! He went home exclaiming to himself, ‘Can this be right? Is it possible that such is the law of the Redeemer’s house?’ It quickened his inquiries, his inquiries strengthened his doubts, and have terminated in the conviction that it was altogether wrong.”—Vide *Introduction, selected sentences, closing with Note p. 6.*

Doubtless, the providential circumstance above quoted led to the publication of Dr. Mason’s book, in vindication of open communion, of which he was so fully convinced, and advocated during the remainder of life, both by precept and example. Such exemplifications of the unity of Christian faith in these days

of anti-Christian dissensions, portends a happy return to the usage of the primitive church.

The following letter from an estimable friend, exhibits the contrast, in a very striking manner, between the exclusiveness of close-communion, and that spirit of love which brings the whole household of faith in a crucified Redeemer around the communion-table of Him who said, "This do in remembrance of me." And it is to be hoped and believed, that the day is not far distant, when all anti-Christian separating walls of exclusiveness will be broken down by that spirit of love, which is so admirably characterized in the facts communicated in the following lines of words "fitly spoken, like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

The sentiments and facts communicated are from the Rev. N. J. Marselus, D.D., pastor of the Reformed Dutch Church, Bleecker street, New York.

"NEW YORK, Nov. 22, 1849.

"*To the Rev. Lebbeus Armstrong.*

"REV. AND DEAR BROTHER.—In compliance with your request to furnish you with a written statement of the facts connected with the dismissal of a member of our church to a Baptist Church in this city, (which I related to you some time ago,) I give you the following particulars, as illustrative of the principle of Christian character and consistency, when brought in contrast with that spirit of exclusiveness which is so fully interwoven in the system of our Baptist brethren, when carried out in their doctrine

of close-communion. Among all the professed Christian denominations of any note, this spirit is found to exist only with the Roman Catholics, the High Church Episcopalians, and the Baptists. And it is the very spirit which manifested itself in those of old, who said to all others, 'Stand by thyself; come not near to me for I am holier than thou.'

"It is a matter of deep regret that our Baptist brethren, who, in other respects, hold the truth in its purity, should be found in such company, and especially, when they seem disposed to commend Christian liberality if it happens to be exercised towards *them* by members of other religious persuasions. We trust, however, that the time is not far distant when they will regulate the whole of their practice by that golden rule of our common Saviour, 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets.' You will perceive in the sequel that this rule has been observed, at least by one of their ministers, but on an occasion when he could not do otherwise, without condemning himself as uncharitable and illiberal. God grant that these instances may be multiplied a thousand-fold, and then, again, will that primitive saying be heard even from the lips of infidelity itself, 'See how those Christians love one another.'

"But to the narrative, or statement of facts in the case. In the year of 1833, the wife of one of the members of my church became a hopeful subject of grace, and as she had been brought up in the bosom

of the Baptist church, of which her parents were members, she naturally felt desirous of being connected in Christian fellowship with the same church. Her husband opposed her wishes. He could not endure the thought of separation from his companion, in so important a relation as that of church membership. The trial, to him, was one of no ordinary character. It pressed so heavily upon his mind, that fears were entertained, at times, lest his reason might become impaired, and ultimately forsake her throne. My pastoral services were called in requisition. I reasoned with him, urging the necessity of compliance; prayed with him that he might be fully reconciled to the step which his partner was about to take; and assured him that he had even cause for gratitude that she had been brought into the fold of the Great Shepherd; for though there were many folds, and many under shepherds, there was, in reality, but one fold, and all under the care and guidance of that one Great and Divine Shepherd. My efforts were successful. He yielded his acquiescence, and she became a member of the Baptist church in — street. For a while they divided their attendance between my church and the Baptist church. But, in process of time, in consequence of his frequent intercourse with his Baptist friends, the uncharitable (I had almost said unchristian) remarks which he often heard respecting those who hold to infant baptism, and the contemptuous manner in which they are accustomed to speak of what we deem an holy ordinance, such as “*baby*

sprinkling, baby Christians," &c., I say, in consequence of these things, his own mind, at length, became unsettled on the subject of baptism. After reasoning with him both on the subjects and mode of baptism, and finding his prejudices so strong and deep-rooted that there seemed no possibility of removing them, I advised him to unite himself with the Baptist church of which his wife was a member, and told him I would give him a regular certificate for that purpose. I accordingly furnished him with a certificate of dismissal to the aforesaid Baptist church in the same form as prescribed in the constitution of our own church with the single exception that he was "sound in the faith, only that his mind had undergone a change on the subject of baptism," and, as such, I cordially and affectionately commended him to the Christian fellowship and confidence of the Baptist church in — street. He was received by them, as the following communication addressed to me by their pastor, will testify :

“NEW YORK, SEPT. 13, 1833.

“*To Rev. N. J. Marselus.*

“MY DEAR SIR.—This is to inform you, as the President of the Consistory of the Reformed Dutch Church in Bleecker street, that — —, so affectionately recommended by you, has, at his own request, been received as a member of the church under my pastoral care.

“Allow me, also, to express to you my own grateful thanks, and those of my brethren, for the kind

and liberal spirit in which your recommendation of Mr. — was couched.

“ The reading of your letter in our church-meeting excited a very happy feeling, and drew from several of our most judicious members, expressions of lively gratitude for your Christian liberality. May the Lord abundantly bless you and your people. May we all act for his glory, and enjoy him forever.

“ I am, my dear sir, yours most affectionately,

“ — — — — —

“ *Pastor of the Baptist Church in — — street.*”

“ In July, 1841, a young man, an esteemed member of my church, married a young lady, a member of the before-mentioned Baptist church. The ceremony was performed by her pastor, and I, being present, invoked the divine blessing upon the parties between whom the marriage covenant had been solemnized. In December of the same year, the husband called at my house, and expressed a wish that his partner might be connected in church communion with himself. I told him that I had no doubt if he applied to the pastor of the church with which his wife was connected, he would very cheerfully furnish him with a certificate of her membership, and then her relation might be regularly transferred to us. He accordingly called upon him the same day, and requested such a certificate for that purpose. But he was told that it could not be done, as it would be a violation of their principles, to grant a certificate of dismissal to any of

their members, with a view of forming a connection with any other church than one of their own denomination. When this intelligence was brought to me, I immediately searched among my papers for the preceding document, and having found it, I requested him to return forthwith, and put it into the hands of the Rev. Mr. ———, Pastor of the Baptist church in ——— street. He did so, and brought back the following certificate .

“ *New York, Dec. 30, 1841.* ”

“ This is to certify that Mrs. ——— ———, is a member, in good standing, and greatly beloved, of the Baptist church in ——— street. She has always been held in very high esteem by the whole church for her piety, modesty, and Christian deportment. Learning that Mrs. ——— is about to connect herself in Christian fellowship with the Reformed Dutch Church, under the pastoral care of my very dear friend, the Rev. Mr. Marselus, it affords me much pleasure thus to bear my testimony to her excellent character.

“ ——— ———,

“ *Pastor of the Baptist Church in ——— street.* ”

“ The name of this lady was accordingly published on the next sacramental occasion, as having been received, on certificate from the Baptist church in ——— street.

Thus I have endeavored to meet your wishes in as

concise a manner as practicable, and have only to add that I remain yours sincerely,

In the bond of the Gospel,

N. J. MARSELUS."

The above communicated *facts* cannot fail of being deemed worthy of promulgation throughout all christendom, and the world. They comprise volumes in accordance, and, of course, in favor of that apostolic unity of practical faith in the doctrines and ordinances of gospel salvation, which pervaded the primitive Church of Jesus Christ during the first Millenary of its existence; before the scattering power of the seed of tares from the enemy germinated, and brought forth discord, insurrections, and *exclusive divisions* in the house of the spiritual Israel of God on earth. It will be only by the restoration of that long lost "unity of the spirit," through faith in the doctrines, and fellowship in the divine ordinances of primitive Christianity, that will prepare the Church of God for the foretold blessedness of the forthcoming Millenium, after the combined powers of Antichrist shall have spent their force in the air, and been overthrown at the battle of the great day of the Lord. And this spirit of love, only, can substantially evince due preparation for the holy communion of the Lord's supper—preparation for the solemn hour of death—and preparation for an endless state of perfect union, love, peace, and glory with God, and the whole family of the redeemed in Heaven.

That the Baptist denomination are not without conviction, and alarm on the subject of their long cherished exclusive immersion, close communion, and opposition to infant consecration to God by baptism, will appear from the following published communications of recent circulation. The following is copied from the Boston *Puritan Recorder*, March 14th, 1850.

“ DEDICATION OF CHILDREN BY BAPTISTS.

“ The consecration of children to God, in an act of public worship, has so much of intrinsic reason in it, that not a few Baptists have, in spite of their prejudice against infant baptism, practised it. Lately, Dr. Fuller, a distinguished Baptist minister in the South, has come out in its favor. The custom has existed to some extent among the Baptists in England from the first, and still exists. A writer in the English Baptist Magazine complains of the tenacity of his people in regard to it, and says, that when he refuses to ‘dedicate’ their children, they carry them to ministers who will. When he reasoned with them, they replied, ‘What! are our children no better than the young of beasts, that they should not be dedicated to the Lord?’

‘ This practice took the name of ‘dry christening.’ By some it was regarded as an intimation of Christ’s blessing the infants brought to him; some held it to be admissible in itself, as a solemn and edifying act, but carefully guarded against its being regarded as an ordinance of God.”

The following appeared in the next number of the *Puritan Recorder*, March 21st, 1850.

“REV. BAPTIST NOEL.—The Rev. Baptist Noel has lately refused to *re-baptize* a person, proposing to unite with his church who has been baptized by *sprinkling* after having reached adult years, thus practically declaring that he thinks there is no important difference in the modes of administering that ordinance. He also, as is well known, utterly rejects the principle of *close-communication*, cordially welcoming all evangelical Christians to the Lord’s table, and himself communing with other denominations. The Baptists of this country have evinced no little exultation at the conversion of this gentleman to their denomination. How soon will they be ready to adopt his liberal and catholic views on these two points? And if they should universally adopt them, how much would be left of all that is the life of the *distinctive* Baptist denomination?”

The following is copied from the *New York Presbyterian* of Nov. 3d, 1849.

“*The Baptists—Open-Communion in England.*”

“From the statement of a writer in the *New York Baptist Register*, it appears that open-communication is making steady and rapid advances in Great Britain, and that the churches to which the most eminent divines ministered, are embracing the practice. The writer to whom we refer, says :

“ ‘The plan of open-communication is destructive to

Baptist Churches, as is abundantly proved by its effects in Great Britain. The views of Robert Hall have so spread in that kingdom, as nearly to destroy the identity of the Baptist denomination. In many Baptist churches, once regular, but now open-communication, the immersion of believers is despised and derided ; and if a candidate for admission into any of them conscientiously wishes to be immersed, he has to be baptized as stealthily as possible, and generally by twilight, for fear of offending the sprinkling members.

“ ‘ While infant sprinkling is practised openly to gratify the Pedobaptist members, believers’ baptism has to be administered almost secretly, for fear that the church will be stigmatized as strict and bigoted. A pastor of one of the Baptist churches in England, himself a professed Baptist, but his wife a Pedobaptist, allows members of the church to have their children sprinkled by a Pedobaptist minister in his own meeting-house, and even his own children are brought forward and sprinkled. Even the church to which the Rev. Andrew Fuller so faithfully and so successfully preached, is rapidly becoming Pedobaptist. The present pastor is unable to stem the current, and there is reason to fear, that after his decease, the Church may be easily induced to settle a Pedobaptist minister as pastor.’ ”

The following communication shows that *immersion* is considered by *some* of the Baptists at least, to be *essential to salvation*, as will be seen in the sequel,

that a *Baptist minister was silenced* by the question of a Presbyterian *lady* on that subject.

“ *To the Rev. Lebbeus Armstrong.*

“ DEAR SIR—Agreeably to your request, I send you the following report of a conversation which took place between a worthy member of my church and a Baptist minister. Miss B — ‘was sitting,’ she said, ‘in company with her sister and another lady, both members of the Baptist Church, when a Baptist minister, entered to pay an ordinary visit. Being acquainted with one of the Baptist ladies, he was introduced to the other with the remark, that *she was a Baptist*, and then to Miss B —, my informant, leaving it uncertain to what church she belonged.’ The minister soon after being seated, said to Miss B—, ‘May I ask, to what Church *you* belong?’ Her answer was, ‘I belong to the Presbyterian Church, of which, Mr. — is pastor.’ ‘Ah!’ said he, ‘then you do not hear *baptism* preached.’ ‘No,’ she answered, ‘nor do I *wish* to hear it.’ ‘What then,’ he said, ‘*do* you wish to hear?’ She answered, ‘I wish to hear Jesus Christ, and him crucified.’ ‘Can you hear Christ preached,’ he asked, ‘*and not hear baptism?*’ ‘Allow me,’ she said, ‘to ask you one question; do you think baptism essential to salvation?’ ‘To this he refused to make *any reply*, though repeatedly urged to do so.’

“ By baptism, in the above conversation, was meant, of course, by the minister, *immersion*; and by his

question, 'Can you hear Christ preached, and not hear baptism?' it was *insinuated* that the doctrine of *immersion* forms a vital and essential part of the gospel, so that the doctrine of *immersion*, not being preached, the whole gospel is vitiated and made destitute of saving power.

"A plain avowal to this effect, the Baptist minister, if questioned closely, might have shrunk from making; but surely he presents the same thing in the form of *implication*. Why did he not, without *hesitation*, answer the lady's question, 'Do you think baptism essential to salvation?' Possibly, as an experienced controversialist, he judged that the *baptistic leaven* would ferment most successfully in the form in which it was administered; but, if so, he was disappointed, the Presbyterian lady being more firmly attached to her church after this conversation than she had been previously.

"A PRESBYTERIAN PASTOR,

"*Of the City of New York.*

"*New York, Sept. 2, 1850.*"

The following is a communication from the Rev. Ebenezer Platt, formerly the pastor of a Congregational church in Darien, Fairfield County, in Connecticut, and subsequently, pastor of a Presbyterian church in North Port, Long Island—and is now a resident of the city of Brooklyn, without pastoral charge, on account of ill health :

“ BROOKLYN, *Jan. 20th*, 1851.

“ *To the Rev. Lebbeus Armstrong, Ballston, Saratoga County, N. Y.*

“ DEAR SIR—Understanding that you are in the city of New York for the purpose of publishing a work designed to promote the visible unity in the fellowship and communion of saints, I have thought proper to comply with your request, viz., to forward you a fact which tends, if I do not greatly mistake, to the great and good end to which you aim in your publication. During my ministerial labors at Miller's Place, L. I., we made the very agreeable acquaintance of Elder Hodge, a Baptist minister, whose son is now filling an important post in one of our cities in the same calling. He was from Scotland—sound in the faith, as to all the great leading doctrines of God's word, and steadily and perseveringly devoted to the great work of saving souls. Elder Hodge was, however, tenacious of his opinion that *immersion* is the only scriptural mode of baptism. As Elder Hodge was a man of ardent piety, and could use the ‘sword of the spirit’ with great dexterity and power, he was selected by a Baptist Association to go on a mission. Accordingly, he accepted of an appointment to preach *three* Sabbaths a month at Coram, L. I. He had therefore *one* spare Sabbath each month. A small but very pious Congregational church in the vicinity, learning his character and excellencies, as a minister of the gospel, engaged him to preach for them that spare Sabbath, not only

that their own aged and infirm pastor might be relieved; but that they might be fed with substantial food of the gospel. It was during this period he became thoroughly convinced of the *unchristian and unscriptural* ground of what is called 'close communion.' The circumstances, he related as follows: He had already joined a Congregational association, though he still held, that immersion was *the* mode of baptism, having been cut off by his Baptist brethren. He said in our family circle one evening after preaching for me, with great unction, 'I love my Baptist brethren and their *mode* of baptism. But, I am now convinced that it should be no bar to Christian *communion* with other evangelical denominations. I once thought it should. But God has taught me to call not that common, or unclean, which he has cleansed.' He continued: 'While a missionary at Coram, I made an acquaintance with a small but very pious Congregational church at Bating Hollows. They had a very infirm pastor. Learning that I was at liberty one Sabbath in each month, the good people earnestly solicited me to accept the invitation to supply them that time, and I accepted. I soon became ardently attached to them as the dear children of God. Not long, however, through a mistake, or, as I view it *now*, an *over-ruling Providence*, I went there on the day of communion. When I found my mistake, it gave me great distress. I wished myself ten miles off. But there I was. I could not honorably leave. I concluded, however, to be silent, and let the aged pastor

improve the occasion. But all insisted that I should preach. I told them that I was a Baptist in principle and could not therefore commune with them. 'We know it,' said the deacons, and leading members of the church, 'but, you can *preach*. We want to *hear you preach* :' So I consented, and after I had closed my discourse, the communion table being spread, I invited the members forward—then said to them, dear brethren and sisters, 'you know *I cannot commune with you ; but no doubt the Lord Jesus will.*' On saying this, I stepped away to go to the corner of the house and sit down alone. But instantly it came back to me like a flash of lightning—'You have no doubt the Lord Jesus *will* and *you cannot* ! You have *no doubt* have you ? No. If Christ communes with *any* on earth, he does with these dear brethren and sisters—*You have no doubt the Lord Jesus will ?*' This reiterated question came with such thundering power on my heart and conscience, that I could have no peace until I resolved to examine the subject carefully and prayerfully before God. True to my vow, I returned from the sanctuary to the search. And, brother, strongly as I believed in *immersion*, I could do no otherwise than give up my *close-communion views* and conduct—I eagerly embraced the first opportunity to testify to the people of God and the world my change of views, though I knew it would expose me to persecution if not excommunication. And thus it was. Not long after, I was deprived of my mission,

and the church of Coram appointed a committee to take the steps of the gospel with a view to trial.

“ I heard their story, and then addressed them as follows: Brethren, you have come to commence a course of discipline with me, with a view to excommunicate me, if I repent not, for communing with the Pedobaptists. But all who know them, will acknowledge them to be among the most godly of the land, whilst you sit under the preaching of one, who every Sabbath intermission, administers the devil's communion. Now, I say not this to disgrace you, or to reproach your pastor. But, I ask, if it is not true, that your preacher does not visit the tavern, without rebuke, every Sabbath, and call for brandy, drink, and then hand it to all of you who may be present? You cannot deny it—there are scores of witnesses. Now, this I call administering the devil's communion. Yet, in your view, and in the view of the Baptist Church, my conduct in communing with the Pedobaptists demands the *anathemas* of the church; and this too, whilst your intemperate, brandy-drinking and brandy-distributing minister goes unrebuked, and remains a worthy brother in the church.

“ Are these things right? They *did not*, nor *could* they say a word; though they pursued the discipline till it resulted in my being cut off from the Baptist Association, and would have affected my church membership, if I had not had a connection with a church in Hartford, Connecticut.’

“ Such in substance is the testimony of one, whose praise is in very many of the Congregational and

Presbyterian churches of Suffolk County, Long Island ; whose record is sealed for the Judgment—who now, we trust, reigns in glory with Christ on high ; and whose communion with the saints knows no limit nor an end. And I am happy to state, that I believe the above case of *intemperance*" [alluded to, in Elder Hodge's rebuke of the Baptist committee who commenced gospel labor with him,] "does not characterize the Baptist denominations any more than any of our Congregational denominations.

"EBENEZER PLATT,

*"Late Pastor of the Presbyterian Church
at North Port, Long Island."*

The following is from the pen of the Rev. Samuel H. Cox, D.D., in his letter of recommendation of the Author's Treatise, by dialogue, on the nature and tendency of what is believed to be palpable errors, both doctrinally and practically comprised in the assumptive exclusiveness of the close-communication Baptist's system of theology. A part, only, of Dr. Cox's spirited commendation, was copied by the author, for the Prospectus of his book, as appears in the notices of recommendation, and the remainder was reserved for a chapter of general remarks.

Hence, in the preliminary recommendations, after the words, "If war must come in reference to the question, let it come—the sooner the better—I am ready for it," he proceeds, "and only because I view it as both necessary and inevitable ; I desire it

too, and will be found, by the grace of God, 'harnessed in order serviceable.' The necessity and the occasion *they* make themselves, not me. I never yet saw a Baptist that could not be confuted on logical and scriptural principles, and that in quick time.

"These are some few of the reasons why I recommend the work of Mr. Armstrong, and why, before I die, I may write a book myself, as I am persuaded that it is quite time for men to say and do something in self-defence against a most deleterious leaven of error and schism in the Church of God. I have seen so much of proselytism and the fascination of false ideas in relation to it, since my own ministerial career of more, now, than one-third of a century, that I feel prepared to take a stand and keep it, with no apology for being as plain and intelligible, as direct and determined, as I am sure the truth requires.

"SAMUEL H. COX.

"*Brooklyn, N. Y., Oct. 15, 1850.*"

The following communication is from the Rev. Dr. Lansing, pastor of the Congregational Church, in Clinton Avenue, Brooklyn, State of New York.

"*To The Rev. Lebbeus Armstrong.*

"DEAR BROTHER.—I have read the whole of your manuscript on the subject of immersion as indispensable to Christian communion at the Lord's table. The following thoughts, suggested by your work, are at your disposal.

"To your argument, based upon the fact, that dur-

ing the first Millenary of the Christian Church, there was no such thing as close-communion, for want of baptism by immersion, you might have added the fact that the first *name* by which the sect was distinguished in history was the name 'Anabaptist,' that is, those who baptize a second time, or over again. The very name itself, clearly shows that the mode of baptism then prevalent in the church, was so offensive to them, that they *baptized again* those who had received baptism in the mode in which it was commonly administered by the Church; showing clearly, that baptism by *immersion*, and not *aspersion* or *pouring*, was the *innovation* upon the practice of the Church.

"You might have mentioned, among the evils naturally resulting from the practice of close-communion, and chargeable upon the doctrine that immersion is the only divinely-appointed mode of Christian baptism, besides those which you have collected from history, those which are familiar to every Christian minister's experience, the unhappiness which it has created in families of the most undoubted piety; and the disruption of the most tender ties of blood, as well as of social relationship; and above all, the *fact* to which I allude with pain undefinable, the utter and seemingly reckless disregard, not only of altogether the most learned and highly-respected portion of their own brethren; but also of all Christendom besides, with which a portion of their communion, in defiance of the remonstrances of their brethren, and in practical contempt of the feeling of Christians of other denomina-

tions the world over, have determined to give us a new version of the Word of God, our precious old Bible. And what can be the object, if it be not the gratification of a sectarian, proselyting spirit? I ask what else can be their design? Because almost everybody knows, that although there are a considerable number of mistranslations in our present version of the Bible, yet the most learned, and godly, and approved writers with which the Church has been blessed during the whole period of this version's existence, bear their unbroken and undivided testimony to the fact that there is not an error that has the least shade of bearing towards a partiality in them all.

But, if our new version advocates are ready to declare that proselytism is their *aim*, because, as they believe the Word, it is their *duty* that *all the world* besides themselves are wrong, and that fidelity to their Lord demands at their hands the course they are pursuing. If they are prepared by such an avowal to *unchurch* and unchristianize the world besides, why, we leave them to enjoy the consciousness of their fidelity as far as they can; and while we cannot bid them God speed, we must bid them farewell, while we fervently pray God to preserve his Church from too many such professed friends.

“I have written the above because I love the saints without respect to name; and because, in my inmost soul, I am pained to see the unity of the Church broken, and Christ divided by a misguided zeal for what all sober and ingenuous minds are ready to con-

cede, is, after all, a mere form ; and the want of having observed which, either by ignorance of its importance, or a conscious satisfaction with another mode ; or want of opportunity to observe it, will not shut out of heaven one single soul that shall believe in Jesus. Is the communion-table of our Baptist brethren so much more sacred and holy than heaven, that those who have not been immersed shall be shut out from the former, while the kind and sympathising Jesus admits them into the latter ? I would to God our Baptist brethren in America were as deeply imbued with the spirit of Christian union, as are the *elite* of the Baptist ministers in England. I do not desire them to abandon *immersion* if that be their preference ; but I do desire that they should open their church doors to those, to whom, by their own confession, they believe Jesus will open the portals of glory. God excludes from heaven none but the wicked. O let not our Baptist brethren any longer exclude from the communion of our common Lord, those whom the Holy Ghost has sealed to the hope of salvation, and whom He will guide to his eternal kingdom. Do not let it be said they are excluded because they will not do their *dnty*. They *have*, in the deepest conviction of their conscience, *done* their duty. God has accepted them in it, as our Baptist brethren allow. God has blessed them abundantly in building up his kingdom. O how earth and heaven shall rejoice together, and Satan tremble, when the Church, in the spirit of Christ, shall let these *water walls* come down and whelm in ruin

this Pharaoh of close-communication, and all the mighty hosts of evil that have followed in his train.

“Your brother in Christ,

“D. C. LANSING.”

O, when will our pious, devoted, evangelical Baptist brethren be convinced that *immersion* is *not* the divinely-commanded, exclusive mode of Christian baptism! When will they be convinced that Christ never designated this mode, either by precept or by example, as the exclusive mode of applying the water of purifications in the commanded ordinance of baptism? When will they be convinced that the apostolic church, and primitive Christians, amid all their temptations, persecutions, and tribulations, *until death*, during the first thousand years after Christ's ascension up to heaven, left no *Church record* to bear testimony of any dissention about the mode of applying water in Christian baptism, evincing to a demonstration that no Baptist church holding to exclusive *immersion*, exclusion *communion* of the Lord's Supper with the *immersed*, as the only true disciples of Christ, and opposed to infant baptism, existed on the earth during the first Millennium of the gospel Church?

When, O, when will evangelical Baptist Doctors of Divinity and Elders, who preach the Bible doctrines of sinners lost by total depravity, Christ crucified to make a vicarious atonement sufficient for the propitiation of the lost world of sinners, and effectual for the

salvation of *all* who were ordained to eternal life in the unchangeable purpose of Jehovah, and whose names were written in His book of life from the foundation of the world, and that all such will be saved by the grace of regeneration, by the power of the Holy Ghost, through faith in the crucified Redeemer, repentance unto life for sin, and a holy life of devotedness to God until death? When, O when, we repeat, will such preachers of the gospel of Christ, and such believers in the doctrines of salvation by grace be convinced that *the mode*, the mere *mode* of applying the water of purification in the commanded ordinance of baptism was no part of the divine designation when the ordinance of gospel baptism was divinely instituted?

Once more, we *repeat* and *reiterate* our lamentable vociferation of interrogatives, when will our dear Baptist fellow-Christians be convinced of the truth of the humiliating fact that the introduction of the doctrine of *exclusive immersion*, as the *only mode* of Christian baptism, the *only badge* of true discipleship, the *only token* of worthy qualification for communion at the Lord's table, was evidently ushered into the world by hosts of fanatics in the sixteenth century, in opposition to the Protestant Reformation from Popery—that those fanatical innovations of *exclusive immersion*, and opposition to infant baptism, were evidently perversions of God's truth by the Old Serpent, the Devil, and his legions of seducing spirits, the demonstration of which fact was evidently confirmed

by the furious storm and tempest of insurrection against all the civil and ecclesiastical governments of Christendom then existing, to the shedding of rivers of Protestant blood, by the carnage of the battle-field, and by the murderous phrenzy of assassination, followed by the poison of anti-Christian influence and animosity, which has filled the Church with emulations, strifes, and divisions during more than three hundred years past, answering, in all respects, the purposes of the adversary of all good, as a substitution for his beloved Popery in its darkest ages of the most bitter persecution, by massacres and inquisitorial tortures, to destroy orthodox Christians from the earth? When will Baptist Christians be convinced of such God-provoking, soul-destroying facts, as have been written in the records of the Church with the blood of martyrs, which is still crying unto God from the earth that God's truth may prevail—that His Church may be purified from the contamination of Satan's devices, and learn, from the disastrous state of all past experience, to “cast off the works of darkness and put on the whole armor of light.”

The perversion of God's truth into various Satanic systems of falsehood, which is the prevailing “signs of the present times” in this age of infidel philosophy, is incalculably more dangerous and destructive to immortal souls now living on the earth, than all the systems of martyrdom by torture which defiled the earth with the murdered blood of Christians during all the seasons of persecution, from the bloody Nero,

to the last Pope of Rome, who had civil and ecclesiastical power to drive forward the trade of death by torture in the use of all the infernal machines of butchery in the courts and dungeons of Papal inquisitions! *Then* the *bodies* only of Christians suffered under torture, until their emancipated souls, liberated by bodily pangs of death, were carried by angels to Abraham's bosom, to dwell in everlasting mansions of glory.

But now, while the bodies of millions of mere professed Christians, of various denominations, are clad in *vanities* and pampered with all the *luxuries* of earth, and furnished with Satanic passports of sibbolethic signs, ensuring a free and triumphant passage over the billows of death, into anticipated regions of sensual enjoyments and happiness, alas! for the want of the *essentials* of true religion, viz., the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, evinced by love to God, and holiness, and to the whole household of faith—love to the Bible, and all divine laws and ordinances—hatred to sin, and all the sinful works of darkness, and sole reliance on the mercy of God for pardon and salvation; yea, summarily, for the want of the oil of divine grace, they find, at last, that they are but “foolish virgins,” the door of heaven is shut upon them, and they sink to hell.

CHAPTER XII.

[A discourse on the divine authority for Infant Baptism, in two parts, comprising, first, the doctrine that God requires Infants to be Baptized, and that the primitive Gospel Church practised Infant Baptism uniformly without schism for more than one thousand years.

And, secondly, that both the Jewish and Christian Seals of God's Covenant of Grace are emblems of the blood of atonement; that by divine authority, the application of the Seals were, and still are, restricted to members of the human body; that the mode of their application respectively, is peculiarly adapted to show forth both the necessity and application of atoning blood; and hence, that

all opposition to Infant Baptism, is not only without scriptural foundation, but based wholly on a system of perversion of God's revealed truth.]

' Their children, also, shall be as aforesaid.'—JER. xxx. 20.

THE text, and its connection, comprise a prediction of the happy state of the Jews when they shall be gathered from all nations among which they are now dispersed, and be brought to Jerusalem, to the land of promise, to the place of the temple, and to the worship of the God of their fathers.

In the seventieth year of the Christian era, the nation of the Jews was totally subverted by the Romans. Jerusalem was desolated. One million one hundred thousand Jews perished by the sword, famine, and pestilence; their temple was razed to its foundation; survivors of the awful siege were sorrowful witnesses of the departure of their sceptre, by the utter extermination of their national government; and from that to the present time, their posterity have suffered the long-predicted scourge of God, by a state of dispersion among all the nations of the earth. They have been treated with the utmost cruelty by their enemies, their sufferings have been almost indescribable, and they remain to the present time under the righteous chastisement of heaven, totally bereft of all national polity, and subject to the domination of the rulers of nations where they re-

spectively reside. And though all these calamities have been brought upon them, as the just reward of their iniquity for murdering the Son of God, and rejecting His gospel; yet, they still retain their unbelief in the principles of the Christian religion; they are still rejecters of Christ, and of the gospel of His grace.

But, blessed be God, this will not always be the situation of that people. The nation is not utterly forsaken. God has declared that he will remember His covenant, and gather them into His fold agreeably to the predictions of His word. Thus hath the Lord spoken to their scattered tribes by the mouth of His prophets, (Ezek. xxxvi. 24—28,) “I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and I will bring you into your own land. Then will I 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, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.”

The same divine promise is made also in the context by the prophet Jeremiah, chap. xxx. 18, &c.

“Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob’s tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places; and the city shall be builded upon her own heap. V. 19: I will multiply them and they

shall not be few ; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small. V. 20, &c. : *Their children, also, shall be as aforesaid*, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them. Their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them ; and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me. Chap. xxxi. 1 : At the same time, saith the Lord, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people."

There has been no period of time when all these prophecies have been fulfilled relative to the Jewish nation. The predictions must, hence, have reference to the conversion of the Jews to Christianity in the latter days. Though now they are dispersed among all nations of the earth, and are under the influence of unbelief, and opposition to Christ and his gospel ; yet, the time is fast approaching when all the predictions of God's Word, relative to their conversion to the faith of the gospel, will be fulfilled. Among other blessings and privileges to which they will then be entitled through the grace of the gospel, it is said, " Their children, also, shall be as aforesaid."

The sentiment comprised in the text may be illustrated under the following point of

DOCTRINE.

The Church of Christ, under the gospel dispensation, will afford the same privileges, in substance, to the children of the Jews after their conversion to

Christianity, as they enjoyed under the Jewish dispensation, when the Jews kept the ordinances of God, in the ancient period of their national and religious prosperity.

That the import of this doctrine may be clearly understood, we shall.

I. Show to what privileges the children of the Jews *were* entitled agreeably to God's covenant of grace with His people, under the Mosaic dispensation. And,

II. Show to what privileges the children of the Jews *will be* entitled in the Christian Church, by the same divine covenant of grace, after the conversion of the Jewish nation to Christianity.

1st. The children of the Jews, under the former dispensation, were entitled to the sealing ordinance of God's covenant of grace.

The covenant of God, which first comprised, and required a seal upon the human body, was made and established with Abraham, the reputed father of the Jewish nation. The Lord appeared unto Abraham, and said, (Gen. xvii. 1,) "I am the Almighty God: walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee; and thou shalt be a father of many nations. 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 to thy seed after thee. This is my covenant which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee: Every

man child among you shall be circumcised; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. He that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generation. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised, and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. The uncircumcised man child shall be cut off from his people, he hath broken my covenant."

This was a covenant of grace. It secured to Abraham and his posterity the promised grant of the land of Canaan, which was a type of the heavenly inheritance to the faithful and obedient. It secured, by the promise and oath of God, all the spiritual blessings of grace and salvation contained in the divine declaration, "I will be your God." Its seal was circumcision. And Abraham, and his children, and all the infant posterity of the Jews throughout the former dispensation, were entitled to this seal through the faith of the parent. Thus, said an inspired apostle, Rom. iv. 3, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." V. 11: "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith, that he might be the father of all them that believe."

At eight days old, the obedient Jews circumcised their male children as God commanded. And although this divine ordinance was impracticable and not *required* of *female* children, yet *they* were included in all the blessings of the covenant, from generation to

generation. The command of God in relation to affixing the divinely instituted seal of his covenant, was definite and explicit, both with respect to the subjects and mode. *Males* only, were to be circumcised in the flesh of their foreskin, at any age, when the command was given, and their future offspring, at eight days old. And when the conditions of the covenant were fulfilled by the parents, both their male and female children were entitled through grace to all the promised blessings of the covenant. Consequently, as circumcision was the instituted seal of God's covenant which secured to believing, obedient Jews all needful temporal and spiritual blessings in the way of God's appointment, hence their children were, all of them, either actually or virtually entitled to the seal of God's covenant, and both male and female children, by virtue of that covenant, were entitled to all the blessings comprised in the divine promise to the faithful and obedient.

2. The children of the Jews under the former dispensation were members of the Church of Israel.

The owner of a flock of sheep puts his mark on the lambs of his flock, *because they belong to him*, and thus, by his *mark*, his sheep and lambs are distinguished. So God required his mark to be put on the children of believing Jews, that the parents by faith, and their children also, bearing the seal of God's covenant, might be distinguished as his covenant people and Church of the living God, from the heathen nations of the earth. Circumcision was the discrimi-

nating token or badge to distinguish every visible member of the Church of Israel, of every age and rank, including both parents and their children. The Church of Israel included the whole congregation, both men, women, and children, old and young, great and small; and children were considered as being under the special guardianship, watch, care, tuition, and discipline of the Church, and subject, under the special instruction of their parents, to every call and ordinance of God. Hence, when the *Church* was called upon to appear before the Lord, the whole congregation were required to assemble, and enter into, or renew covenant in compliance with the ordinances of Jehovah. Thus said Moses to the Church of Israel, (Deut. xxix. 10.) "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel, your *little ones*, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp, that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, that he may establish thee to-day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee *a God*, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. (V. 29,) The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our *children* for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."

In delivering his valedictory address and dying charge to Joshua, Moses was divinely directed to say thus, (Deut. xxxi. 10.) "At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of releasc, in the

feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, women, and *children*, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law; and that their CHILDREN, which have not known any thing, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it."

Thus did the *children* of the Jews belong to the Church of Israel. The covenant of God was made both with parents and their children. Its solemn relations regarded *children* in all respects equal with their parents, because, *they were to be the parents of the next generation, to proclaim the wonders of Jehovah to those who should come after them.* Hence, by virtue of the Divine covenant, children bearing its seal of circumcision, were divinely constituted, distinctly, a part of the congregation; were required to appear before the Lord; were under the watch and care of the Church; entitled to its privileges, and amenable to its order and discipline. They were infant members of the Jewish church.

3. The children of the Jews were entitled to the privilege of eating the passover.

The passover was a solemn feast of the Jews, divinely instituted in commemoration of their deliverance from Egypt, because, on the night of their departure, the

destroying angel slew all the first-born of the Egyptians ; but *passed over* all the houses of the Israelites without doing harm. The sign of the *passover* was the blood of a lamb on the *posts* and *lintel* of the doors of Israel. When the destroying angel saw this blood, he passed by the door, and where no such blood was seen, he entered and slew the first-born.

At the institution of the divine ordinance of the passover, the Jews were required to take a lamb, every man according to his household, and after killing, and striking the side posts and top of the door with its blood, to eat the lamb as a paschal feast, with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staves in their hands, ready to take their flight from the land of bondage. All the tribes of Israel were commanded to observe this feast annually, commencing at even, on the 14th day of Abib, which was then divinely constituted the first month of their civil year, and to continue to observe this feast as an ordinance of God forever. Thus said the Lord to Moses, (Exodus xii.) “ This is the ordinance of the passover. It is the Lord’s pass-over. I am the Lord. And this day shall be unto you for a memorial ; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. Ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons forever. And it shall come to pass when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And, when your children shall say unto you, What mean you by this service ? Ye shall say, It is

the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians and delivered our houses. When a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land; for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof."

Thus, in imitation of the original institution, the Jews were required to take a lamb according to the household, and each household, with all that appertained to it, were to join in the solemn feast. To this feast the *children* of the Jews were entitled, and by the divine constitution, it became the duty of parents to instruct their children from one generation to another, relative to the origin and design of the passover; the express command of God to observe it as a religious ordinance in commemoration of the distinguishing mercy of the Lord to his oppressed people; and the obligation of both parents and children in all their succeeding generations to keep the ordinance of the passover with devout gratitude for the wonderful goodness of the Lord.

Hence, in a summary review of the foregoing particulars, we discover the privileges to which the children of the Jews were entitled under the Mosaic dispensation. They were entitled to the seal of the covenant of grace; to membership of the Church of Israel; and to the participation of the ordinance of the passover; all which course of discipline was to be conducted

under the special instruction of their pious parents to whom God had committed the watch and care of infant souls.

Having shown to what privileges the children of the Jews were entitled under the former dispensation, we proceed

II. To show to what privileges their children will be entitled in the *Christian Church*, after the conversion of the Jews to Christianity. The text says—“Their children, also, shall be as aforetime.” Their being as *aforetime*, implies a title to privileges of the same import as formerly.

1. After the conversion of the Jews to Christianity, their children will be entitled to the *seal* of the covenant of grace, which, under the gospel dispensation is *water baptism*.

In a summary of arguments to prove infant baptism, we observe that *the Church of God is one* and the *same* in all ages, from its organization to its consummation. The *covenant of his grace* (which comprises the whole plan of man's salvation through the redemption of the blood of Christ,) *is the same in all ages*; and invariably is the only sure foundation of all the hope of pardon and future blessedness of man. Under the *Jewish dispensation*, the *seal* of God's covenant was a *bloody sign*, signifying, typically, the necessity of being purged from the guilt of sin by the blood of Christ. Under the *gospel dispensation* the Church of God and the covenant of his grace continued the same, and will so continue for ever. But

at the commencement of this latter dispensation, God was pleased to change the *seal* of his covenant from *circumcision to water baptism*, which signified the necessity of the sprinkling of the blood of Christ by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost to cleanse the soul of man from the pollution and the guilt of sin. * * * * *

That water baptism under the gospel dispensation, is a divine ordinance substituted in the room of circumcision, is abundantly evident from the following *illustration* of the foregoing *summary* of arguments.

Circumcision was once a divine ordinance in the Church of God, and continued to be so by the express command of God during the whole Mosaic economy, till the advent of Messiah. At the coming of Christ a new dispensation commenced under the gospel of Jesus; but the *church* continued the same church of God, and so continues to this day, and will so continue to the end of the world. The religion of the Old Testament and that of the New, is the religion of the Bible, and has been the same for substance in all ages under both dispensations. Our Saviour said, "Many shall come from the East and from the West, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." What can the kingdom of heaven here mean but the visible church from which the children of the kingdom (i. e. the Jews) should be cast out for their unbelief and rejection of the gospel; and into which the Gentile nations should be gathered through faith in Christ. The Jews, for unbelief in

Christ, and rejection of his gospel, were broken off from the Church of God. Through faith in Christ and obedience to the gospel, the Gentiles, (that is the wild olive,) are grafted into the original stock, the Church of God, (a figure contrary to the natural process of grafting,) and thus the Gentiles become partakers of the benefits of the church. And into the same stock, the apostle declares the Jews shall be grafted again by their conversion to Christ, "For God is able to graft them in again." Hence, nothing can be more certain than that the Church of God is the same in continuation from Jewish to Christian, and that water baptism *now*, is what circumcision was of old, a divine ordinance in the Christian Church, substituted in the room of circumcision.

Again, God's covenant with his church is essentially the same, both under the Jewish and gospel dispensations.

The Church is God's building; and the whole superstructure of this wonderful fabric is based on God's covenant of mercy. If the covenant was *ever* unchangeable, it must, of necessity, be unchangeable still. God's covenant with Abraham, taken in its full spiritual import, must be regarded as the covenant of the church *now*." The covenant with Abraham has never been abolished. In the *Old Testament* it is declared to be "everlasting;" in the *New*, to exist "forever." St. Paul declares it to be a covenant of "promise;" confirmed of God in Christ; that the law cannot disannul it, nor render it ineffectual; and that Christians are children of the covenant with Abraham. Thus

said the Apostle Peter—"Ye are children of the prophets and of the *covenant* which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham—In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Hence Christians are called Abraham's seed. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." Of Abraham it is said—"He received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith, that he might be the father of all them that believe." It is hence evident that God's covenant with Abraham was his covenant with his ancient Church, and that God's covenant with Abraham is his covenant with his church now, which is the same church in continuation under the gospel. "Of this covenant baptism is now what circumcision was formerly—the visible token or seal. Hence baptism has come in the place of circumcision."—(*Vide Ency. Rel. Knowl.*)

The import of baptism and circumcision are precisely the same. Circumcision was both a sign and a seal of God's covenant. As a sign it represented regeneration; as a seal it confirmed the righteousness of faith. Baptism is of the same import. The conclusion must hence be incontrovertible that circumcision and water baptism are divine ordinances established in the same Church of God at different periods; that both these divine ordinances are appendages of the same covenant, of the same import, and that baptism is substituted in the room of circumcision. Circumcision was the sign and seal of God's covenant until the coming of Christ. Christ was born of Jew-

his parents, and at eight days old was consecrated to God in the temple at Jerusalem by receiving the sign of circumcision, which continued to that time to be the seal of God's covenant. But when Christ entered upon his public ministry, offered himself a sacrifice to atone for the sin of the world, and gave commission to his ambassadors to teach and disciple all nations, the circumcision of males was no longer the seal of God's covenant, but the divine command was—"Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This commission of the divine Saviour of the world, was the connecting link of the two dispensations, Jewish and Christian. Here the Jewish dispensation ended, and the Christian dispensation commenced. *Here the seal of God's covenant was changed from circumcision to water baptism by express divine command.* The nature of true religion was not changed. The Church of God was not changed, otherwise than to pass from one dispensation to another. God's *covenant of grace* was not changed; it remained the same. The *seal* only was changed from the circumcision of male children, to the divine ordinance of water baptism, to be applied to adult believers in Christ of *both* sexes, and to their infant children, both male and female.

Thus was exterminated the partition wall between Jew and Gentile; and from *that time* it could be said in the language of divine inspiration, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in

Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Such is the foundation, the divine authority, and validity of infant baptism. It is undeniable that there was a divine command to circumcise Jewish infants; that this was the seal of God's covenant of mercy; that those who complied with the conditions of God's covenant, were members of His Church, and entitled to its promised blessings: in this covenant infants were included, and sealed with its seal by divine command. When Christ commanded His disciples to baptize, this was, in effect, *commanding* them to set the gospel seal of God's covenant on believers in Christ, and on their children.

In accordance with this sentiment, Christ taught, and His disciples taught, and the primitive Christian fathers taught and practised on the principle that children had always been included with their parents in the covenant of God, and were entitled to the seal of the covenant under the gospel as well as under the Jewish dispensation. When infants were brought to our Saviour for His blessing, He said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." St. Peter taught that children were included with their parents in God's covenant of promise to believers. "The promise is unto you and to your children." The house-

holds of the jailor in Philippi, of Lydia, of the city of Thyatira, and of Stephanus, were baptized on the profession of their parents' faith in God's covenant through Jesus Christ. That there were children, little children, infant children, in these households, and that the seal of God's covenant was put upon them, is the language of the Bible, interpreted by common sense, and *must* and *will* be so understood until it is proved positively that there were no infants, no little children in those households.

When many hearers of Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost were pricked in their heart, and inquired what they should do? they were answered by the apostles, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of 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 to as many as the Lord our God shall call." This promise extended even to the Jews who shall yet be converted to Christ. They will be called of God. They will be gathered into the fold of the Great Shepherd, and the promise of God is to them and to their children. "For if ye be Christ's," said the apostle, "then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The Christian fathers taught and practised infant baptism in the primitive ages of the Christian Church. Justin Martyr, who wrote only about forty years after the death of John the Evangelist, said, "We have not received this carnal circumcision, but the

spiritual circumcision, and we have received it by baptism.”

Irenæus, who wrote a few years later than Justin, said, “Christ came to save all persons who are by Him baptized unto God, infants, and little ones, and children, and youths, and elder persons.”

Tertullian, who lived in the second century, advised the delay of infant baptism, and yet speaks most expressly of infant baptism, as a prevailing and established practice in the Church of God.

Origen, whose ancestors reached to the apostolic age, speaks repeatedly and expressly of infant baptism, and declares that “The practice had come down from the apostles.”

Pelagius, in his controversy with Augustine, in the latter part of the fourth century, was reported to have denied infant baptism, to evade the force of argument against him, by Augustine, on the subject of original sin. Pelagius repelled that charge as an injurious slander. “Men slander me,” said he, “as if I denied the sacrament of baptism to infants. I never heard of any, not even the most *impious heretic*, who denied baptism to infants.”

From such testimony is it not certain that infant baptism is a divine institution; that it is the gospel seal of God’s covenant, in the room of circumcision; that it never was an innovation in the Church of God; but, was divinely appointed, divinely commanded, and has been divinely sanctioned and blessed by the Great Head of the Church, from the period of

His commission to evangelize the nations to the present day. The right of infant baptism was never *denied* till the twelfth century, by the sect of Petrobrusians, which soon dwindled away, and was never successfully opposed till the year 1522, by a sect of fanatics, about the time of the commencement of the great Reformation from Popery in Europe, in the days of Martin Luther and John Calvin. Notwithstanding opposition, the Bible doctrine of infant baptism is still maintained as a divine institution—as an ordinance of God, who inspired His prophets six hundred years before the coming of our Saviour, to predict that the children of the converted Jews under the gospel dispensation, should “be as aforetime,” because they would be entitled, by grace, to Christian baptism—the outward seal of God’s covenant under the gospel dispensation. Otherwise, their children would not “be as aforetime.”

2d. The children of the converted Jews will be entitled to membership in the Christian Church, by virtue of God’s covenant with the parents, and the faithfulness of parents to apply the gospel seal of the covenant to their children.

Baptized children of believers in Christ, are in covenant with their parents, and members of the Christian Church, just as circumcised children of the Jews, were members of the Jewish Church. Christian parents are under covenant obligation to train up their baptized children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Baptized children are under the watch

and care of the Church, under whose supervision they are to be educated in the principles and practice of the Christian religion. And when they come to years of maturity, it is their duty and privilege to renew their covenant by giving up their hearts to the Lord, by a personal dedication of themselves to his service, and by a solemn engagement to walk, (as they have been educated,) in the path of true religion. But, whatever course baptized children may take in advanced life, whether virtuous or vicious; yet this is reduced to a certainty, that the baptismal seal is put on them as children of believers in Christ, in covenant with their parents, and by virtue of God's covenant are included within the pales of the visible Church with their parents. And if their ungodly lives in adult years, or neglect of personal covenant, deprive them of the privileges of the church, and exclude them from heaven, the fault lies on themselves, and not on their parents.

Such was the infant membership of the Jewish Church. In this sense all baptized children are members of the Christian Church. And by virtue of the same covenant, and in the same sense, will the children of the converted Jews be members of the visible Church of Christ, and thus "*their children will be as aforesaid,*" members of the Church of the living God.

3. When the Jews are converted to Christianity, their children, after suitable age and personal covenant engagements to be the Lord's, will be entitled

to a seat at the Lord's table, to commemorate the dying love of their great Redeemer.

As there were two special ordinances in the Jewish Church, (viz.—circumcision and the passover,) so there are two sacraments in the Christian Church, viz.—baptism and the Lord's Supper. As circumcision and the passover were divinely-instituted ordinances in the Jewish Church for the observance of both parents and children, so baptism and the Lord's Supper were instituted by the Great Head of the Church to be observed by all its members, both parents and their children to the end of the world, to commemorate the great events signified by their respective ordinances. Little children of the Jews were eligible to the ordinance of the passover as soon as they were capable of receiving *animal* food. But Christ requires children of the Christian Church to be of age sufficient to “*examine themselves*” in relation to personal holiness and self-consecration to the service of God as pre-requisite qualifications, expressly enjoined on worthy partakers of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Hence, upon the same conditions, divinely prescribed, when the Jews are converted to Christianity, their children, after suitable age, personal holiness, and covenant engagement to devote their lives to God's service, will be entitled to seats at the Lord's table to commemorate the love of Him who died to redeem lost sinners.

Thus we have considered in what respects the children of the converted Jews will be as *aforetime*. The sum of the matter is—the Church of Christ under the

dispensation of the gospel, will secure to them the same privileges in substance, as children were entitled to, when the ancient Jewish Church was in a state of obedience and prosperity. As their children were entitled by the divine constitution to the seal of God's covenant to membership in his Church, and to a participation of his ordinance of the passover, so the children of the Jews, after their conversion to the faith of the gospel, will be entitled to baptism, (the seal of God's covenant under the gospel dispensation,) to church membership, and to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper on their profession of holiness and consecration to the service of God. The privileges under the gospel will be equal to those in the Jewish Church, and thus the promise of Jehovah will be fulfilled which he made by his prophet in the language of the text—
 “Their children also, shall be as aforetime.”

IMPROVEMENT.

I. On a review of the subject we infer, that when the Jews are converted to Christianity, they will, doubtless, unite themselves with those denominations of Christians who practise infant baptism and the Lord's Supper. The faith and practice of those churches are in accordance with those divine institutions and privileges which God gave to his ancient people by covenant, and never has abrogated nor abolished either by precept or example.

Suppose, for instance, that a converted Jew comes to a Baptist church and inquires of the pastor “Do you

circumcise your children?" The answer will be, *No*; circumcision is abolished. The Jew inquires farther, "Have you any divine ordinance practised in your church in the room of circumcision, or that answers to its import, for the use and benefit of both parents and their children?" The answer again will be, "*No*. We practice water baptism by *immersion* only; but the application of this mode is wholly confined to adult *believers*; and our gospel fellowship and communion extend to none but those who hold to the immersion of believers, and reject infant sprinkling as a human or popish invention to make baby Christians." So says the conscientious, close-communication "*Immerser*."

The Jew may be supposed to reply—"I find no privilege here. I cannot unite with you, for I read the divine promise to our nation, that on our conversion to Christ, our children shall be as aforetime. But with *you* there is neither circumcision nor anything that answers in its room. If I unite with you, my children will not be as aforetime; they will have no divine seal, nor sign to distinguish them from the children of heathen parents. I must seek a spiritual home for my *children* as well as for myself. I cannot unite with you, so farewell."

Next, it may be supposed, he goes to a society of Quakers or Friends, and inquires of them—"Do you circumcise your children and eat the passover?" The reply is, *No*; neither of them. The Jew inquires furthermore—"Do you practice any sacraments or divine ordinances that answer in the room of those mention-

ed?" "No; we believe that all external religious rites and ordinances are abolished; and we practice accordingly. We neither circumcise, nor eat the pass-over, nor baptize adults, nor children, nor partake of the Lord's Supper; neither do we believe in the validity of any of those external ordinances." *So says the honest Quaker.* "Well," says the Jew, "This is no home for me! Here are no privileges, such as my fathers and their children enjoyed. My children, here, will not 'be as aforetime,' according to the promise of God. I must seek further."

Anxious to find a home and unite with the people of God, the Jew goes to another denomination of Christians and inquires of their pastor—"Do you circumcise your children?" He is answered—"No; this ancient seal of God's covenant ceased when the Jewish dispensation ended; and the Divine Saviour of the world instituted water baptism in its room, as an ordinance applicable to both male and female, and better adapted to the state of the Christian Church. The Jew inquires—"What does this ordinance signify?" He is answered—"It is a seal of God's covenant of grace, answering to that of circumcision. It is a sign to signify the necessity of the inward cleansing of the soul from sin, by the sprinkling of the blood of Christ when the Holy Ghost baptizes the soul by the washing of regeneration. And, it is also a sign or pledge of our engagement to be the Lord's."

Well satisfied with the answer, the Jew inquires farther: "Are your *children* divinely entitled to this seal

of God's covenant in connection with their believing parents, and as a sign of their title to membership in the visible church?" He is answered—"The promise is unto us and to our children; and to all that are afar off, 'even to as many as the Lord our God shall call.' We baptize our children with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We dedicate them to God in faith in his covenant. We pledge ourselves under the most sacred obligation to train them up for God in the knowledge of the Scriptures, and the way of eternal life. They are under the watch and care of the Church, as members of the Christian family in minority. And when arrived to years of understanding and personally renew their covenant with God by taking their baptismal vows upon themselves and professedly espousing the cause of the Redeemer, they will be entitled to all the privileges of the Church on earth, and to the promise of the blessings of the Church triumphant in heaven."

Animated with the love of Christ, and a zeal for the honor and glory of his cause, the Jew relishes this doctrine. His soul feels the power of assimilating love; and he inquires farther. Do you eat the pass-over? He is answered, No; not in the form of the ancient Jewish rites; but we have a divine institution in its stead, which is the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; instituted by Christ himself, just before his sufferings on the cross, and by him appointed a perpetual ordinance in the Christian Church, to commemorate the sufferings of the bleeding Lamb of God upon

Mount Calvary, whose blood was shed for the remission of our sins, the redemption of our souls from death, and to give us a title through grace to the blessings of eternal life. To this divine ordinance we all have a right. Our children are in covenant with us. The seal of God's covenant is fixed on them at their dedication to God in his holy ordinance of infant baptism. We teach them that it is their indispensable duty to repent; to believe the gospel of Jesus Christ; to submit themselves to God; to love and serve Him; to profess Christ openly before the world; to engage in all the duties of the Church; to attend to all its ordinances; to participate in its sacraments; to put on the whole armor of God in righteousness; and to be Christians, not in name only, but in word and deed, in faith and practice, in heart and life, in body and soul, for time and eternity. When our children come up, thus, to the standard of the cross of Christ, they are entitled to all the promises and blessings of the covenant of divine mercy, and God has pledged himself by his promise to be their God and portion forever.

The matter is now settled in the mind of the converted Jew. He is overcome with adoring views of the wonders of divine mercy in the fulfilment of the ancient promise of God, by the provision made in the gospel for the privileges of himself and children. He fellowships the doctrine of the covenant. He begins to feel like a child at home. He breaks forth in an ecstasy of grateful and joyful response to all that he has heard. I am persuaded, that God has directed

me here. Here I have found a home, both for myself and children, where the blessings of the covenant of the God of my fathers are poured upon parents and their children. Here the brightness of the divine glory in the provisions of the Christian temple fills me with overflowing gratitude and love. Here will I take up my abode, and seek a dwelling place in Zion. Here will I unite in the communion of God's people. Here will I bring my offspring to the Lord for consecration under the seal of His covenant. For here the covenant promise of the God of Abraham will be verified, and blessed be His holy name, "*My children will be as aforetime.*" And

May it not be reasonable at least to suppose, that a similar line of conduct among the converted Jews, at the commencement of the Millenium, will have special influence in convincing the various denominations of Christians of the utility, importance, and divine authority of the sealing ordinance of God's covenant of mercy in relation to believers in Christ, and also their children, together with the gracious promises and blessings annexed to it, until one general sentiment shall prevail, and there shall be "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism; until the people of God shall be *one in love*, evincing their discipleship of the Saviour who gave himself in love to the sufferings of death for his people; and, until children, and youth, and age shall join in the praises of God as aforetime, and the whole earth shall be filled with his glory.

Let all who believe in the covenant-keeping God, join in the response, Amen, and Amen, So be it Lord, and let *us* now feel as aforetime when we first consecrated our souls and bodies to the God of Abraham.

CHAPTER XIII.

REMAINDER OF THE SERMON.

Secondly we infer, That both the Jewish and Christian seals of God's covenant, are emblems of the blood of atonement; that, by divine authority, the application of the seals are restricted to different members of the human body; and that the *mode* of their application, respectively, is peculiarly adapted to show forth both the *necessity* and the *application* of atoning blood.

Circumcision, the first zeal of the covenant, was a sign of the *necessity* of the blood of atonement. It was ordained to signify, that sinners could never be saved from the pollution, guilt, condemnation, and endless punishment of sin without a sacrifice, by the shedding of blood, sufficient to satisfy the demands of

divine justice in behalf of guilty rebels, when they should be disposed to accept of the atonement, and seek its appropriation to secure their pardon and eternal life. In the economy of man's redemption, Jesus, the Mediator, was ordained to be that sacrifice; and His blood, shed, and applied, is sufficient for the atonement, and for all the purposes of man's redemption.

Hence, circumcision, the divinely-appointed sign of the *necessity* of the blood of atonement, was literally a bloody token. In its application, a portion of a member of the human body was required to be amputated by the express command of Almighty God, importing, that "Messiah, the Prince," would be cut off, out of the land of the living; not for himself, but for the transgression of the people, that by his death, all who became interested in the blood of atonement, might be ransomed from the curse of endless death, and be made partakers of life eternal.

Such was the emblematical signification of circumcision, the ancient seal of God's covenant. It pointed the recipient to the solemn, *future event*, of the death of Messiah. And, during all the generations of the Jewish Church, every instance of circumcision was typical of the *necessity* of the shedding of the blood of Christ, for the atonement and salvation of guilty sinners.

But *Christian baptism*, the gospel seal of the covenant, is a *purifying sign*, ordained, emblematically to signify the *application* of atoning blood to the heart.

of man for purification, by the efficiency of the Holy Spirit in His office-work of regeneration.

God's method of salvation is by grace, through faith in the blood of atonement. It not only procures the necessary atoning sacrifice; but applies the blood shed to guilty, polluted man, for the purification of his heart from sin, and to fill him with love to God and holiness; otherwise not a soul of Adam's lost race would ever enter heaven. The reason is obvious. All mankind, by nature being opposed to God's free offers of mercy, if left to follow the inclination of their own *free*, but obstinate *will*, would *all* continue through life to reject the proffered terms of salvation, and perish in their sins. But, by the Holy Spirit's application of the blood of atonement, all who are divinely ordained to eternal life, even *all* that will finally be saved, are purified—are cleansed from all sin; and by grace are prepared for heaven. By the application of atoning blood, adult sinners, whom God hath chosen to salvation, are regenerated—born again (from above) of water and of the Spirit; their hearts are changed; they are *new creatures*, created in Christ Jesus unto good works; they repent of sin; believe in Christ; obey the gospel; are justified by faith, are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, and, thus by grace, they are saved from the wrath to come, and made heirs of the kingdom of eternal glory.

This office-work of the Holy Spirit in applying the blood of atonement, is termed in Scripture, "the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy

Ghost; sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience; and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ (which) cleanseth us from all sin." [Titus iii. 5; 1 Peter i. 1; 1 John i. 7.]

This is the baptism of the "Holy Ghost and of fire," applying the blood of atonement, by which sinners are regenerated and made Christians—by which all their graces are tried in persecutions and tribulations, as metals are tried in the fire, and by which all the redeemed from earth are saved; "not by works of righteousness which *they* have done," but by the gift and grace of God, according to His "mercy on whom He will have mercy, that no flesh should glory in His presence." This is the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which is essential to salvation, without which no human being ever became, or will become, a Christian, or enter into the kingdom of heaven. And the *mode* of the Holy Spirit's operation is uniformly represented by pouring or sprinkling the blood of atonement on man's polluted heart for purification unto holiness and eternal life. Hence, if water baptism is a sealing ordinance of God, ordained as an emblem of the application of the blood of atonement, in the regeneration of man's heart by the baptism of the Holy Ghost; then, it must be obvious, that the mode of applying water to the human body, by *pouring* or *sprinkling*, is best adapted to show forth, emblematically, the application of divine grace in the purification of sinners' hearts by the washing of regeneration in the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

The next thing to be considered is the *place of the gospel seal*. The *forehead* is expressly designated in the Bible as the member of the human body which is ordained to receive the *new* purifying seal of God's covenant. This is evident from the following Scripture testimony.

In Revelation vii. is a record of John's vision on the isle of Patmos, in which he saw an emblem of Jesus Christ, the Great Angel of the Covenant, "ascending up from the east, having the *seal* of the living God." By his special command, opposing interests were suspended, "till," (in the language of the angel,) "we have sealed the servants of God in their *foreheads*."

John heard the number which were sealed, viz., one hundred and forty and four thousand." This prophetic vision was evidently fulfilled in the Reformation which came to pass in the fourth century, in the reign of Constantine, when the Roman empire was revolutionized from Paganism to Christianity, and many thousands were baptized. It is evident that the seal upon their *foreheads* was water baptism, because the seal of grace by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, is always set on the *heart*. But the seal which John saw in the vision, was placed on the human *forehead*. Consequently, it was the *external sign of inward grace*, which was water baptism—the gospel seal of God's covenant of mercy.

The correctness of this exposition of Scripture, is further evident from Rev. xiv. 1. In vision, John saw a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him

an hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written in their *foreheads*. The chronology of that prophetic vision shows that its fulfillment comprised the Protestant Reformation in the days of Martin Luther, and other reformers—that Christ was the Lamb—Mount Zion was His Church in the wilderness—the hundred and forty and four thousand with the Lamb, were the faithful Protestants of that period, and the Father's name on their *foreheads*, is to be understood the outward seal of God's covenant, placed on that member of their body by water baptism. This blessed sealing-time in the Church was twelve hundred years after the Reformation and sealing-time in the reign of Constantine; and the vision of an equal number, sealed in both reformations, is, doubtless, to be understood a large *definite* number, in both cases signifying a very great *indefinite* number, whose profession of godliness was evinced by the seal of God's covenant on their foreheads.

Again, it is recorded in the Revelations, xxii. 1—4, that John had a vision of the heavenly state. He saw the throne of God, and the Lamb in glory. The redeemed were there, near the throne of their Father. And John, in vision, heard it said, “His servants shall serve him, and they shall see His face, and His name shall be in their *foreheads*; and they shall reign for ever and ever.”

Hence, it appears obvious, that water is to be applied, by divinely-authorized agents, to the foreheads of the subjects of baptism, in the name of God, the

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that this is to be understood as the true, scriptural import, of setting the seal of God's covenant and name, (or the name of the Father, the *first* person in the Godhead,) on the forehead of those who are baptized.

And it further appears evident, that as the blood of atonement is represented in Scripture as being applied by sprinkling, or pouring, on the *heart*, by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and as "sprinkling of clean water" is a prophetic emblem of the application of the blood of Christ in the regeneration of the heart, therefore, the sprinkling or pouring of water on the foreheads of candidates for baptism, is evidently the appropriate and scriptural mode of representing the Holy Spirit's application of atoning blood to the heart in regeneration.

But, as the external ordinance of Christian baptism is not represented in Scripture as being essential to the salvation of the soul, the mere *mode* of applying water to the forehead in the sealing ordinance of baptism, ought never to have been the subject of controversy, the cause of division, nor the token of party proselytism among Christians. If immersion is preferred by the candidate for baptism, and care is taken by the baptizer that the naked forehead receives the application of water in the name of the Trinity, so that the seal of God's name and covenant is placed on the part of the body designated by the Holy Spirit, it may be considered gospel baptism, unless it is done in the spirit of Antichrist, to set a sign and

token of schism, contention, and excommunication in the Church, to rend it asunder, and root out the spirit of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Immersion, for such purposes, deserves only the appellation of "the mark of the Beast," originating from the adversary of God and His Church.

3d. We infer *that all opposition to infant baptism is without Scripture foundation.* On investigation such will be found to be the result of the most popular objections which are made to infant baptism.

One objection is, *there is no express command in Scripture to baptize infants.* This is not true. Christ expressly commanded His disciples, thus: "Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The import of this command is, go teach *all* who are proper subjects to be taught, and baptize *all* who are proper subjects to be baptized. If this is not the import and whole meaning of the command, then there can be neither import nor meaning in words spoken. Who, then, are proper subjects to be taught their duty? And who are proper subjects to be baptized?

Every parent, of every nation on earth, and of every period of time, is a proper subject to be taught that it is his or her duty, on the peril of the soul, to submit to God on the terms of His covenant of mercy—to repent of sin—to believe in Christ—to obey the gospel—to be baptized with water, the *new*-commanded seal of the covenant, instead of circumcision; and to

consecrate all the children of the household to God in the holy ordinance of the covenant, by offering them up in baptism—the seal of the covenant for both male and female, instead of the circumcision of males only; and that even the infants of eight days old, or less or more, should not be neglected in the parental duty of infant consecration, on penalty of leaving an infant soul without the seal of the divine covenant. If words have meaning, such is the import of Christ's express command to His apostles, and to all His ministers, "Go teach and baptize."

In conformity with the divine command, all parents, of every nation, are to be taught reasons why their children are to be baptized, and why the parents are commanded to consecrate them all to God and seal them with the baptismal token of His covenant. The soul of every infant born into the world is polluted with the original sin of its fallen nature. The condemnation of heaven rests upon it, the moment it first breathes the vital air. Dying in infancy, or living to old age, it can be saved in no other way than by the sprinkling of the atoning blood of Jesus Christ upon the soul by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, in the washing of regeneration. The sprinkling of "clean water" upon it, is the divinely-appointed emblem of its spiritual purification by the blood of Christ. Hence, if the application of the atoning blood of Jesus Christ alone, by the affusion of the Holy Spirit, can cleanse the soul of the infant from the pollution and condemnation of the sin of its nature, and save

it from ruin when it dies, who shall forbid water, (the emblem of that blood,) to be sprinkled on its forehead, the part of the human body designated by the Holy Ghost to receive the new seal of God's covenant of mercy, as an infant member of the Church, (God's visible kingdom of heaven on earth,) and the token of its heirship through Christ to the inheritance of eternal glory in heaven? Alluding to infants, Christ said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." If, by "the kingdom of heaven," Christ meant *His Church on earth*, then infants are proper subjects to become consecrated members of it. If the *kingdom of glory* was Christ's meaning, then infants washed in His blood, and dying in infancy, are heirs of the blessedness purchased for them by His blood in glory. Surely, then, infants are proper subjects to be baptized. The seal of God's covenant ought to be set upon them. And it is the *commanded duty* of all parents to consecrate, first, themselves, and secondly, their children, to God, in the holy ordinance of His covenant of mercy. On this principle, and by virtue of Christ's command, every child born into the world is a proper subject to be consecrated to God in infancy, and to have the seal of God's covenant set upon it by him who is commissioned of God to baptize. If all parents on earth understood their duty comprised in Christ's command, and believed it, and were disposed to obey, not a child, not an infant on earth would continue unbaptized. The conclusion then must be obvious, that either parental *ignorance*

of *duty*, or *unbelief* of the divine requirements, or *neglect* to perform what is known and believed to be duty required and commanded of God to be done for their children, *is the cause* why all unbaptized children are not sealed with the token of God's covenant of mercy.

If, to evade the force of truth, the objection is still urged, that infants are not capable of being *taught*, as a prerequisite to baptism, the reply is—Infants are not *required to be taught* as an essential pre-requisite to baptism, any more than Jewish infants were required to be *taught*, before circumcision. Jewish *parents* were taught and commanded to keep God's covenant, by circumcising their infant children, and subsequently by training them up in the knowledge of the import of that covenant. So parents under gospel instruction are to be taught to submit themselves to God in all points as the gospel requires, and to dedicate their infant children to God in baptism, as the foundation of all their subsequent duties of training them up for God; to prepare *them* to perform the same duties to the next generation, that the Church, and ordinances, and glory of God may be thus perpetuated on earth to the end of the world.

It is further objected—*Infants cannot believe*; therefore are not proper subjects of baptism, for none but believers are required to be baptised.

Reply. For the same reason then, infants cannot be saved, for faith is essential to salvation. *Those who object to infant baptism because infants cannot*

believe, must, to be consistent, object to their salvation if they die in infancy! This popular objection to infant baptism has no foundation in Scripture; but is based entirely on a perversion of divine truth. It is true that infants cannot believe. But it is a perversion of God's truth to say, that because infants cannot believe, therefore they must not be baptized. The Bible says—"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." In this expression Christ spake only of adults. To apply any part of this sentence to infants, is a perversion of God's truth. Who is there that does not believe in infant salvation, when they die, washed from the sin of their nature in the blood of atonement? If infants are therefore proper subjects to be *saved* before they are capable of exercising faith, surely they must be proper subjects to be *baptized* before they are capable of believing the gospel. Hence the *objection to infant baptism for a reason which would destroy the hope of their infant salvation, must be abandoned as having a false foundation!*

The same objection might have been made to God's ordinance of circumcision. Faith was evidently required of Abraham as a prerequisite qualification both to circumcision and to righteousness unto salvation. But when God commanded him to circumcise infants at eight days old, what would have been the result, had he objected to God's command because infants could not believe? Or suppose Abraham had raised an objection to the divine command thus—"Lord, it

will do infants no good to circumcise them, they cannot be taught, they cannot believe!" Instead of believing unto righteousness and salvation, and obtaining the promises and blessings, and appellation of "*the father of all the faithful*" in Christ Jesus, such objections to circumcision as have been stated, which are the same in substance as those against infant baptism would have placed Abraham and all his posterity on a footing with the heathen, under the eternal condemnation of heaven.

Another objection to infant baptism is based on a rejection of the grace of the Abrahamic covenant. Thus it is said—that gospel *baptism* did not come in the room of *circumcision*, because *that* was only a token of a national covenant.

In reply, we observe—That to Abraham and his seed, even all believers in God's covenant and in Christ, to the end of the world, were the promises of salvation made through the righteousness of faith. But, if the covenant which God made with Abraham, of which circumcision was a seal, was merely a *national* or *civil* constitution and not a covenant of grace, then God never had a covenant of grace by which *Abraham* or *believers* in Christ were saved. Abraham's faith and righteousness were based on that covenant. His hope of salvation rested on the promises of God to him in that covenant. Believers in God to the end of the world were included in the promised grace of that covenant. But alas! if that covenant was not a covenant of grace; if its promises did not comprise

salvation from sin, the inheritance of heaven, and eternal glory, then Abraham was never saved; believers in Christ cannot be saved by a faith which failed to save Abraham. God had no church under the Old Testament. He has no true church now. And professed Christians have no more assurance of salvation than the heathen have, that their idol gods will save them. So much must be lost, if the covenant of circumcision was a mere civil compact, destitute of the gracious promises of God!

But the Bible informs us that circumcision was a seal of God's covenant of promise; that Abraham believed God, and that his faith in that covenant was counted to him for righteousness; that he thus became the father of all that believe; that to him and all his spiritual seed by faith, was the promise of salvation made: that all believers in Christ are Abraham's seed, heirs according to the promise, and proper subjects to be baptized; that their infant children are proper subjects to be consecrated to God by their parents, for the promise of God is both to them and their children; consequently the command of Christ to teach and baptize all nations, requires believing parents of every nation to be baptized with water in the name of the Trinity, as the seal of their covenant engagements to serve the Lord, and to consecrate their infant children to God, both male and female, by causing the seal of God's covenant to be placed on their foreheads, by the sprinkling of clean water, the divinely-appointed

emblem of purification from sin by the blood of atonement.

Another objection comes like an overwhelming tempest, "There is no example of infant baptism recorded in the Scriptures." Or, to be more explicit, the objector positively and boldly affirms, with uplifted hands in the presence of his God, in view of the decisions of the day of judgment, and the retributions of eternity, that there is not a single passage in the New Testament where it is recorded that, "A minister ever took a bowl or basin with a little water in it, and dipping his hand into the water, *sprinkled* some of it into a *baby's face*, pronouncing it baptized in the name of the Lord."

Doubtless, a similar formidable array has prevented the baptism of more infants than all other objections which have been noticed. Thousands, if not millions, probably have been referred to their Testaments for the truth of the objection, with recommendations to read every word of the New Testament from beginning to end, to see if such a record could be found. To settle this point, the book has been ransacked, chapter after chapter, with the very words *sought after*, constantly in the mind, thus, "*Minister, bowl, basin, sprinkle baby's face ; bowl, basin, little water in it, minister dips his hand in it, sprinkles baby's face !*" But, after long and diligent search, no such sentence could be found. The question is now settled in the mind of the examiner, clear as the sun, that no account of

infant baptism is recorded in Scripture, and that no such doctrine ought to be preached or practised.

From such *perversion of divine truth* we turn away, to show that the seal of God's covenant was required, and applied to children of believers in the apostolic age; that there is record of the fact in the Scriptures of truth; and that the fact recorded was a fulfilment of the predictions of Old Testament prophets.

Four hundred years B. C. the prophet Malachi was inspired to close the Old Testament with the following remarkable revelation from God: "Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." The great day of the Lord alluded to, was the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, which had been foretold (Mal. iv. 1.) Before that tremendous day, Elijah, the reformer of Israel was to appear. John the Baptist was evidently the Elijah intended in that prophecy. He came, as it was predicted, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the heart of the fathers to the children, in compliance with the condition of God's covenant; and to turn the heart of children to the fathers, by receiving from them the religious instruction required in the divine covenant.

The description which John gave of himself was, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness." Of

him, an angel declared before he was born, "Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God." So it came to pass. John came preaching repentance in the wilderness of Judea. His word was attended with power. A great reformation followed. The Jews, in thousands, heard the doctrine of repentance; were baptized of John in Jordan, confessing their sins; and the fruit meet for repentance which he required of them was, doubtless, a return to the reciprocal duties of parents and children, comprised in God's oft-neglected covenant. Thus the way of the Lord was prepared for the commencement of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Next, Christ and his disciples followed up the Reformation by proclaiming to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel," "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." After the divine Saviour had commissioned his apostles to *teach* all nations and *baptize* them, he ascended up to glory, leaving his disciples with the promise of *his* presence and Spirit, to follow up the foretold, and begun reformation of turning the heart of fathers and children to each other, in the observance of the specified conditions of God's covenant. That valedictory promise of the Saviour was fulfilled by the gift, and baptism of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, when the apostles were indued with the miraculous gift of tongues, by which they were abundantly qualified for their important work of reformation. They were filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake of the things of God, till the people of Jerusalem were

amazed, some doubted, and some mocking, charged them with drunkenness. This gave Peter an opportunity of announcing to assembled Jews, out of every nation under heaven, that the Spirit by which they spake was a fulfilment of an ancient prophecy by Joel, of a Reformation, then in progress, which would continue till the remnant of Israel "according to the election of grace, should be called into the deliverance of Mount Zion, and be saved." In his admirable sermon on that occasion, Peter boldly charged the Jews with the murder of Jesus Christ. Conscience was let loose upon them. They were pricked in their heart. Thousands enquired, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter answered, by the Spirit of inspiration; "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."

The import of Peter's reply was, Repent of your rejection and crucifixion of Jesus Christ the Messiah and of all your other sins of heart and life. Evince your repentance by receiving the new seal of God's covenant of mercy, which is water baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, as Christ commanded, when he commissioned us the apostles and ministers to preach to all the world, and teach all nations. So we now teach *you* to observe the conditions of the covenant of God. And

forget not your duty to your children. God's covenant with Abraham included his children. By the divine promise, they were entitled to the seal, and to all the blessings of the covenant, equal with their parents. By faith in Christ you are now Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise; and the promise is unto you and to your children. While, therefore, you feel the joys of pardoned sin, and are made partakers of the peace of the Holy Ghost, remember, O! remember the promise of God to your *children*, and neglect not to seal them with the token of God's covenant, and train them up in the knowledge of His truth, in His service, and for His glory. Such was the import of an inspired apostle's instruction to Jewish converts on the subject of Christian baptism.

The effect of that sermon, was the hopeful conversion of three thousand Jews to Christianity. Doubtless, many of them had been baptised by John with the water of Jordan. But, professing faith in Christ, they were baptised in his name, and were added, the same day, to the Christian Church; evincing, to a demonstration, that *John's baptism was not in the name of Christ, nor the baptism of the gospel of Christ*. John baptized them unto repentance: But now they brought forth *fruit* unto repentance by faith in Jesus, and by submitting to gospel baptism in *his name*, by which they received the new seal of the covenant of grace. [See Acts xix. 1—7.]

In this remarkable Reformation in fulfilment of

Scripture prophecies, that God would turn the heart of fathers to their children, no shadow of doubt remains, but that these three thousand Jewish converts put the seal of God's covenant upon their children of promise which God had included with themselves in His covenant. But, it is evident from the Scripture history of the first seven years of the Christian Church until the calling of the Gentiles, which commenced at the conversion of Cornelius, a centurion of a band of Roman soldiers, that though adults were baptized with water, yet, the circumcision of Jewish male infants was continued in practice as the sealing ordinance of God's covenant without any explicit apostolic interdiction.

Peter's visit to the house of Cornelius, [Acts x.] and the success of his ministry there, prepared the way for an apostolic decision, that circumcision was no longer binding on members of the Christian Church. Peter was complained of, for visiting and eating with the uncircumcised. After expounding his vision; the circumstances of his call to visit Cornelius; the success of his preaching evinced by the witness of the Holy Spirit; and the consequent baptism of Cornelius and his believing Gentile kindred and friends; the complainants were satisfied, and glorified God, saying, "Then hath God also to the *Gentiles* granted repentance unto life." [Acts xi. 1—18.] Some years after, the whole apostolic college at Jerusalem in council on the question, and by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, unanimously decided that circumcision

was no longer necessary to be practised in the Church of Christ. [Acts xv. 1—29, A. D. 53, 20 years after the Crucifixion.]

From that time, instances of the water baptism of households are recorded. Lydia was converted to the Christian faith in Macedonia. The divine record says, "She was baptized and her household." The Philippian jailer was converted to the faith of Christ. When under conviction, he enquired of two apostles, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." The Bible marginal reference is Acts ii. 39, "The promise is unto you and to your children." The jailer believed the word of the Lord. It was about midnight. And the sacred record informs us, that "the same hour of the night he was baptized, and all his straightway;" evidently all his *household*, for nothing else could be meant. Stephanus was one of the first converts to Christianity in Corinth. Paul, the apostle, affirmed thus, "I baptized, also, the household of Stephanus." The meaning of "household" is defined by common and universal consent and usage, to comprise the children and infants belonging to a family. And the Bible declares that such were baptized. And we are taught by divine authority to believe, that they were baptized in the name of the Trinity, by pouring or sprinkling water on the forehead, to seal their heirship to the promise of the covenant of mercy. It, hence, remains for objectors to infant baptism to prove positively, that

there were no children, no infants, in those households above referred to, or give up their objection for want of example, as having no foundation in Scripture.

Another objection to infant baptism is, that the doctrine and practice of infant baptism are anti-Christian innovations into the Christian Church.

It is a settled principle of *common law*, in all cases, both civil and religious, that positive *affirmations*, where proof is demanded, are not entitled to public credence, unless well authenticated testimony is adduced. On this principle we shall take the liberty of throwing back upon objectors to infant baptism, whoever they may be, the whole weight and burden of proof of their positive assertion that the doctrine and practice of infant baptism are *anti-Christian innovations into the Christian Church!* *The affirmation cannot be believed until it is proved.* Hence, positive and well-authenticated testimony is demanded to sustain the following points: 1st. That water-baptism is not the seal of God's covenant of grace, in the room and stead of circumcision. 2d. That there were *no children, nor infants*, belonging to the households of which record is made among instances of apostolic baptism. 3d. That it was by anti-Christian influence, founded on false doctrine, that infant baptism was apostolically introduced into the primitive evangelical churches of Christ, and has continued to be practised by evangelical Christian churches throughout Christendom, from that time to the present day. Or, 4th. That infant baptism was not

preached nor practised at all, in any of the primitive churches of Christ, neither in the days of the apostles nor of the Christian fathers, during a period of centuries after the apostolic age. 5. Positive proof is demanded to show conclusively, precisely, and specifically, the time when infant baptism began to be preached and practised. Also the place where the doctrine and practice under consideration originated. And, also, the person or persons, or individual church or sect of professed Christians, by whom the doctrine and practice of infant baptism first originated, and was introduced into the Church of Jesus Christ, together with the opposition first made to infant baptism, and the time, place, and person, or associations of men, who made the first array against so formidable an innovation into the Christian Church. Until the foregoing points are satisfactorily proved, the alleged innovation will be considered altogether unfounded. And we have shown previously, by citations from the earliest Christian fathers, from the days of Justin Martyr down to the days of Pelagius and Augustine, that infant baptism was universally practised, both by the orthodox and heretics.

Among the many which are made, we shall notice but one more popular objection to infant baptism, viz., that it is a method of proselyting children in infancy to sectarianism, which will destroy their liberty of choosing what kind and mode of religion they would wish to adopt and practice when grown to manhood.

No beings in the universe, it is presumed, feel more interested in the promulgation of this objection to infant baptism, than Satan and all in alliance with him, who wish to root out God's Church from the face of the earth. Always when Satan preaches, his doctrine is, "Let children grow up without religious restraint, and without religious instruction, and when they are old, I will take care of them, to keep them in the way in which they have been trained up, that they shall not depart from it." To this perversion of divine truth, all infidels and anti-Christians of every class, will give their loud, repeated, and reiterated response, "*Amen, amen, and amen.*"

In short, however numerous and plausible they may be made to appear, all objections to infant consecration to God, and all opposition to the religious instruction of children, will be found by investigation to be based on some one or another of Satan's devices, which tend to pervert God's truth—to subvert His ordinances—to destroy the Church—to promote false religion, and to ruin the souls of men. Satan's devices to prevent infant consecration to God, and the religious instruction of children are deep laid, of long continuance, and tend only to destruction. Anciently, if by any allurements whatever, the adversary could decoy Jewish parents to oppose, or neglect circumcision, and religious instruction of their children, the result was soon found to be *apostacy* into the idolatry of heathen nations, followed by desolating judgments from the Almighty upon the genera-

tion of defaulters, and continued so till repentance and reformation prevented ruin, and secured the returning smiles of heaven. Such instances of apostacy and divine chastisements were frequent, and the cause was generally neglect of God's covenant. By following the devices of the adversary, the heart of parents was turned from their children by neglecting the duties which God's covenant required by them to perform. And children thus neglected in their infant consecration to God, and permitted to grow up to manhood without the impress of the seal of God's covenant, and without religious instruction easily became the dupes of Satan's devices and the worshippers of idol gods.

The same cause will produce similar results in all ages of the world. Hence it is not difficult to account for the introduction, rapid spread, demoralizing tendency, and destructive consequences of false principles, false doctrines, and heaven-daring practices, which, at this period, are forming their alliances, and collecting their forces under the banner of Antichrist throughout all Christendom, to make another tremendous onset on the Bible and on the religion of Jesus Christ, if possible to drive them from earth into oblivion. The devices of Satan, God's covenant disregarded, His word perverted, His ordinances neglected, and children left to be trained up in *irreligion*, that they may have the privilege, in manhood, of choosing for themselves a religion to suit the carnal mind—yes, *all* these, and *more* of like import, lie at

the foundation, and are the causes of the fearful omens which threaten our land and world at the present day. Infidelity, self-righteous perfectionism, and every prevailing system of *Christless* religion, promoted by fanaticism, and various new methods of proselytism and bigotry prevail in exact proportion to the opposition to, or neglect of, infant consecration to God, and the consequent neglect of pious, prayerful, and exemplary instruction of children.

In conclusion. If I could raise my voice to be heard round this globe of earth, I would say to every parent living, and beg that the saying might be transmitted to all who shall live hereafter; yes, in view of the end of the world, the day of judgment, and the eternal awards of blessing or cursing to all the inhabitants of this earth, I would say, "Parents, God has made it *your duty* to consecrate yourselves and your infant offspring to His service, in conformity with the conditions of His covenant of grace. If you desire to be numbered with the blest in heaven, after the death of your body, do your duty while you live. If you desire that your children may share with you the blessedness which Christ has purchased with His blood, and which is reserved in heaven for all that love Him, then do your duty to your children, as God requires you to do, without delay, without fail, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

CHAPTER XIV.

Prediction now Fulfilling.

Illustrated by Analysis of the Church of God from its Divine Organization to the Present Time, comprising the Qualification of its Members, Signs and Seals of its Ordinances, Unity of its Component Parts, and Perpetuity of its Existence.

God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem—GENESIS, ix. 27.

JAPHETH and Shem were sons of Noah. In pronouncing a paternal blessing on one of these sons, the patriarch was “moved of the Holy Ghost” to foretell an eternal purpose of mercy. The events foretold, comprised inestimable blessings to be conferred on mankind in a manner calculated to display the perfections, promote the glory, and perpetuate the praise of God forever.

The prediction is highly important. During a succession of ages past, its fulfilment has furnished materials for some of the most interesting subjects recorded in the history of man. Its progress combines an assemblage of revolutions which have been changing the moral aspect of nations, both under the Jewish and Christian dispensations. And the most important part of the prediction remains still to be accomplished.

May the King of Zion aid our feeble efforts to illustrate and improve a subject thus momentous and comprehensive.

With reliance on divine assistance, it is proposed *first*, to show what we are to understand by the tents of Shem; and secondly, consider the enlargement and residence of Japheth.

First. It is proposed to show what we are to understand by the "*Tents of Shem.*"

A *tent*, literally, is a moveable place of residence. But the text is figurative. By the tents of Shem, we are to understand *temporal* possessions and *spiritual* blessings.

From the loins of Shem, sprang the whole nation of the Jews. The patriarch Abraham is referred to by the Jews in all ages, as the common father of all their tribes. The line of posterity from Shem to Abraham is direct. The sacred genealogy runs thus: "Shem, Arphaxad, Shelah, Eber, Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, Terah, Abram, the same as Abraham." Of him it is said by all the Jews—"Abraham is our father." With Abraham God established a covenant which in-

cluded a sacred grant to the nation of the Jews both of temporal possessions and spritual blessings.

The *temporal possession* secured to the posterity of Shem in that covenant, was a grant of the land of Canaan. God said to Abraham—"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." This *Divine Charter* contained a region adjoining the east end of the Mediteranean Sea, in length about one hundred and sixty miles, and eighty miles in breath, containing upwards of eight millions of acres of land, the fertility of which is represented by "*flowing with milk and honey.*"

In process of time, this section of country, with all its appurtenances, became the actual possession of the posterity of Shem. After a tributary residence in Egypt during four hundred and thirty years, and a tedious march through the wilderness of Arabia for the space of forty years more, the Jews, at length, under the command of Joshua, entered the promised land with triumph, divided it by lot among their tribes, cultivated, and ate the fruit of the ground, built cities, extended their wealth, increased their population, and flourished like a willow planted by the side of a living stream. Such were the tents of Shem in a temporary sense of the term.

The "Tents of Shem" imported also, *spiritual blessings*.

These were comprised in the following clause of the *divine grant*, when God said to Abraham—"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 to thy seed after thee." These gracious words were rich and extensive in their import. They included all the spiritual blessings which God eternally purposed to bestow upon the children of the covenant. To this period may be traced the visibility of a church on earth, its ordinances of divine worship, the security of its signal privileges, and confirmation of its perpetuity.

A visible church was constituted. Previous to this period, there were sincere worshippers of the true God. But, the establishment of a *visible church*, under covenant regulations, was suspended until ages after the creation, and the sacred honor was reserved to be conferred on the posterity of Shem in the family of Abraham. His household was divinely constituted a patriarchal church, to show forth the praises of him "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

In the church thus organised, were instituted *ordinances of divine worship*.

The Lord said to Abraham—"I am the Almighty God; walk before me and be thou perfect." The import of these words was infinitely extensive. "*I am the Almighty God.*" Who by searching can find out, to perfection, the import of these wonderful words? The height is above the heavens; what can we know? The depth is beneath the dread abyss; what can we do? The measure thereof is wide as the universe,

and as incomprehensible as eternity! "I am the Almighty God." I created heaven and earth. I uphold and govern the universe. Immensity is my dwelling-place. Eternity measures only the duration of my existence. My name is Jehovah. My nature is holiness. My *perfections* are love. Abraham, I am the only being who is to be adored as God. Worship thou me. Render to me thy heart and every power. Be humble. Be upright. Be sincere. Thus, to be a member of God's Church, Abraham was required to be holy in heart and life. God and his ordinances were holy; and to participate the divine blessings, the children of the covenant were required to be *submissive, reconciled* and thus to be like God.

In connection with purity of heart, the ordinances of God had respect also to *external moral conduct*. Obedience to the divine government was strictly enjoined. A seal of the gracious covenant was divinely instituted. This was circumcision, which Abraham was directed to apply to himself, to his children, and to his servants. The application of the divine signature imported, in the true worshipper, a public profession of religion; a solemn dedication of posterity to God; submission to the divine disposal, and an humble reliance on the adorable providence of God for all things relating to life and godliness, to time and eternity.

Relative to the visible church in the line of Shem, may be observed also, *the security of its signal privileges*.

Jehovah pledged his sacred word to fulfill all that was implied in those comprehensive words—"I will be their God." These are words of the covenant. The import is extensive. The promise is sure.

The blessings announced are, summarily, redemption from sin and death, and the possession of the gracious inheritance of eternal life. To the heirs of the covenant of divine mercy, these blessings and privileges are secured by the unchangeable promise of Jehovah, and in the language of inspiration, "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." By *grace* the heirs of promise are redeemed from sin; by *grace* they are redeemed from death; and by *grace* they are made partakers of the heavenly inheritance. Hence, God himself declared—"I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. And they shall be mine, said the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." Such was the import of the security of the promised blessings to the heirs of salvation. By covenant and promise, Jehovah secured to his people all the privileges which they have ever enjoyed; and all the ineffable blessings and inconceivable glories which are treasured up in heaven for them that love God.

To the foregoing representation of the Church, may be added the *confirmation of its perpetuity*.

The Church, thus constituted, was designed to be perpetual. In support of this point, the covenant was explicit. "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in

their generations, for an *everlasting* covenant." Such was the declaration of Jehovah in confirmation of the perpetuity of the Church. To His *word* God annexed His *oath*, to preserve His Church to the end of the world. When Abraham's faith was tried, God said, "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

With reference to the divine confirmation of the perpetuity of the Church, an inspired apostle thus claims: "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee; and multiplying I will multiply thee. For men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us."

In connection with His *covenant* and *oath*, for the confirmation of the perpetuity of the Church, God annexed His sacred *promise*, all of which are explicit in the following remarkable passage: "I have made a *covenant* with my chosen, I have *sworn* unto David my servant, thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations. My covenant

will I not break, nor alter the thing that has gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me."

Such are the declarations of God to confirm the perpetuity of the Church. It is a building of God. Its foundation is a Rock, against which the gates of hell can never successfully prevail. The covenant, oath, and promise of God will secure the existence of the Church amid all the revolutions of nature, until the consummation of time. Dissolving worlds will totter to desolation. The visible heavens will pass away with a great noise. The element will melt with fervent heat. The earth will be burned up. But the *Church* will survive the wreck and conflagration. When all the purposes of divine grace shall be accomplished, and all the heirs of salvation shall be gathered within her pales, the Church will be changed from her militant form to a triumphant state in glory, and all the redeemed will be forever with the Lord.

Such is the Church. Such are the spiritual blessings granted by covenant, and secured by oath and promise to the posterity of Shem. And such are the "tents of Shem," in a spiritual sense of the word.

It was proposed, *secondly*, to consider the enlargement and residence of Japheth. "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem."

Temporal and spiritual blessings to be conferred

upon Japheth are implied in the text, and represented as being the result of divine efficiency. God's providential agency in the *temporary* enlargement and residence of Japheth, is now to be considered. Relative to temporalities, the prediction implied *population* and *conquest*. In the fulfillment of the prediction, God enlarged Japheth by *population*.

Japheth was blessed with seven sons, whose names were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Mesheck, and Tiras. From this sevenfold stock issued forth an *extensive population*.

From the most authentic and approved historians, *Gomer* is considered to have been the father of the Gomerians, or Cimbri. His posterity anciently inhabited the northern parts of Asia Minor. Increasing in population, they emigrated into Europe, and peopled the countries of Poland, Hungary, Germany, Switzerland, France, Spain, Portugal, and Britain.

The posterity of *Magog* peopled Tartary, an extensive country on the north of Asia, and part of Europe, belonging at present to the Russian empire. From thence they extended their population to various other adjacent and extensive countries, from Siberia to the Indian Ocean, comprising the various tribes of Scythians, Goths, Huus, Tartars, Moguls, and Turks.

Madai is considered to have been the father of the Medes. His posterity peopled a mountainous country on the southwest of the Caspian Sea, and north of Persia, extending their population over a vast country, and forming a numerous and powerful kingdom.

Javan was the father of the Greeks. His posterity peopled an extensive country on the southeast of Europe, extending their population over the countries of Peloponesus, Achaia, Thessaly, Macedonia, and Epirus, comprising the numerous kingdoms and republics of Greece.

Tubal is considered by Josephus as being the father of the Iberians, on the east side of the Black Sea.

The descendants of *Meshech* peopled Capadocia and Armenia, extensive countries on the north of Syria and Mesopotamia.

And *Tiras* is considered to have been the father of the Thracians, who peopled an extensive country north of the Ægean, and west of the Euxine Sea.

From this view of the subject, it appears that the enlargement of Japheth by population, was remarkably extensive. His posterity may be considered at the *present day* as comprising nearly *all* the inhabitants of Europe, those of the northern regions of Asia, those of the islands of the Mediterranean, nearly all the inhabitants of the North and South Americas, and, also, the principal population of many important islands of the Northern and Eastern Oceans. Thus God has enlarged Japheth, and he stands confessed as the father of the principal population of the Gentile world.

Again. The temporary enlargement of Japheth related, also, to *conquest*. The posterity of Japheth besieged, conquered, and entered into the *possession*

of the cities and country belonging to the posterity of Shem.

Sin is the procuring cause of destruction to the wicked, and afflictive chastisements to the people of God. This truth is most strikingly illustrated in the historical facts relating to the subversion of the Jewish nation and polity. The posterity of Shem sinned against the Lord. They neglected to perform the conditions of His covenant. They violated His laws, rejected the overtures of His mercy, and, infatuated with the delusions of the idolatrous nations around them, they chose other gods instead of the God of Abraham for the objects of their vain adoration. Such contempt of the divine majesty was the procuring cause of the distressing calamities which befell the Jews. During the term of their judicial government, from Othniel to Samuel, (a space of about three hundred and forty years,) the Jews were in bondage to the heathen nearly one-third part of the time. They were in a state of captivity to the king of Mesopotamia eight years, to the king of Moab eighteen, to the king of Canaan twenty, to the Midianites seven, to the Ammonites eighteen, and to the Philistines forty years. From all these instances of oppression, God raised them up deliverers in answer to their penitential cries of distress.

By the revolt of ten tribes, in the reign of Rehoboam, a foundation was laid for their whole country to become a place of residence, or tributary, to the posterity of Japheth. A division of interest occa-

sioned jealousies, rivalry, and contention. Cotemporary rival monarchs, under the appellation of the kings of Israel and Judah, fixed their respective seats of government in the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria. At this period, the nation was like an house divided against itself. The ligaments of union, the only bands of national safety, being broken asunder by intestine discord, ruin awaited. Wickedness prevailed. Kings, and their subjects, united in the practice of the most abominable idolatries. Not a single pious king sat on the throne of Israel, and a great proportion of the kings of Judah were monsters of wickedness. The cup of iniquity was first filled in Israel, and this kingdom was *first* marked out for a downfall. Shalmaneser, the Assyrian, invaded, besieged, conquered, and terminated the existence of the kingdom of Israel, about two hundred and fifty-four years after its establishment under Jeroboam, the proverbially wicked son of Nebat.

After the extermination of the ten tribes, the kingdom of Judah remained as a surviving branch of the Hebrew nation about one hundred and thirty-four years. As wickedness still prevailed, (especially the sin of idolatry,) God gave the nation over to the scourge of their enemies, as the just reward of their iniquities. Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, overthrew the kingdom of Judah, and carried the Jews captive to Babylon. Assyria and Babylonia were, at that period, united in one vast kingdom, and the whole posterity of Shem, in the line of Abraham,

were brought into subjection, and made tributary to the sovereign monarchs of Chaldea. This was the first of the celebrated four great monarchies of the world.

In the reign of Belshazzar, grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon was overthrown by the combined forces of Cyrus, the Persian, and Darius, king of Media; and Chaldea was constituted a province of the great Medo-Persian empire, the second noted monarchy of the world. Though certain privileges were granted to the Jews by an edict of Cyrus, yet, as a nation, they were still held in subjection to the absolute sovereignty of the Persian monarchs.

About three hundred and thirty years before the commencement of the Christian era, the Persian empire was subverted by Alexander the Great, (a descendant of Japheth,) and was annexed to the Grecian empire, the third great celebrated monarchy of the world.

To the sovereignty of the Grecian monarchs, the Jews continued in subjection, until this empire was subverted by the Romans. Augustus Cæsar, (the Octavius of civil history,) reduced the habitable world under subjection to the Roman government, hushed the tumult of war, and reigned the unmolested sovereign of the fourth, and most renowned monarchy of the world. By this time, the whole country, once granted to the posterity of Shem, was completely in possession of the posterity of Japheth, or tributary to their royal sovereign.

Thus, God enlarged Japheth by population, and gave him the tents of Shem by conquest for a temporary residence.

But the *temporary* enlargement and residence of Japheth, belong only to the minor part of the subject. The most important consideration is, that of his gracious initiation into the special privileges and blessings of the Church of God. The "tents of Shem" have been shown to consist in part of Church privileges. The import of the divine prediction then is, *Japheth shall dwell in the Church.*

CHAPTER XV.

The foregoing Sermon continued.

[The Church-membership of Japheth—a fulfillment of Divine Prophecy, illustrated in a continuation of the foregoing sermon.]

IN illustrating this branch of the subject, we may consider preparatory providential means and manner of Japheth's accession to the Church. Divine providence forms one complete chain, in which there is not a link superfluous, nor a link wanting. The preliminary providential steps now under consideration, were a change of priesthood, the abolition of ceremonial ordinances, which stood as a separating wall between Jew and Gentile, and the ratification of a new way of access to God.

One preparatory step was a change of priesthood. The office of priesthood is of divine origin. It consists in offering sacrifices and in making intercession for guilty men. To this sacred office Aaron and his

sons were legally consecrated; and in the Aaronic line the office was perpetuated during all the revolutions of the Jewish dispensation. But the priests, under the legal dispensation, with all the dignity attached to their sacred office, were but *types* of a more dignified and exalted High Priest to come, whose office would consist in once offering up His own life ■ sacrifice to God for sin, and in making available intercession for all His spiritual Israel. Such an High Priest was the Lord Jesus Christ, and such was the nature of His priesthood.

The priesthood of Aaron was imperfect and changeable. The priests themselves needed atonement for their own sins, and they were liable to continual change by death. Hence, the economy of redemption included an abolition of the Aaronic priesthood, to make way for the perfect and unchangeable priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The change was effected. At the time, and in the manner foreordained of God, and foretold by the holy prophets, the Lord from heaven appeared on earth, clothed with human nature to establish a new priesthood in the Church of God. At the age of thirty years, required in the legal dispensation, and to fulfill the righteousness of the Levitical law, He was solemnly consecrated to the sacred office of the priesthood by the ceremonial washing of John's baptism; and thus, in the language of an apostle, "He was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers, that the Gentiles,

(the posterity of Japheth,) might glorify God for His mercy." By His death on the cross, He offered up Himself a sacrifice to God for the sins of guilty men. By His resurrection from the dead, He proved that the powers of death could never abolish His priesthood. And by His ascension into heaven, He entered once for all into the most holy place in the temple of Jerusalem above, to intercede at the throne of God for all who seek redemption in His blood.

Another event preparatory to the accession of Japheth to the Church, was the abolition of ceremonial ordinances.

"The priesthood being changed," said the apostle, "there is made of necessity a change also of the law." By "a change of the law," we are not to understand a change of the *moral law*, nor a change of the *covenant of grace*. These were perpetual. In proof of their perpetuity, Christ said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." The change of law which was rendered necessary by a change of priesthood, related to the ceremonial law, or ordinances of the legal dispensation. These consisted of a bloody sign, gifts, sacrifices, meats, drinks, divers washings, and carnal ordinances, which the apostle assures us "could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience." They were mere shadows of good things to come, and Christ was their antitype and substance. They were but figures of His one great sacrifice of Himself for the sins of

mankind. Their existence was limited to the time of reformation. And, hence, they are represented as being nailed to the cross, and blotted out, when Christ established a new dispensation. A change of the priesthood rendered their abolition necessary. Having answered the purposes for which they were instituted, they were changed for ordinances adapted to Christian worship, and like a bond that is cancelled, they were of no farther use in the service of God.

The divine covenant being sealed with Christ's atoning blood, the bloody token of circumcision was changed into the purifying sign of water baptism, as an external seal of the same covenant of grace. Christ, the Lamb of God being slain, a participation of His flesh and blood in the use of the consecrated elements of the sacramental Supper, was substituted in the room of the pascal lamb, which was eaten in the Jewish passover. And Christ, the great sacrifice, being offered up, the sacrificing of beasts was abolished, and found a substitute in the devout offerings of thanksgiving and praise offered on the altar of a devotional heart; and thus, *all* the diverse ceremonial ordinances were changed for modes of Christian worship.

By the abolition of ceremonial ordinances, Christ broke down the wall of separation between Jew and Gentile, that *both* might become one body, united by the blood of the cross in one church, enjoy the same privileges, become joint heirs of the same blessings, and be partakers of the same glory. With reference to this subject, an apostle thus affirms, "But now in

Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us. Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in Himself, of twain, one new man, so making peace, and that He might reconcile *both* unto God, in one body by the cross. There is neither Jew nor Greek ; there is neither bond nor free ; there is neither male nor female ; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

Preparatory, then, to the accession of Japheth to the Church, was the ratification of *a new way* of access to God. Christ crucified is this way, and it is made known by the gospel of His grace. Hence, said the Great Redeemer, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life ; no man cometh to the Father but by me." And, says an apostle, decidedly with reference to both Jews and Gentiles, "Through *Him* we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Having, therefore, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by *a new and living way*, which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh."

The way, then, that Japheth is to be brought into the Church, is through Christ. *He*, alone, is the way of salvation ; the medium of access to the Father ; and the only meritorious ground of a sinner's acceptance with God. *He* stands at the altar in the court of heaven. *He* there pleads the virtue of Gethsemane's

agonies ; of Jerusalem's sufferings ; of Mount Calvary's blood. In *His name* the sacrifices of a broken heart meet divine acceptance at the throne of mercy. By *Him* alone, believers are justified. And through *Him* alone they obtain eternal redemption.

The means and manner divinely appointed for Japheth's accession to the Church, are, summarily, The promulgation of the truth of God, accompanied by the power of the Holy Ghost, to the enlightening of the understanding, the conviction of the conscience, and the renovation of the heart, resulting in holy submission to God, repentance for sin, faith on the Lord Jesus Christ, and a holy life, with the concomitant blessings of pardon, peace, and a good hope through grace of a glorious immortality in the world to come.

All necessary preparation being made, the kingdom of God approached nigh unto Japheth. The Christian dispensation now commences. The gospel Trumpet sounds. The call is *first* made to the Jew, and is rejected in the exercise of the same spirit that murdered the son of God. For such obstinacy, the nation is rejected of God, and its principal branches are broken off from the privileges of the Church for their unbelief. Contrary to nature, (according to an apostolic figure,) "*the wild olive,*" (Japheth,) is now grafted into the original stock among the few believing branches, and with them partakes of the root and fatness of the good olive tree, which is the Church of God.

Now, you behold *Japheth*, with his thousands of the Gentile world, taking their seats in the spiritual

Tents of Shem, participating all the privileges and enjoying the blessings of the new dispensation of the covenant of grace. Now, Gentiles hear, believe, and embrace the gospel, and are gathered into the Church. The new seal of the covenant, which is water baptism, is applied to themselves, if adults, and to their respective households by infant consecration. The God of Abraham is pleased with the dedication. He remembers his covenant, and oath, and promise, and never fails to be their God.

In the manner above described, God has been fulfilling the prediction in the text during the intervening ages, from the commencement of the work to the present day. The work is still progressing with the rapidity of rolling years; and its completion awaits the consummation of time. About eighteen hundred years have elapsed since "The law went forth out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem," to gather the Gentiles around the ensign of Emmanuel, and fill the tents of *Shem* with the posterity of Japheth. What wonders have been wrought among the nations in the progress of this blessed work!

That Japheth might dwell in the tents of *Shem*, the apostles preached to the Gentile world. Thousands were converted to God, and inherited the blessings of his covenant mercy.

That Japheth might dwell in the tents of *Shem*, the Christian Fathers sounded the gospel trumpet during the dismal watches of the night of pagan darkness. The Spirit applied the word, and light burst forth

upon a dreary world. The gospel prevailed against opposition. The empire of the world felt the shock. Constantine laid his crown at the feet of Jesus, dedicated his life and treasures to the promotion of the gospel, while thousands of Gentile converts received the seal of God's covenant in their forehead, were incorporated into the body of the Church, and were honored with the surname of the "*Tribes of the children of Israel.*"

That Japhet might dwell in the tents of Shem, Luther, and a host of bold Reformers, protested against the abominations of Papal Rome, "Saying with a loud voice, if any worship the Beast and his image, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God," and a rich harvest of souls was gathered into the Church, many of whom were called to seal their testimony for Jesus with their blood, and inherit the blessedness of the dead who die in the Lord.

In the progress of this blessed work of Reformation in gathering Japheth into the tents of Shem, the populous nations of Europe have become evangelized. This Western World bows with submission, and forms a province of the Saviour's empire. The dark regions of Asia are blessed again with rays of gospel light. China, with her hundreds of millions, has raised the Macedonian cry, "*Come over and help us;*" give us the Bible; give us tracts; give us the gospel that we may sit in the tents of Shem, and learn the way to glory. Ethiopia stretches out her hands to God. The islanders of the vast oceans from North to South, and

from East to West, are becoming excited by the inquiry, What mean these tents of Shem? And if glory is connected with them, why may not that glory be ours?

The spirit of benevolence is pouring its gold and silver into the treasury of the Lord, to aid in proclaiming to all the sons and daughters of Japheth, that there is room for them in the tents of Shem. The rich and the poor sit down at the same table of their Lord, prepared for them, unitedly, in the tents of Shem. The mighty power of female influence under the banner of "*Moral Reform*," is breaking in upon the dark abodes of death, to bring captives out of the prison-house of infamy and despair into the soul-reviving tents of Shem. Missionaries are forsaking home and all its endearments, to traverse oceans, to explore wildernesses, and carry the tidings of salvation to the ignorant, poor, and perishing heathen in the remotest corners of the world, and lands of moral darkness. While the united prayers of millions in monthly concert are filling the court of heaven with petitions, addressed to the commiseration of the King of Zion, in language of heartfelt anxiety. Let thy kingdom come, O! Redeemer of Israel. Convert the Jews from their unbelief. Convince Mahometans of their delusions. Turn the heathen from the worship of their idol gods. Reclaim fatal Errorists by the power of truth. Break down the powers of opposition to holiness. Bring sinners to repentance. Let the earth be filled with mercy. And let the tents of Shem be full.

To seek a residence in the tents of Shem, sinners are crowding the temple-gates of Zion, with new songs of praise to the Redeemer, and the general Church is blessed with continual increase.

For a residence in the tents of Shem, infidels are renouncing the principles of their vain philosophy. Drunkards are forsaking their cup of death. Profane swearers learn the art of prayer. Wretched outcasts of society, like the prodigal, return to their Father. And the result is, they are all, on the evidence of piety, admitted into the tents of Shem, and there, by penitence, faith, patience, and perseverance, are furnished with *credentials* for admittance into the celestial tents of glory above.

For a residence in the tents of Shem, many of the rising generation are devoting the morning of life to the service of the great Redeemer. Blooming *youth*, the hope of their parents and the hope of the Church, are influenced to abandon the ball-chamber for the society of Christians; the haunts of vice, for the house of worship; the wanton play, for the pleasures of devotion; and the superfluous ornaments of the frail body, for the spiritual adornings of the mind, to qualify them for an everlasting residence in heaven. And even, there are instances of little boys and girls, such as I see in the assembly before me, yes, many such ones have become savingly acquainted with Jesus, and, seated in the tents of Shem, are not ashamed to let their feeble voices be heard in the praises of their blessed Saviour.

Thus, the prediction in the text, which has been fulfilling during scores of ages past, is still fulfilling before our eyes continually. And still, it must be confessed, that the most important part of the prediction remains to be accomplished.

In the progress and completion of this wonderful work of God, the prince of darkness will be bound with a great chain, and his influence will be confined to the bottomless pit. The Millennial sun, with radiant beams of mercy, will rise in full splendor to dispel the moral darkness of the world, and diffuse the blessings of universal peace and prosperity to the Church. Then sinners will flock to Zion from every clime. The unbelieving Jews will embrace the Saviour whom heir fathers crucified, and with joy, will they and their children, come shouting to Zion, glad to renew their covenant, and seal themselves the sons of God.

The idols of the heathen will then totter to receive the last tribute of homage from their ignorant millions. The tomb of the False Prophet will then lose its veneration, and be totally deserted by the deluded worshippers of Mahomet. The anti-Christian power of the Apocalyptical beast, with all the abominations of its conventicle deceptions, will go into perdition, and none shall be able to deliver. The confederate workers of darkness which complete the triple combination of powers in opposition to God, and shall succeed in gathering the kings of the earth and the whole world to the battle of the great day of God Almighty, will all be slain with the sword which proceedeth out

of the mouth of Jehovah. The *world* will be converted to God. The influence of the blessed gospel will universally prevail. Japheth will dwell *unmolested* in the tents of Shem. And this earth will be full of the glory of the Lord.

IMPROVEMENT.

From the foregoing subject we infer—*First, that God never had but one Church in the world.*

The general Church includes all the chosen of God in Christ Jesus, which have been, and finally will be saved.

With respect to the *visibility* of the Church, we have reason to believe that “they are *not all Israel*, which are of Israel.” In every age of the world, doubtless, many say—“Lord, Lord,” but do not the things which he says. When avowed opposition to the true religion has failed of success, the adversary of all good has frequently changed his procedure, by *counterfeiting* the appearance of Christianity, without possessing its reality. By this means, tares have been sown among the wheat, and the Church in all ages has been contaminated with *visible friends*, possessing enmity in their hearts to God and holiness, and to the plan of grace by which men are saved.

But, this deplorable fact destroys not the unity of the Church. “The Lord knoweth them that are his.” And, whether their local circumstances admit of a visible profession, or not, yet they belong to the true Church of God; and this Church is but one. The

change of dispensation from Jewish to Christian, destroyed not the unity of the Church. Under both dispensations the Church is *one*. Under the former, it was the Church of God, subject to ceremonial ordinances. Under the latter, it is still the same Church of God continued, subject to ordinances of Christian worship. With the dispensations connected, the Church forms one complete chain. The link that connects the dispensations is the Lord Jesus. All divine ceremonial ordinances under the former, led sincere worshippers to look forward to the promised Messiah, and through him to the throne of mercy. Ordinances under the Christian dispensation, lead the friends of God to look back to the advent of Messiah, and through that blessed medium of access to the *same* throne of mercy. With reference to the oneness of the Church under the two dispensations, an apostle says—"There is *One* body. For by one spirit we are all baptized into *one* body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free." Hence it is evident that God has but *one* Church, and that all sincere worshippers of the true God in every age and nation compose its members.

Secondly, we infer that true religion is the same in all ages. There is but one God; the triune, eternal, invisible and incomprehensible Jehovah. There never was, and never will be, but one kind of worship acceptable to God. This, is summed up in a sentence, and is "the conclusion of the whole matter." "Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the

whole duty of man." External modes of worship under different dispensations effect no change in the nature of true religion. Without holy exercises of heart, *all modes* of worship are vain. But when the heart is right with God, a diversity of external modes may be practised, and each be acceptable to *Him* who looketh on the heart, and judgeth not merely according to outward appearance. Hence the worshippers of God under different dispensations, and under the influence of diverse external circumstances, have adopted, adhered to, and practised different modes of worship under sanction of divine authority. And hence Christians differing in external modes of worship, still meet with divine acceptance, provided their hearts are right with God, and none of their modes of worship are repugnant to his holy word. Convinced of this doctrine an apostle exclaimed—"Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

We infer, *thirdly*, that the children of believing parents, in every period of the Church, are proper subjects to receive the seal of the covenant of grace.

The seal of the covenant has been changed in form, but not in substance. As a change of dispensation made no schism in the Church, and as a change of divine ordinances has effected no change in the nature of true religion, so a change of the seal of the covenant in form, destroys not its substance. Members of the Jewish Church were expressly commanded to put

the seal of the covenant on their *male* children. But distinction of sex, in this respect, is abolished. "There is neither male nor female." What are we to understand by these words, but that the distinct application of the seal of the covenant to males *only* was modified by divine appointment, and a seal instituted and to be applied without distinction of sex?

The children of the Jews had a residence with their parents in the tents of Shem. When Japheth enters the tents of Shem, he is required to bring his children with him, and seal them as visible heirs of the promise of life. Hence said Christ, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." And, said an apostle—"The promise is unto you and to your children. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Let all who wish to promote the residence of Japheth in the tents of Shem be careful to put the seal of God's covenant upon their children, for they are proper subjects to be dedicated to God in his holy ordinance.

Fourthly, we infer, that all who attain to a residence in the tents of Shem, ought to love one another.

Love is the fulfilling of the whole law of God. It is that charity without which, all pretensions to religion are vain. Those who dwell in the tents of Shem are nearly related to each other. They are brethren and sisters. They are worshippers of the same God; belong to the same Church; have been made new creatures by the same grace; and have been baptized

into Jesus Christ by the same spirit. They exercise the same kind of faith; are animated by the same hope; and are candidates for the same heaven. When arrived to glory, they will all join in one celestial anthem, and sing hallelujahs to God and the Lamb for ever and ever. Surely, then, they ought to love one another in this world as brethren. They ought to bear one another's burthen, and so fulfill the law of *Him* who said—"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." God is love. Religion is love. Heaven is full of love. The tents of Shem are situated on the road to heaven. And all who dwell therein ought to love one another.

IN CONCLUSION.

If the work of gathering Japheth into the tents of Shem is thus important, then every child of God ought to feel deeply interested in its promotion.

We, my hearers, are of the posterity of Japheth. But, it is our privilege to dwell in the tents of Shem. To us is the word of salvation sent. Accompanied by a divine power and influence it has brought some within the pales of the covenant of mercy. Their hope is in Jesus. They have found a residence in Zion. And, perhaps this moment, such recipients of divine mercy are sending up to heaven, on the pinions of love, a silent tribute of praise to Him who redeemed them from the power of death, and constituted them hopeful heirs of glory. If so, it is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

But, is there nothing further to be done? Yes, my brethren. To *each* a work of importance is assigned. Every Christian is required to be instrumental in the great work of salvation. Let each one ask the question, what have I done, what can I still do, instrumentally to promote the salvation of sinners? Are we ministers at the altar, let our preaching, our prayers, our lives, public and private, be directed to this end, to promote the glory of God in the salvation of sinners. Are we private members of the church, let the *one, two, or five talents possessed*, be diligently improved to promote the same object. Sinners are perishing. Time is flying. Death is approaching. What we do, must be done quickly. Wherefore I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, by the blood of Jesus, by the worth of souls, by the solemnities of the day of judgment, by the glories of heaven, and by the terrors of a state of endless despair, I beseech you to do all in your power as instruments, of gathering Japheth into the tents of Shem.

O height and depth of God's redeeming grace,
To Shem, the Jew, and Japheth's Gentile race!
Let Japheth's sons aspire to Shem's abode,
And dwell forever near their Saviour God.

CHAPTER XVI.

Ancient Zion's Towers, Bulwarks and Palaces, Typical of the Foundation, Ornaments, For- tifications, and Incumbent Duties of the Christian Church.

Walk about Zion, and go round about her; mark ye well her bulwarks; consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following.—PSALM xvi. 12, 13.

THE city of Jerusalem was built on a range of hills anciently called Mount Zion. This circumstance, doubtless, was the reason why the city and temple, and the worshippers at the temple, are frequently denominated "Zion" in Scripture, thus—"Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion—the city of the great king. Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion. Zion heard and was glad."

In allusion to the same circumstance, the *Church* of Israel was also called Zion. "Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion. Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

When Jerusalem and the temple were in the full tide of prosperity, Zion was ornamented with every thing superb, magnificent and glorious. She was for-

tified with walls, towers, and bulwarks, and adorned with palaces, which rendered her the joy and glory of the whole land.

But, the peculiar glory and fortification of ancient Zion consisted pre-eminently in the *providential towers and bulwarks* which Jehovah had erected to adorn and secure her spiritual interest, and render her the earthly repository of his own immortal praise. Hence, the adorable interpositions of Divine Providence were celebrated in songs of temple worship, to proclaim the glory of Israel's God, to excite the spirit of devotion; and to encourage all the people to unite in the delightful service of the Lord. Thus they *sang* —“Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness. God is known in her palaces for a refuge. Let Mount Zion rejoice. Let the daughters of Judah be glad. Walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks; consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death.

In discoursing from the text, it is proposed to illustrate the *nature* of ancient Zion's towers, bulwarks, and palaces; the foundation of her confidence in the divine protection; the importance of transmitting the knowledge of her situation and the memorial of her achievements to succeeding generations; and improve the whole as mere types and shadows to illustrate the

ornaments, fortifications and incumbent duties of the Christian Church. It is proposed

I. *To illustrate the nature of ancient Zion's towers, bulwarks and palaces.*

Literally, towers and bulwarks were strong and high buildings for ornament and fortification, and the palaces were the magnificent residence of kings, princes, and nobles. It was a prevailing custom of the ancients to erect towers and bulwarks on the top of the walls of their cities. Historians inform us that on the walls of *Babylon*, which were three hundred and fifty feet high, were two hundred and fifty towers raised high and splendid above the walls, for ornament and fortification. The walls of *Jerusalem* were also adorned and fortified with towers and bulwarks. Of *Uzziah*, one of the kings of Judah, it is said—"He built towers in Jerusalem at the corner gate, at the valley gate, and at the turning of the wall. He made engines to be on towers, and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones." Palaces, also, were numerous in Jerusalem.

But this *external* splendor and fortification were of *little consequence* compared with the *providential towers and bulwarks, and palaces* of ancient Zion. These consisted in her *laws, worship, discipline, and the mutual residence of God with his people.*

Zion received her *laws* from God. Jehovah gave them an inspired history of creation and providence, comprising the *moral law*, which is pre-eminently the *first*, the unchangeable, permanent and most impor-

tant law ever given to man, and is the unerring rule of life. Their divine lawgiver had also favored them with a code of ceremonial and judicial laws adapted to the state of the nation, and designed to promote the spiritual interest, the peace and prosperity of the community.

From these sources of divine instruction, they were favored with means of knowing every doctrine which God required them to believe, every duty which he required them to perform, the import of every blessing which he had promised to bestow as the reward of obedience, and the *nature* of every *curse* denounced against the rebellious and impenitent workers of iniquity. These divine favors were designed as providential *towers* and *bulwarks* for the protection of Zion from the depredations of all her spiritual enemies, who were ever ready with weapons of carnal policy, to allure the people of God into a state of *apostacy* from his service, and *union* with idolaters, for the purpose, if possible, of exterminating true religion from the face of the earth.

Again. The *worship* required in the faithful observance of the divine ordinances of the sanctuary, was designed for the ornament and defence of Zion.

When a burnt sacrifice was offered, agreeably to the divine appointment, it imported *God's abhorrence of sin* on the one hand, and the *penitential acknowledgments of the humble worshippers* on the other hand, who deplored their past transgressions, and invoked the Majesty of heaven for pardon, through faith in the

blood of atonement, which was *typically* represented in the offering before them.

When incense from the golden altar ascended morning and evening, it imported the divine method of intercession for the penitent believing sinner; and dictated a divine rule of stated seasons of daily devotion to be observed by all the spiritual worshippers of Zion.

And when the temple-worship was ornamented with cheerful songs, accompanied with melodious responses of praise and thanksgiving, the *whole scenery* was but an earthly prelude to the worship of the celestial paradise where the heavenly choir will for ever celebrate the perfect praises of the Lord. Such worship, spiritually performed, was, to the inhabitants of Zion, the most ornamented and strongly fortified providential towers and bulwarks, to protect the people of God from the invasion of their spiritual enemies, and to promote their spiritual peace and prosperity.

Again. The *discipline*, in the administration of both civil and ecclesiastical government, which was required and exercised in Zion in the days of Jerusalem's prosperity, may be considered among the number of her strong towers and bulwarks for fortification.

The rules of discipline, and directions for the administration of government, were all divinely instituted. Everything that related to the instruction of children, the good order of families and individuals, the peace of society, the prevention of crime, the

means of reclaiming the vicious, and the punishments to be inflicted on incorrigible offenders, was designated in the divine code, in a manner so plain that no person need be at a loss with respect to the line of conduct which, in all cases, would invariably tend to promote the general and individual good of the whole body politic. Hence, to observe and to do what God had prescribed, was the sum total of all disciplinary duty. A strict observance of the divine rules of discipline and government in the administration of public justice secured to Zion that peace, good order, and well-regulated state of families and society, which, more than towers and bulwarks on the walls and ramparts of their city, tended to fortify, strengthen, unite, cement, and bind the whole community together by the strongest ligaments of affection in the prosecution of one common interest—which *common interest* was invariably the best and only security of *individual* prosperity and happiness. Adopting the divine prescription as the rule of life, and walking agreeably thereto in the ways of the Lord, comprised the sum of their duty, and amounted to a fulfillment of the conditions of that covenant in which God, as a party concerned, had engaged to be their God and portion forever.

Again. In connection with her towers and bulwarks, let us contemplate, also, the spiritual palaces of ancient Zion, which constituted the mutual residence of God with His people. “*Walk about Zion. Consider her palaces.*”

It has been observed, that a palace literally is the mansion-house of a king. But, both God and His people mutually resided together in palaces not made with hands. Zion, in her state of prosperity, which we are contemplating, was a community of spiritual kings and priests unto God. Each faithful member of Zion had a palace adorned with holiness for the place of his own residence. This was a *heart devoted to the service of the Lord*. And what is most remarkable, the Omnipresent Jehovah, condescended to take up his earthly residence, not only in the *most holy place* in the Temple, when the congregation were assembled to dwell with Him, but, also, in the private and individual palace of every spiritual worshipper's heart. There, *morning*, and *evening*, and *noon*, from *day to day*, from *Sabbath to Sabbath*, and from *year to year*, the great Lord of the universe might be found dwelling with His people in the *palace of every truly devotional heart*.

“ Thus saith the Lord, heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Where is the house that ye build unto me, and where is the place of my rest? To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.” In the palace of such an heart, God always delighted to dwell, and there the humble worshipper always delighted to enjoy His sacred presence. Such were the spiritual towers, bulwarks, and palaces of Zion, which constituted her most impregnable fortification, and most delightful place of residence.

II. The next point proposed for our consideration is, *the foundation of Zion's confidence in the divine protection.*

God's covenant with His people, His promise and oath to fulfill all the *conditions* of the covenant on His part, and His faithfulness to perform all that He had promised and sworn, constituted the foundation of Zion's confidence in the divine protection.

A covenant is an agreement between parties on certain specified terms. When covenants are proposed between *men*, each party has the power, optionally, to accept or to refuse the terms proposed by the other with impunity. But, when *God* is a party in a covenant transaction, the conditions which He proposes cannot be rejected by *man* without *sin*, and the consequent forfeiture of all the blessings promised whatever they may be.

God's gracious covenant with Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, required him and his posterity, in their generations, to be holy, and to walk before God with perfect hearts. The divine promise was, that Jehovah would be their God. Thus, said He, to Abraham, "I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect. 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 to thy seed after thee."

Afterwards, when Abraham's faith was tried, and proved to be genuine, God annexed an oath to His promise. "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord,

that in blessing I will bless thee, and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed ; because thou hast obeyed my voice."

Of like import was God's covenant also with David. "I have made a covenant with my chosen ; I have sworn unto David my servant, thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations."

As the terms of God's covenant to be fulfilled on the part of man, imported holiness of heart and life, and a faithful observance of divine ordinances, hence, on the performance of these conditions, God pledged Himself by His promise and oath, to protect, and defend, and bless, and prosper His people. The pledge to ensure these blessings, combined all the perfections of the divine nature, and all the energy of divine providence. *Omnipotence was enlisted to secure what divine truth had uttered.* Hence, the faithfulness of God constituted a fortification for the protection of Zion, *invincible in its nature, and permanent in its existence.* Not walls, nor towers, nor bulwarks, nor *any fortress of man's device*, could so well secure the interest of Zion, as the *arm of Almighty power* which was engaged to protect the Israel of God.

This was the ground of Zion's confidence in the divine protection. Jehovah was the refuge of his people. For the display of his power he had denominated Mount Zion, "the mountain of his holiness," and the temple, "the house of his glory." This was the place where he recorded His "*Most Holy Name* ;"

the place of the sacred repository of his covenant mercies ; and the place where he required his people to assemble to offer their sacrifices, to pay homage to their heavenly benefactor, and receive the pledges of his covenant love.

When confederate kings of the surrounding idolatrous nations assembled their forces to besiege Jerusalem, the pious chieftains of Zion confided in God as their refuge, their stronghold, their impregnable fortress. His name was their strong tower, they ran into it, and were safe. When the enemy saw this, they marveled, were troubled, and retreated. The dread of Israel fell upon them. They were discomfited with fear. And often, their well-concerted invasions were broken, as ships are dashed to pieces upon the rocks, by the fierceness of tempestuous winds and waves.

Hence in the exercise of faith in all that God had spoken, and promised, and sworn, Israel declared, "The Lord is our defence, and the Holy One of Israel is our king. O ! Lord God of Hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee ? Thou hast a mighty arm. Strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand. I will say of the Lord, he is my refuge, and my fortress, my God, in him will I trust. The Lord liveth, blessed be my *rock*, and let the God of my salvation be exalted." Such were the *exultations* of pious *Israel*.

III. Another point proposed for discussion is, *The importance of transmitting the knowledge of the state of Zion and the memorial of her achievements to*

succeeding generations. “Walk about Zion and go round about her; tell the towers thereof; mark ye well her bulwarks; consider her palaces.” But why was such accurate observation required of the situation of Zion? Another clause of the text informs us. “That ye may tell it to the generation following.”

It is evidently one important part of the divine plan of providential government, to bring to pass, events, comprised in the eternal purpose of God, through the instrumentality of subordinate agents, and divinely appointed means. This is evident from the whole tenor of divine revelation, which a single instance is sufficient to illustrate and confirm. When God would accomplish his purpose of delivering Israel from the land of bondage, the event was brought to pass through the instrumentality of Moses as the subordinate agent under God, and by the means divinely prescribed to influence Pharaoh to consent to let the people depart from Egypt. All the concomitant circumstances of that case, from the birth of Moses to the emancipation of the tribes of Israel from Egyptian bondage, were comprised in the divine purpose, and brought to pass under the superintendence of divine Providence, through the instrumentality of subordinate agency and appointed means. So, in other cases, agents and means are embraced in the divine plan to execute the purposes of Jehovah. It is on this principle that we predicate the importance of transmitting to pos-

terity the wonderful works of God in relation to the circumstances and progress of Zion.

It is the *revealed* purpose of God, that Zion should live in every age, and that the cause of holiness should triumph and prevail till the consummation of time. These events are peculiarly calculated to promote the divine glory, and to people heaven with an innumerable host of redeemed souls.

To accomplish this purpose of grace, God has appointed, as one special means, *that all who have experienced the wonders of His love, should declare and testify the same to their fellow men, and adopt every practicable and appropriate measure to communicate to posterity the knowledge of all the works of divine mercy which have fallen within their observation.* This *single point* of the divine plan of operation, has resulted in the inspired compilation of the whole body of the *sacred writings*, which have brought down, even to us, at this late period of the world, the history of creation, the history of God's providential government, the immensity of His love, the condescensions of His mercy, and the inflexibility of His justice, with the means and subordinate agency by which the divine purposes have been accomplished from generation to generation, since the day that first dawned on the garden of Eden, to give light to the first parents of mankind. Thus, wherever the Bible diffuses its rays of inspired illumination, there the wonderful works of God in ages past, are made known to the inhabitants of our world, to teach man-

kind the knowledge of the true God, His laws, His grace, His works, His power, and His glory, that they may be influenced to submit to His government, to accept of His mercy through the merits of His Son, and choose *Him* for their everlasting portion.

To declare to all around what God has done for His people, and to commit to posterity the means of knowing the wonders which God has done for generations past, forms a principal and most important rule of duty for all who are called to minister at the holy altar—for all who are intrusted with the charge of a family—for all who sustain offices of rule and trust in Zion—for all who are employed in the education of youth, and for all who have souls to save, and would wish to glorify God, by being made instrumental in the salvation of their fellow men. It was on this principle, and to forward the accomplishment of such purposes, that the friends of ancient Zion were required to make accurate observations on the order, and beauty, and strength of the mountain of holiness, and the immunities of God's covenant people in the days of their spiritual prosperity, that a faithful report might be prepared and registered, and committed to succeeding generations, that the works and ways of God might be declared to men as long as time should last. Parents were commanded to teach them to their children. Thus said God to ancient Israel, "These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children; and shall talk of them

when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. Teach them to thy sons, and thy son's sons, that they may teach them to their children."

In obedience to this divine command, the pious Israelites of old declared thus, "We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us what works thou didst in their days in times of old. We will not hide them from their children, showing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and His strength and His wonderful works that He hath done. For He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children, that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children, that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments. For this God is our God forever and ever ; He will be our guide even unto death.

CHAPTER XVII.

Improvement of the foregoing Subject.

THE subject will be improved under *one* general remark, viz., that the continued Zion of God, under the dispensation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, is not *less* divinely ornamented, fortified, and occupied as the mutual residence of God and His people, the *manner* of which is required to be the constant observation of all her friends, the subject-matter of their periodical reports, and the substance of their perpetual instruction from one generation to another, till the whole work of divine grace on earth is completed.

“Zion” is but another term to denote the Church of God from its commencement to its consummation. The Church is established on an immovable foundation, and is ornamented and fortified in a manner which will effectually secure its perpetuity, and the salvation of all its true spiritual members.

The Church is built upon a Rock. Its foundation

is Christ the Lord, the Rock of Ages, which can never be moved. "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, and a sure foundation." In allusion to this foundation, said Christ to Peter, "Upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Saints are said to be "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ *Himself* being the chief corner-stone." "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Thus, He who came down from heaven, and died for sinners, is the foundation of the Church.

Again. *The Church is divinely ornamented.* The gifts and graces of the Divine Spirit, constitute its holy adornings. All the *magnificence*, and *beauty*, and *riches*, and *glory*, of the ancient temple, and the temple-worship of ancient Zion, were but types and shadows of the still more glorious adornings of the Spirit of grace. To beautify the Church, the Holy Spirit descends from heaven to convince of sin, to regenerate the souls of men, to sanctify their natures, to purify their hearts, and thus prepare them for usefulness on earth, and for admission into the kingdom of glory. By this divine process, *some* pardoned rebels of the totally depraved and ruined race of men, are filled with an holy zeal for the promotion of God's glory and the salvation of sinners, and are providentially qualified for public service in the Church. After due preparation, and a voluntary consecration of them-

selves to the laborious and self-denying work, they are sent, and go forth into the vineyard of the Lord to proclaim the messages of His love and grace, to preach the gospel of His kingdom, and to build up the Church in faith, in holiness, in purity, and in gospel order, on the ruins of the kingdom of darkness. Such are the holy adornings of the Christian Church, which render her, in the view of all holy beings, more beautiful than Tirzah, (the celebrated beautiful city of Ephraim,) and more comely than Jerusalem, with all the splendor of her palaces, and all the magnificence and glory of her once celebrated temple.

Again. *The Church is divinely fortified.* The dispensation of the covenant of grace, confirmed by the promise and oath of God, which effectually secures the salvation of every true believer in Jesus Christ, constitutes the fortifications of the Christian Church, of which the towers and bulwarks of ancient Zion were but types and shadows.

The covenant of grace, in its most extensive sense, comprises the whole system of man's redemption. It comprehends the eternal purpose of God to save sinners of Adam's fallen race; the distinct parts of the work which each divine person in the adorable Trinity engaged to perform in the economy of redemption; the manner in which rebels are subdued and brought into voluntary subjection to the divine government; their consequent holy exercises, and correspondent exertions to promote the glory of God and their own salvation; the ground of their security from final apostacy by the

mighty power and sanctifying grace of God ; and the final result of the whole process of grace by their un-failing and happy entrance into an incorruptible inheritance in heaven. Hence the salvation of all who are saved, of every tongue, and people, and nation of the earth is represented in Scripture as being a work of divine "*Grace*, according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

The security of man's salvation rests exclusively on the merit, the efficacy, and power of divine grace. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, are co-workers in the redemption of man, and the eternal Godhead stands pledged by *promise* and *oath* to secure the salvation of all true penitents and believers in Christ. The benevolent Father provided for their salvation by the gift of his Son to atone for sin. The compassionate Redeemer purchased their redemption with his own precious blood. The merciful spirit regenerates, sanctifies, and fits them for heaven. And to all the recipients of divine mercy, the grace of salvation is made sure by the covenant faithfulness of God, in fulfillment of his promise and oath, upon the same principle that Abraham's blessing was ensured. The divine promise to Abraham was confirmed by an oath. So, to all the heirs of life eternal, God has ratified his *promise* by an *oath*, evincing the unchangeableness of his purpose, the certainty of his covenant faithfulness ; and the confirmation of their hope of future blessedness. To this effect are the following remarkable words of an apostle : " When God

made promise to Abraham, he swore by himself, saying, surely, blessing I will bless thee." (Applying this divine confirmation to the Christian Church, he adds,) "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."

Such are the fortifications of the Christian Church. The powers of darkness, and the gates of hell combined in malignity, with all their deceitful policy and infernal effort, can never prevail against the Church, nor destroy the soul of one of its truly spiritual members. God himself, by the mighty power of his grace, constitutes the fortress, the hiding place of His Church. His wisdom, His purpose, His omnipotence are combined and engaged to guard, defend, and perpetuate the Church from generation to generation, till the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, shall become a great mountain and fill the whole earth.

Again. *The Church is the mutual earthly residence of God and his people.* The infinite and incomprehensible God, the great Lord of creation, condescends to take up His terrestrial abode with His people in His Church. "This is my rest (said He,) here will I dwell." How sweetly are these words of Jehovah versified by the celebrated Dr. Watts :

"The God of Jacob chose the hill
Of Zion for his ancient rest;

And Zion is his dwelling still,
His Church is with his presence blest."

Where God records His name, there His children love to abide. Where the people of God assemble for spiritual worship, there Jehovah delights to dwell. Thus the Church which sinners despise or neglect, is divinely constituted the earthly paradise of saints, the royal terrestrial palace of the King of Kings, prepared by grace for the mutual residence of Jehovah and His people in their generations to the end of time. In the progress and consummation of divine grace, the dispersed of Judah, the outcasts of Israel, and all the Gentile nations, from the rising to the setting sun, will be gathered into this earthly resting-place of Zion, to dwell with God their king, during the Millennial reign of righteousness, which will be a prelude to the enjoyment of an eternal rest in heaven. Then there will be one fold and one shepherd, one Lord, one faith, and one baptism; the Church will be blessed; the songs of Zion will constitute the music of the ransomed nations; the earth will be a renovated Eden, and be filled with the glory of the Lord.

Lastly, It may be inferred, *That the wonderful works of God in the dispensation of His grace, should be the subject matter of the observation of the friends of Zion, the substance of their periodical reports, and the discriminating theme of perpetual instruction from one generation to another, till the whole work of grace on earth is accomplished. This comprehends all the duties implied in "Walking about Zion,"*

to mark, consider, and declare to generations following the glory of God, the power of His truth, the purity of His doctrines and religion, the condescensions of His love, the unsearchable riches and mysteries of His grace, and the greatness of His salvation.

Ministers of the gospel are required to “*Walk about Zion*” by a constant attention to the state of their flock ; by “preaching the word in season, and out of season” as ability enables, and opportunities of doing good may occur ; and by devoting their time, talents, influence, energies, and property, to the promotion of God’s glory, the conversion of sinners, and the general peace, prosperity, and extension of the Redeemer’s kingdom.

Legislators, and all public officers of trust and authority, from the highest executive officer of a nation to the magistrate of a city ward or country town, are required to walk about Zion, by their respective enactments of laws for the promotion of civil and religious liberty, the suppression of vice, the encouragement of virtue, and by their official and authoritative measures, to enforce and sustain the majesty and dignity of such laws for the promotion of the general good of mankind.

All members of the Church, according to their several ability, are required to “*Walk about Zion,*” by their uniform attendance on the worship of the sanctuary and the ordinances of God’s house, by their united observance of the rules of discipline which Christ has instituted to reclaim offenders in the

Church, to preserve order and peace, which are essential to the prosperity of Zion, and also, by contributing of their substance for such support of divine ordinances as existing circumstances may require.

All heads of families are required to “*Walk about Zion,*” by the daily maintenance of the worship of God in their houses; by furnishing their respective households with all necessary means of religious instruction, among which the Holy Bible stands pre-eminent, but should be accompanied with other religious books and periodicals containing general information of the progress of Christianity, the statistics of the Church, and the victories of Zion over the powers of darkness. By such means, the rising generation attain to the knowledge of God’s wonderful works and ways, and the praises of the Lord are perpetuated from generation to generation.

Superintendents and teachers of Sabbath schools, all instructors of youth, from the common school to the classical and professional seminaries of learning, and all who are endowed with talents, and have acquired influence in society, have particular duties assigned them comprised in the general direction of “*Walking about Zion.*” Every opportunity afforded of doing good which falls within the compass of their ability and respective sphere of action, if faithfully improved, may be considered a tour about Zion, and may be the subject of observation, of record, of report and publication as the importance of the case, or circumstances

may be deemed expedient, for the benefit of the present and future generations.

Tract distributors are required to "*Walk about Zion,*" and hurry the speed of those flying messengers of grace, which warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come, and denounce the awful terrors of God's holy displeasure, if the terms of His mercy are rejected.

Young converts to the love, faith, and obedience of the gospel of Jesus Christ, are required to "Walk about Zion," by announcing—"Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he has done for my soul."

Little boys and girls who love their Saviour, are required to "*Walk about Zion,*" by telling their school-fellows and associates about the loveliness of Jesus, who came down from heaven and died for sinners, and by endeavoring to persuade them to submit to his terms of mercy and salvation.

Thus, and in like manner, the wonderful works of God and the achievements of Zion may be told from generation to generation, till all the purposes of divine grace shall be accomplished, the ordinances of time be dissolved for ever, and the further worship of Jehovah be conducted in *one eternal protracted meeting in the upper temple of celestial glory.*

In Conclusion.

Let every hearer ask the solemn questions—What have *I* done to favor Zion? What report have *I* been

making out by my life and conversation, my precepts and examples, that will tell favorably to the cause of religion when I am dead and gone? What have I done to beautify the Church, to promote its order, to increase its strength, ornament its institutions, and recommend its ordinances to the observance of mankind? What have I done to seek the salvation of my own soul, and the souls of my family and friends, to promote the cause of Zion in my neighborhood, or to send the gospel, the Bible, and a tract to the heathen, to tell their perishing millions that a Saviour has died to redeem their souls from death? What legacy of usefulness to Zion am I preparing to bequeath to my generation, and by them to be transmitted to the next generation, and onward in progression, to promote the prosperity of the Church, and aid the glorious work of evangelizing the world, when I am laid mouldering in the dust? O let the inquiry come home to every hearer's conscience with deep and thrilling anxiety. In all my observations and walks about Zion, in sight of her blood-stained cross, in hearing of her trumpet of alarm, invitations and warnings, in view of her rising splendor, certain victory over the powers of darkness, and in view of her eternally glorified state in heaven, what have I done to be a sharer in her blessings to glorify God, to serve my generation, to prepare for death, and what report have I in preparation to be handed in to my judge on the great day of final retribution?

Let every hearer inquire further—What shall I

wish I had done to promote this blessed work of God, when I am languishing on my dying bed, the world receding, eternity opening, my soul fluttering at the solemn adieu of the tenement of clay, and trembling to appear at the bar of the dread tribunal to receive the award of an eternal destination? O then, what shall I wish that I had done to promote the interests of Zion?

Let all the friends of Jesus inquire, thus :

Should I be *saved*, and mount upwards in eternal ages to sing the wonders of redeeming love, and from those immeasurable heights of the celestial paradise, be permitted to look down to this little spot of world where I received such an immortal existence, and be enabled, with celestial accuracy, to compute the full price of an immortal soul, and the indescribable glories of its salvation, what, then, *shall I wish* I had done to promote the glory of God, the interest of the Church, and the salvation of perishing sinners?

But, let all impenitent sinners inquire thus ; Should I be damned, and sink down in eternal torment with the enemies of God and haters of his church, where thickest darkness prevails, and heaviest billows of damnation roll forever ; and from the bottomless deeps of that dread lake of horror, "where hope never comes," should I be permitted to lift up my baleful eyes to this spot of earth where my sins were committed, my guilt contracted, and my condemnation sealed in view of the Saviour's open arms for my salvation, and after gazing with tenfold horror upon that door of mercy

once open, but *now* forever shut, should I further be permitted to glance a still increased despairing look to Abraham's bosom, and see all my Christian relatives there in glory, and I lost, for ever lost! O then, and there, in the tormenting flames of endless punishment, what shall I wish that I had done, to seek mercy for my own sinful soul, while the door of mercy was open, and the once crucified Saviour calling upon me to seek the Lord while he may be found, to call upon Him while He is near, and to take the water of life freely? Oh, "stop! poor sinner—stop—and *think*—before you farther go!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

Perfection and Imperfection of true Christian Character :

Illustrated from the Scripture Biography of Ancient Saints, and the common experience of all Modern Evangelical Christians.

Job i. 8, chap. ix. 20, in connection.

THE first verse of the text contains the words of the Lord to Satan in relation to Job's piety. "And the Lord said unto Satan, hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?"

The ninth chapter and twentieth verse contains words of Job concerning himself. "If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse."

The Lord declared that Job was *perfect*. Job affirmed that he was *imperfect*. What shall we say

to these things? Is there a contradiction between the Lord and His servant Job? To this question, the following reply was once made by a person professing godliness. "If the Lord said that Job was *perfect*, and Job said that he was *not perfect*, which am I to believe—God, or man?" The sentiment suggested by this reply was, that there was an absolute contradiction between the Lord and Job—that the Lord spake the truth, and was to be believed; but that Job's assertion was unfounded, and, consequently, not worthy of credence. But how, then, could Job have spoken by divine inspiration, "as he was moved by the Holy Ghost?" On the supposition that there is a contradiction between the Lord and Job, and that one of them is to be believed and the other not, an absurdity would unavoidably follow, to which no believer in the divine inspiration of the Bible would ever be willing to subscribe.

The object of this discourse is to show that there is no contradiction between them. They both spake the truth, and the words of both are entitled to equal credit

In discoursing from the above-mentioned passages of Scripture in connection, we shall attempt to illustrate, and prove, that all the real friends of God in this life, are both *perfect* and *imperfect*. Job was *perfect*, for God affirmed the fact; yet, Job was *imperfect*, for such is the testimony of his experience, given under the sanction of *divine inspiration*. The same is true of every real child of God in this life.

All the heirs of salvation are both *perfect* and *imperfect*.

In the illustration and proof of this doctrine, we shall *First* show some of the different senses in which the word *perfect* is used in Scripture. *Secondly*, show in what respects all the real children of God are *perfect* in this life. . And, *Thirdly*, show in what respects they are *imperfect*.

I. It is proposed to show some of the different senses in which the word *perfect* is used in Scripture.

Among the various significations of the term, as used in Scripture, a selection of the *two* following usages of the word, is sufficient for our present purpose. *First*, it is used to signify sinless obedience to the divine law ; and, *Secondly*, to signify the sincerity of the heart, the reality of a gracious state, and an eminent degree of piety. When the term is used to express the *moral obligation* which all rational creatures are under, to yield obedience to the laws of their Creator, it signifies Sinless Perfection. Angels in heaven are under moral obligation to be perfectly holy. They are so ; and it is the duty of all men to be like them. Hence, the law of God requires perfect holiness of heart and life. The divine requirement is based upon the eternal rule of right. The language of God to man is, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the mind, and with all the strength." "Be

ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

In describing the perfection of an happy soul in heaven, an apostle says, "But ye are come unto Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect."

Adverting to his own experience, the same apostle declares, that he had not attained to that degree of perfection. His words are, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect."

In the passages above quoted, the word *perfect* is evidently used to signify *sinless perfection*. The angels in heaven, and the spirits of just men in glory, are sinlessly perfect. And it is the duty of all men on earth to be like them, perfectly holy, because God commands them to be so. The divine command is righteous, holy, and reasonable. Nothing less than perfection in holiness could be required of man, consistent with the divine perfections and government. This is man's moral obligation to his Creator, and nothing but a propensity to *sin* hinders him from being what God commands him to be, and what he ought to be.

There are other passages of Scripture, in which the word *perfect* is used to denote sincerity of grace, or eminent degrees of piety. Thus, Gen. vi. 9, "Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generations." He was sincere in his profession of friendship to his Creator. He was eminently pious. He "walked

with God." The same was affirmed of Job. "There is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man." In the Book of Psalms, xxxvii. 37, is a passage of like import. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." Also, in Philippians iii. 15, an apostle said, "Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." Sincerity of heart before God, and an eminent degree of piety, must be the amount of the perfection alluded to in these passages of Holy Writ, unless the express declaration of the inspired writers is contradicted, who said, Eccl. vii. 20, "There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not." And 1 John i. 8, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

It is, hence, evident, that the word *perfect*, when used to represent the state of the glorified spirits in heaven, and the moral obligation of all men on earth to be holy, signifies sinless perfection. But, when used to represent the *facts* in relation to the real state and character of God's people in this world, the sincerity of gracious exercises and eminent degrees of piety are all that is intended.

II. It was proposed to show in what respects all the real friends of God in this life are perfect.

All true believers are perfect in Christ Jesus. Christ is the first cause, the last end, the height and depth, the length and breadth, of all their perfection. In Him believers are perfect in righteousness, in holiness, in justification, sanctification, and complete

redemption. In proof of these points, the following Scriptures are explicit. Eph. iv. 8, &c. : "Wherefore, He saith, when He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. For the perfecting of the saints, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Also, Col. i. 27, &c. : "To whom (i. e. the saints) God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you the hope of glory ; whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man *perfect* in Christ Jesus."

Hence, it may be observed, that in Christ all true believers are perfect in *Righteousness*. Thus said Paul to the Phillipians iii. 9, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law ; but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Also, Rom. i. 17. "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." Chap. iii. 21, 22, "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which is by faith in Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe." Also, chap. x. 4, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

Again. In Christ all true believers are perfect in *Holiness*. Eph. iv. 23, "And be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that ye put on the new man, which after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness." Also, 1 Thess. iii. 13, "To the end He may establish your hearts unblameable before God." In Heb. xii. 10, the apostle declared that the chastenings of God were for the profit of his children that they "might be partakers of His holiness;" and surely, His i. e. God's holiness is perfect.

In Christ Jesus, all true believers are perfectly *Justified*. Justification signifies a free and full pardon of all sin, and a title to the blessings of eternal life. That all true believers in Christ are perfectly justified, is evident from the Bible. Acts xiii. 39: "And by Him (Christ,) all who believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Rom. v. 1: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." V. 9: "Much more, then, being justified by his blood, we shall be saved through him." Chap. viii. 30: "Whom he called, them he also justified." And 1 Cor. vi. 11: "But ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

Again. All true believers in Christ are perfectly *sanctified*. Sanctification is a progressive work of God's Spirit on the heart, by which the power of sin is subdued. It commences at regeneration, and is consummated when the soul is prepared for heaven. Hence, all who are "called to be saints" are said, also,

to be sanctified in Christ Jesus, and by the Spirit of God—1 Cor. i. 2, and vi. 11. Christ, “the captain of their salvation was made perfect through sufferings”—Heb. ii. 10. “He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of one”—Chap. ii. 11. “For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified”—Chap. x. 14. Hence, all true believers are one in Christ, under the sanctifying influences of the Spirit to subdue their sins and fit them for glory; and by the one offering of Christ for them, they are perfected for ever.

Furthermore. In Christ, all true believers are perfectly *Redeemed from all sin*, from the curse of the law, from the sting of death, and from the power of the grave. Thus it is written, Tit. ii. 14, “Christ gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity.” 1 John, i. 7: “The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.” Gal. iii. 13: Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.” Once, Christ said by his prophet, Hos. xiii. 14, “I will ransom them from the power of the grave. I will redeem them from death. O! death, I will be thy plagues. O! grave, I will be thy destruction.” This furnishes the believer with a song of victory, when his “mortal shall put on immortality.” Then will be brought to pass the saying quoted by the apostle, “Death is swallowed up in victory. O! death, where is thy sting? O! grave, where is thy victory. Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”—1 Cor. xv. 54, &c.

Now, all this *Ransom* of believers is perfected through the efficacy of Christ's atoning blood. An apostle said, "Forasmuch as ye *know* that ye were *not* redeemed by corruptible things ; but with the precious blood of Christ." And all the redeemed will sing, "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and people, and tongue, and nation."

Thus, in Christ, all true believers are perfect in righteousness, holiness, justification, sanctification and complete redemption. The Captain of their salvation is perfect. The grace manifested towards them is perfect. And by virtue of union to Christ, their covenant head, and oneness with him by faith, *they*, also are perfect as He is perfect ; for thus the Lord himself declared, Luke vi. 40. "Every one that is perfect shall be as his Master."

III. It was proposed to show in what respects all the real friends of God in this life are *imperfect*.

Christians are imperfect in their *knowledge* both of *God* and of *themselves*. "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than hell, what canst thou know? How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

Christians are imperfect in the knowledge of *themselves*. Thus it is written, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it? How little do Christians know what depths

of sinful propensities lie concealed in the hidden recesses of their own hearts !

Christians are imperfect also in their *understanding* of the Scriptures, both doctrines and duties. Thus an apostle declared, " Now, I see through a glass, darkly ; now, I know in part." O ! how little do Christians know of the sublime mysteries of godliness which are treasured up in the system of eternal truth !

Christians are imperfect in their *affections*. Their love to God and holiness is imperfect. It is the duty of all men to love God with all the powers of their souls, even as perfectly as the angels do in heaven. But, what Christian can say, in truth, that he thus loves. The apostle John says, " Perfect love casteth out fear. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." Where is the Christian who is perfectly free from all disquieting fears ? These are fruits of the imperfection and weakness of love. As a proof, therefore, that Christians are not made perfect in love, they are often troubled with anxious fears. Neither are Christians perfect in filial fear of offending God. " For in many things (says James) we offend all." If love were perfect, no offence would be given either to God or man. But, because love is imperfect, therefore Christians often give offence.

Lastly. Christians are imperfect in all *their religious external performances*. In reading, meditation, and prayer, they are often troubled with evil thoughts, wandering minds, and vain imaginations. What Christian reads the Word of God, without occasional

seasons of absence of mind? The eye may see every word, and the lips pronounce it; but, where is the mind? Imperceptibly, it has broken loose from the object of its attention, and, like the wandering meteor is floating uncontrolled making imaginary excursions through distant climes and regions! Does the Christian retire for serious, solemn, and devout meditation, how often does the mind escape from confinement to the duty, and instead of being devoutly elevated to the sublime contemplation of heavenly things, behold! it is prostrated to the vague reflections, or low anticipations of some uncertain and unsatisfying objects of this perishing world! And, even, when engaged in prayer, while eyes and hands are lifted towards heaven, and lips and voice addressing the throne of God, how often is the heart criminally disengaged, filled with wandering thoughts, or musing on the syren dreams of fancy, all which render the external performance unprofitable to the soul, and unacceptable in the sight of God. Where is the Christian who does not mourn over such seasons of imperfection in duty? Whether the lamentable fact be realized or not, every religious performance, either in the closet, around the family altar, or when convoked in the sanctuary of the Lord, is found, on review, to be defective and tarnished with sinful imperfection.

Is trouble, affliction, and danger near, and does the Master say in His providence, "Tarry ye here and watch," while I retire and pray for you? Alas! before one hour is past, like the disciples of old, the

Christian's eyes are heavy, he falls asleep. And though awaked again and again by his vigilant Master, who sees an enemy approaching, and gives warning of the danger; yet, after an alarm, the propensity to drowsiness prevails, till the Christian is found asleep again at his sentinel post! O, how often has Jesus occasion to complain of His friends, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?"

Thus are Christians both perfect and imperfect in this life. But, to render the subject still more obvious, we shall now close this last head of discourse by introducing Scripture testimony to prove the point under consideration. The witnesses now to be adduced, are of no ordinary character. They are men "who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost:" who were inspired of God to write portions of the sacred Scriptures, from which all our knowledge of true religion and morals, of doctrine and duty, of immortality and glory is derived; and being under the superintendence of God himself, every word they spake, every sentence they wrote, must be considered as incontestible truth. Each witness will now be required, on the stand, to present to the audience a *certificate* of his positive acceptance with God as a man of holiness, made so by the power of divine grace, approved, sealed, and acknowledged as such by the eternal God, and entered upon the record of his everlasting truth; after examining which, the testimony will be taken.

The *point now to be proved* is—that those who are

perfect in God's esteem, are lamentably *imperfect* in their *own* estimation.

Noah, who lived both *before* and *after* the flood, shall be the first witness. The *certificate* of his acceptance with God reads thus: "Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generations; and Noah walked with God." Now let us hear the testimony of his experience after he built the ark and survived the universal deluge. "And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard, and he drank of the wine and was drunken." Was not Noah both perfect and imperfect?

Job shall be the next witness. His certificate reads thus: "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil." Now, hear Job's testimony of himself. "If I justify myself, my own mouth shall condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse. Then Job answered the Lord and said—I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. *Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*"

King David shall be the next witness. His certificate from God reads thus: "I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart." Hear, now, David's subsequent confession. "I have sinned against the Lord. For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me. For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease, and there is no soundness in my

flesh. *My strength faileth because of my iniquity ; I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord.*"

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, is called next to testify. His certificate reads thus ; " Jesus asked his disciples, whom say ye that I am ? Simon Peter answered—thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. And Jesus answered, and said unto him—blessed art thou Simon Barjona : for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. Jesus said unto him the third time—Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me ? Peter said—Lord, thou knowest all things ; thou knowest that I love thee, Jesus saith unto him—feed my sheep." Now let us hear what this apostle has to testify about his perfection. Perhaps, he felt as others have done, who think they are perfect, when he said to his Lord and Master—" Though all men deny thee yet will not I." But what did he say when a maid told him that he was one of Christ's disciples ? "*I know not what thou sayest !*" What said he when another charged him with being a follower of the *Nazarene* ? " Then he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man." And what did Peter *do* when the cock crew, and when Jesus *looked* at him ? "*He went out, and wept bitterly.*" What was his confession on another occasion ? "*I am a sinful man, O Lord.*"

The testimony of Paul, another apostle, is called for. The certificate of his divine commission to preach the gospel, reads thus : " He is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and

the children of Israel. Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness, in the hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; but hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me, according to the commandment of God our Saviour." Tit. i. 1-3.

Question. Did Paul consider himself perfectly sanctified, or free from sin? Let his own words be the answer. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect. I am carnal, sold under sin. For I *know* that in *me* (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing. The *good* that I would, I do not; but the *evil* which I would not, that I do. That which I do, I allow not. I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me." On cross-examination of this witness, suppose the question be asked, Was not Paul describing the feelings and experience of his unregenerate state in the testimony above given. Let the witness answer—"I delight in the laws of God after the inward man." [What unregenerate man could ever, in truth, say this?] Let the witness proceed and repeat the answer to the question on cross-examination. "I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" It is

said to have been a Roman law, once, that a murderer was punished by fastening upon his back, with strong iron bands, the dead carcase of the murdered persons, never to be removed during the life of the murderer. Probably the exclamation of the apostle alluded to that horrible mode of punishment.

The certificate of the Apostle John shows that he left all and followed Christ; that he was identically "the disciple whom Jesus loved;" and that he declared—"We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Doubtless he was perfect in Christ Jesus. But, what was his testimony in relation to his *sinless perfection*? Let him testify. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."

King Solomon's certificate states that he was the wisest man that ever lived before or after him on the earth. Of course, he was the wisest of all that class of "Holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," including all the inspired writers of the Bible. Under the spirit of divine inspiration his testimony was written, and stands thus, on the record of eternal truth—"For there is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good and sinneth not." Such testimony must be conclusive. On it, in the aggregate, we rest the doctrine, that all the real friends of God, in this life, are both *perfect* and *imperfect*. In Christ, their covenant head, they are *perfect*. In their own personal character, life, experience, and religious performances, they are *imperfect*.

CHAPTER XIX.

Improvement of the foregoing Subject.

ON a review of the subject, we see in what manner the declarations of the Lord and Job (though apparently contradictory) are perfectly reconcilable, so that there is not the least shadow of contradiction between them. The Lord spake of Job's sincerity of grace. In this respect Job was perfect. He feared God, and hated evil. He was a sincere worshipper of God, eminently pious, and, in *Messiah*, his covenant head, he was perfect. This was the import of the Lord's testimony concerning his servant Job.

Job's testimony of himself had particular reference to his own personal exercises and character. Such was his conviction of short coming in duty, and remaining inbred corruption, that he could not justify himself, nor say that he was perfect, for such self-confident boasting would only add to his imperfection, and prove him perverse. In this view of the subject, his feelings and sentiments were in accordance with the declarations of his Maker, and thus we have the

united testimony of both God and man, that notwithstanding his imperfections, Job was a sincere, upright, and perfect man, a friend of God and an heir of glory.

2. From a review of the subject, we remark, that an assurance of faith does not tend to puff up its possessors with pride and self-exaltation. The witnesses who have testified on this case, had, each of them, the approbation of God to confirm them in that faith, with which is connected the unfailing promise of eternal life. They had the witness of the Spirit that they were among the number of those who were chosen of God unto salvation ; whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life in heaven ; who pass from death unto life by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost ; who are included in the covenant of God's unchangeable love ; who are heirs through the grace of the Lord Jesus, to the heavenly inheritance that fadeth not away ; and who have the assurance of God's promise and oath, that he will keep them, that " they shall never perish, that none shall pluck them out of his hand, that death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, should be able to separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Consequently, they had just as much assurance of their eternal happiness, as they had, that the word of God is true and that his promises will never fail.

But, what effect did their assurance of faith and salvation have upon their minds ? Were they puffed

up with pride and self-exaltation? Did they boast of sinless perfection, or even say we have no sin, we have no accusing conscience? No, my hearers; such was not their language. Such were not their feelings, nor their sentiments. We have heard their testimony, and are bound to believe them when they acknowledge their imperfections, confess their sins, and implore the blessings of pardoning mercy. Doubtless, the nearer they lived to God, the more clearly they saw their own imperfections and mourned over them. The adversary desired to have them, that he might sift them as wheat; but there was *One* who prayed for them, and this was the reason why their faith failed not. A sense of their unworthiness brought them low before God; and the conclusion of all their experience was—"By grace we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God." Hence appears the propriety of the remark, that an assurance of faith and salvation, according to the eternal purpose of God in Christ Jesus, secured to all who are born of the Spirit, by covenant, promise, oath, and unchangeable love of God, is so far from puffing up believers with spiritual pride and self-exaltation, that nothing has a more powerful tendency to excite in them lowliness of mind, and self-abasedness before God, in view of their *imperfections* and consequent *unworthiness*.

3. From a review of the subject, we discover the foundation of the error of professing to have attained to a state of perfect sanctification, or entire freedom from the commission of sin in thought, word, or deed;

all which, in amount, can signify nothing less than to have attained to a state of sinless perfection. This error arises for want of proper distinctions. It is admitted that God's command lays all mankind under moral obligations to be perfectly holy. The least sin in thought, word, or deed, is positively forbidden in the divine law. "Be ye holy, be ye perfect," is God's command. It is further admitted, that the divine command requiring mankind to be perfectly holy, even *sinlessly perfect*, is a reasonable, a righteous command. Nothing less could be required consistent with the divine government. It is the reasonable duty of all Adam's race to keep, to observe, and to obey this command in its fullest extent ; and no obstructions of any description can hinder any man from perfection in holiness, except those which belong to the sinful propensities of his fallen nature. All this must be admitted as being consistent with the very nature of the divine command, and man's moral obligation to obey.

But, does all this prove the matter-of-fact, that any man ever *did* attain to a state of sinless perfection in this life ? If so, the propositions and conclusion must stand thus : God commands man to be perfectly holy. The command is reasonable, and man is under moral obligation to obey it. *Therefore some men are sinlessly perfect.* Let the argument be shortened, that its absurdity may more obviously appear. God commands. Mankind *ought* to obey. Therefore, mankind *do* obey ! Who can help seeing the absurdity of such a conclusion. Though the

propositions are admitted as correctly in accordance with Scripture and reason, yet the whole tenor of Scripture disproves the conclusion, and establishes the matter-of-fact that no man on earth ever was, nor is now, sinlessly perfect. Hence, to profess to have attained to such a state, or to hold it forth as a point of Bible doctrine, or to make it a test of Christian experience, is a dangerous error, sustained only by confounding portions of the sacred Scriptures which are obviously distinct in their significations. The Bible represents the true friends of God, both perfect and imperfect, without contradiction. All true believers are perfect in Christ Jesus. Many of them have attained to the perfection of eminence in piety, but none to sinless perfection. The reason is plain, viz., no man on earth *is* what he *ought to be*.

The dangerous tendency of the error now in question, does not consist in exertions to become more and more holy, and conformed to God in the image of His love; for nothing should be considered more desirable than such a constant aim at growth in grace, and aspiring energies to attain to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. But the dangerous tendency of this error consists in the facts, that pretensions of attainment to a state of sinless perfection, lead to self-exaltation, that this is a snare of the devil, and that even real Christians are liable to fall into it.

The old Adversary is cunning, sagacious, and experienced in the wiles of seduction. Ever since the

apostacy of man, his malignant efforts have been upon the stretch to destroy those whom he can destroy, and to worry those whom he cannot devour. To carry his purposes into effect, new stratagems of deception are constantly devised, and brought into exercise, to supply the place of those which are worn out and become useless. Hence, long since, persecution, fire and faggot, have been laid aside, and the more successful wiles of counterfeiting God's work of grace, have characterized the movements of the Adversary. If unregenerate sinners can be kept quiet, well; if not, the Adversary transforms himself into the appearance of a messenger of truth, merely to pervert the truth of God, to mislead inquiring souls, and to prevent alarmed sinners from seeking for mercy on the terms of the gospel. In mask and garb resembling a guide of souls to heaven, the first object of the Adversary in his experiment with anxious souls is, to quiet their consciences by some visionary evidence that they are converted, or, at least, *that they have got religion*. The next step is to fill them with enrapturing pleasure in feelings akin to perfect happiness. And the cap of the climax is, to influence them, without delay, to enrol their names on the list of some religious sect, merely to answer sectarian party purposes, without a change of heart, and without the least degree of experimental knowledge of the nature of sin, of the depravity of their hearts, of the law of God, or of the knowledge of Christ and holiness. Thus prepared, Satan can easily manage and

hurry them forward to the possession of perfection in holiness, filled with all the flaming zeal necessary to remodel religion, and to reform churches by influencing the members to renounce their old-fashioned orthodoxy, to remove their old-fashioned orthodox ministers out of office, and, by convincing the old-fashioned, regenerated, pious, prayerful, devoted servants of the Lord, that they have always been in the dark about religion, until, behold! the true light shines upon them. And what is the light and doctrine of this new discovery? The amount is this, that ministers and all lay members of churches are good for nothing, and know not how to preach nor pray, unless they are perfectly sanctified, or, what is the same, sinlessly perfect; and that all who do not thus believe, and come up to this high ground as the test of their profession and discipleship, are unfit to bear the name of Christian.

Such flaming zeal generally accompanies the promulgation of the doctrine of sinless perfection, that real children of God are liable to be captivated, deceived, and drawn into the error, until they are led to renounce all their former hopeful experience of God's regenerating and justifying grace, and to profess that now, and now only, for the first time in life, they have learned that true religion consists in being able to say, "We have no sin." This, my hearers, is no chimeræ. I have merely described *facts* to which I have been witness. One who had long professed religion, cried out, in my hearing, "Glory to God, I

have not committed one sin in thought, word, nor deed, since three weeks ago last Wednesday morning." Another professor present responded thus, "Blessed be God, I can say so too; I have not committed a sin in thought, word, nor deed, since a fortnight ago last Tuesday." Another person in my hearing said, "I have long been seeking to find out what God is, and I never knew till within the last year." I inquired, "Have you not known the answer to the question, 'What is God?' even from your youth up, as it is stated in the Shorter Catechism with Scripture proofs?" The reply was, "O, away with those old-fashioned orthodox doctrines. I have had my mind so long perplexed with them, that I cannot bear to hear them mentioned!"

Such perfectionism is contrary to the Word of God. It destroys the peace of orderly and well-established churches. It procures the dismissal and disquietude of many sound, orthodox, faithful gospel ministers. It puffs up all unregenerate professors of religion with pride and self-exaltation, and abundantly qualifies them for the work of Satan their great master. And when the feet of God's dear children get entangled in this fanatical snare of the Adversary, the result will be perplexity and innumerable trials, out of which the Lord only can deliver them. Such perfectionism, we hesitate not to aver, is a doctrine, a device, and a work of the Adversary, and will be productive of mischief in exact proportion to its prevalence in the visible Church.

4. A consciousness of imperfection in persons, who have a comfortable evidence to hope that they have experienced a change of heart, affords no reasonable ground of objection to prevent their participation in the privileges of the Church.

How often is it the case that hopefully pious persons hesitate, and postpone the duty of making a public profession of religion from a consciousness of their imperfection, and a sense of their unworthiness to have their names enrolled with the people of God. Such a humiliating sense of unworthiness affords the best evidence of a gracious state, and is, in fact, an indispensable qualification for a profession of religion, while the confident vociferations of "Glory! glory!" boasts of happy feelings and of sinless perfection, afford *evidence* of such suspicious character, that but little confidence can be placed in its validity.

The same remark applies with equal propriety to the qualifications of candidates for the communion of the Lord's Supper. It is not uncommon for real Christians, in view of their imperfections, to feel unworthy to partake of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, not considering that a consciousness of imperfection and unworthiness is an indispensable qualification for the worthy participation of that holy ordinance. Should a candidate for communion proclaim, with a self-confident air, "I am perfectly free from sin, perfectly happy, and feel worthy to partake of the Lord's Supper," abundant evidence would appear that *one* essential qualification for that ordinance was

wanting, viz., *true gospel humility*, without the exercise of which no benefit could be derived from a participation of the ordinance, but rather *condemnation* for an unworthy approach into the guest-chamber of the King of kings, without a wedding garment. On these points let all the candidates for communion "Examine themselves, and so let them eat of that bread and drink of that cup;" not with boasted pretensions of perfection, but with meekness and humility.

In Conclusion.

Lastly. The *imperfections* of God's people constitute their *spiritual warfare*. If they were perfectly free from sin, there would be no conflicting powers in their members. But, nothing on earth is more certain than the existence of perpetual hostility between the flesh and the spirit, between the carnal mind and the regenerate soul of man! Prophets, apostles, and all truly pious persons in every age of the world, have been involved in this contest, because no man has been perfectly free from the motions of sin in his flesh. *Sin in the flesh*, is the amount of the Christian's imperfections; and *sin in the flesh* is the enemy which wars against the spiritual mind. The *flesh* and the *spirit* then, are, the internal *powers* at war, each having *allies* engaged in the combat. On the part of the *flesh*, the allies are the *world* and the *devil*, with all the combined "principalities and powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, and

spiritual wickedness in high places." The allies of the *regenerate soul*, are the adorable persons of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; who are always ready to afford aid when called upon for help after the manner of divine appointment.

The armor of the Christian's warfare consists of a girdle of truth, a breast-plate of righteousness, a shield of faith, a helmet of salvation, a sword of the Spirit, and "all-prayer," an instrument of sound, which never fails, when properly used, to call forth all the allied powers of heaven to assistance.

This *war* commences at the period of revolt from the service of Satan at *regeneration*, and terminates only with the last concluding gasp of the Christian's life. When this *mortal* shall put on *immortality*, then will the victory be complete over the powers of darkness, and the *prize-crown* of eternal glory will be the real Christian's *reward of grace*. *Then*, and *not before*, he will be perfectly free from the last and least propensity to commit sin. And then, and there, will all true believers in Christ be perfectly holy, perfectly happy, and blessed for evermore in their heavenly Father's kingdom.

CHAPTER XX.

The Divine Disposal of Satan and his Works, will now form a General Improvement of the foregoing Compilation of Subjects in final Conclusion of the whole Matter.

AN inspired apostle declared that the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil. The biography of Satan, the history of his works and their destruction are interspersed through the pages of the Holy Bible, from the Book of Genesis to Revelations, in a parallel line of duration, with the existence of the Church of God. After the fall of Satan and his angels from heaven, the infinite Creator displayed his glory in the formation of the solar system of the visible universe, sun, moon, stars, and earth, with its rational inhabitants, formed after the intellectual image of their Creator—with capacities for propagation—for endless increase in knowledge, happiness and glory. Thus, God spake! and the light of the visible heavens—the earth and man commenced existence.

A Church on earth was divinely organized, comprising the persons of *one man and his wife*, constituted, at creation, probationers, subject to divine laws, progenitors of a race destined to replenish the earth, subdue, cultivate, and reign over it, as lords over all inferior creatures of earth besides; and still, themselves, accountable for all their conduct to their Creator, on whom they were daily dependent for every breath and blessing.

In their loins was the whole Church of God, ultimately designed to people heaven, and fill the vacancy of fallen angels in the choir of celestial worshippers around the throne of the infinite Jehovah in the metropolis of *immensity*. The garden of Eden, filled with luxuriant abundance, for the supply of all earthly necessities, was the place divinely appointed and accommodated for their abode. One test, only, of their fidelity was required by their Creator, (constituting the state of their probation,) which was a divine *prohibition* of the fruit of *one tree* in the midst of the garden, on penalty of death. "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying—Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat. But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."

In the garden of Eden, Satan *commenced his works* of perverting *God's word*, and works, and ways on earth, by tempting Eve, the first mother of mankind, to transgress the *first law* of her Creator, by eating

the forbidden fruit for the sole purpose of attaining to the knowledge of "*evil!*" "*Good!*" she knew before; for the fruit of the tree prohibited was good, as a *test* of obedience, if let alone without eating or touching it. But to eat, or touch, was evil, a transgression of a known law of the Creator—a breach of trust—a violation of an express divine command—a "*sin unto death*" of body and soul—a contamination of the whole nature, physical and mental powers, and capacities of the transgressors—and involving their whole race of posterity, then in their loins, in all the natural and moral evils comprised in the penalty of death, consisting of all the evils of life, bodily diseases and death; and eventually the punishment of soul and body in the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

All this Satan knew full well, when he told Eve, as the result of eating the forbidden fruit, "Your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as *gods*, knowing *good* and *evil!*" Alas! poor woman, in innocency! She knew not then, the awful import of that short, tempting word—"evil!" Little did she then think, or know, what the amount of loss, and cost, and wretchedness would be entailed on herself and unborn millions of her race, to gratify the desire of the knowledge of *evil*, by a transgression of her Creator's law of the prohibition of the fruit of *one* tree in that garden of abundance of fruit. But, in the language of Milton—"She plucked, she eat; earth felt the wound; and nature from her seat, sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe, that all was lost."

Then, she learned, that the transgression of God's law was an *evil* deed in her, and became so to her husband, who was tempted by his wife to commit the same deed. Thus, the loss of Eden and the curse of *death* comprised the *evil* of suffering the just penalty of the violation of God's first law to man.

From that fatal hour to the present moment, all the violations of God's laws on earth in every generation, and by whomsoever committed, have been the evil fruit of *Satan's temptations*. The devil has sowed the seed of every species of *tares*, which brought forth the fruit of every sin committed against God, by human transgressions of His laws; and consequently, all the sins of the human race, of every name and nature, since the murder of righteous Abel, have derived their origin from the *works of the devil*, and partake of the same nature of the sins, which cast Satan and his angels out of heaven. The devil has always sowed the seed of tares in the human heart. And, out of the heart of fallen man have proceeded the fruit of the tares, in "evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies, pride, foolishness," covetousness, tumults, war, carnage of the battle-field, overthrow of dynasties, desolation of kingdoms; and all the corruptions, hatred, emulation, strifes, discord, divisions, false doctrines, and anti-Christian errors that ever infested the Church of God: all, all, have derived their origin, nature, and tendency, from the "*Works of the devil.*"

Doubtless Satan well understood the ancient predictions of the prophets in relation to the coming of Messiah to atone for sin, to fulfil all ceremonial types, and shadows, which were divinely designed to show the certainty of the accomplishment of God's revealed purposes in relation to the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom. Hence the most inveterate "works of the devil," during the four thousand years of the world's existence before the birth of Christ, were to tempt the nation of the Jews, (God's covenant people,) to amalgamate their religion with the idolatry of the heathen, and to create discord among the great national family and church of the Jews, whom God had selected from all the fallen nations of the earth to bear the testimonials of his truth and love to mankind, by divinely revealed doctrines and instituted forms of worship, by typical representations of future blessedness; all which, were an abomination in the eyes and ears of the *heathen* world, which constituted the *kingdom of Satan on earth*. Hence, during the first four thousand years of the world Satan, had little to do to keep all the heathen nations of the earth in order under his government. Their religion was purely Satanic; namely, *Idolatry*, a violation of the first great law of the Creator of angels and men. And the Satanic modes and instituted forms of their idolatrous worship, were all in accordance with the vilest propensities of *fallen* human nature, abominable in the sight of a Holy God, and destructive to the *morals, bodies, and souls* of men.

The most laborious, "*works of the devil*," during the period aforesaid, were to stir up discord, harrass with foreboding fears, excite distrust in Divine Providence, raise up invaders, create insurrections, and tempt the covenant Israel of God, the chosen people, the national family, the Jewish Church of the Most High, to cast off the yoke of subjection to their God, and Father, and great Deliverer, who brought them forth out of the house of Egyptian bondage; saved them from the desolation plotted against them at the Red Sea; gave them laws from Mount Sinai; fed them; allayed their thirst in the wilderness; and divided Jordan for their safe passage over into the promised land of Canaan, the type of the celestial Canaan of endless rest in heaven.

Thus, it came to pass during the whole Jewish economy, that such tempting "*works of the devil*," were often the cause of the partial apostacies of individual kings and their subjects, and sometimes of the whole body of the Jewish Church into idolatry, until by divine corrections they were brought to repentance, and return to the spiritual worship of the God of their fathers. And the awful record still testifies that during such seasons of Jewish apostacies from the worship of the true God into the infatuating idolatry of the heathen, divine ordinances were neglected; God's solemn covenant was disregarded; the holy Sabbath was desecated; the institution of matrimony was corrupted; the sanctuary of the Lord was polluted with idols, and idolatrous worship; while kings, and

priests and people were found among the enemies of holiness fighting against God under the banner of Satan, the prince of darkness, and enemy of God and man! Such were the "*works of the devil*" in days of yore, before a Baptist professor of religion existed on the earth.

From the commencement of the gospel dispensation to the present time, Satan's principal work has been to tempt, persecute, corrupt, divide, and if possible, exterminate the Church of Jesus Christ from the earth. During the first ages of Christianity, there were very few schisms in the Church on account of any sentimental departure from any divinely prescribed doctrines or forms of Christian worship. *That* which distinguished real Christians from spurious professors of Christianity was fidelity on the one hand, in the uniform observance of divine institutions; or, indifference, on the other hand, to the observance of divine ordinances and covenant engagements. The faithful in Christ Jesus, were uniformly the objects of Satanic hatred; and hence the heathen emperors of Rome, (who then ruled the *world*, proverbially,) were Satan's agents to persecute, and destroy the shining luminaries of the Church, by sword, fire, and faggot, torture and death in all its horrid forms, during ten imperial persecutions in the first three centuries of the Christian Church, from Nero to Dioclesian. But no class of Christians ever ventured to assail divinely instituted ordinances till after the reformation under Constantine, when the aspiring Bishops of Rome succeeded in

raising the Church to the pinnacle of human popularity, by the Satanic stratagem of connecting the ecclesiastical government of the Church and the civil power of the Roman Empire, under the sovereign domination of the Roman Pontiffs. Then the devil turned *Christian* to destroy the spiritual power of the Church, and render it a mere engine of Satan to prepare, (by the mere forms of a perverted Christianity,) millions of deluded souls for the regions of eternal damnation.

At this period, the floodgates of hell were permitted to be unlocked and thrown open, that seducing spirits from the bottomless pit, and seduced mortals on earth by the enchanting power of the "*doctrines of devils,*" and by the alluring "works" of the prince of darkness, might all be brought together as agents in the "works" of fitting souls for destruction. Satan, himself, now in princely attire, triumphantly mounted the *car* of Church and State as the sovereign *director* of Popes, and Cardinals, and Bishops, and people comprising the whole Church of Christendom, all under the Satanic superintendance of political influence—worldly policy—formal religious popularity—power over the conscience—with supreme Satanic *clerical* authority to tyrannize over kings and kingdoms of earth—over political, clerical, and commercial interests—to amend, change, or abolish divine laws and ordinances—and to enforce the Anti-Christian power of intolerance over the whole Church of God, which had now fallen into a wilderness state, under the absolute sovereignty

of Papal tyrants, who were *themselves* but mere agents of Satan to carry into execution his "*works of darkness.*"

Then, doubtless, was fulfilled the Apocalyptical vision (Rev. Chap. ix. 1—11,) of a falling star from heaven, with the key of the bottomless pit, which was opened, till a smoke from the pit ascended, which darkened the sun and air. And out of the smoke, (the fulminating effluvia of hell,) issued out swarms of locusts upon the earth, with the power of scorpions to kill men; having a king over them whose name in Hebrew is "*Abaddon,*" but in Greek, "*Apollyon.*" What but the following can be the explanation? God's Church was a star; but it fell under the domination of Popery. Popery derived its existence from the king of the bottomless pit; and as agent of his Satanic Majesty, was intrusted with the *key* of the infernal pit, which key is the "*doctrines of devils.*" With this key, the pit was opened, till the sentiments and spirit of hell rolled out of the pit upon the earth, till the light and spirit of divine Revelation were darkened, and this darkness rolled through the atmosphere from Papal Europe into the kingdoms of Syria in Asia, (where locusts issued out of the smoke like scorpions,) signifying the rise of Mahometanism in all its Anti-Christian power and policy to destroy the bodies and souls of men. And the name of their king was in Hebrew "*Abaddon,*" in Greek "*Apollyon,*" but in English, Devil, whose works we are now contemplating.*

* See Rev. Chap. ix. 1—11.

Behold, now! and let it be declared, if there be at the period now under contemplation, any name, power, greatness, popularity, or influence on the whole earth that can equal that of his *Satanic Majesty!* He is king of all the angels in the long, broad, and bottomless lake of fire and brimstone, possessing liberty of *will*, his boasted *will unconquerable*, by all the powers of immensity! He is, moreover, the *Pope* of all *Popes*, the king of all kings of Christendom, throughout the vast dominions of the great Roman Empire in all its Papal glory! Nothing effectually could then be done in Christendom—not even a law enacted, nor a proclamation issued, nor a change of any religious institution or ordinance whatever, without the superintendence or concurrence of his *Satanic Majesty!* Such were the measures adopted for the security of his sovereign and perpetual reign over the powers of earth, that an *heretical** word preached or spoken against his Majesty, or even against one of his Majesty's *pontifical agents*, the culprit was doomed to suffer death by torture!

When his *Satanic Majesty* wished to enlarge the boundaries of his dominions and influence for the greater facility of preparing souls for his endless kingdom in the regions of the damned, far below the earth, He had only to give the key of his infernal kingdom into the hand of his *Papal agent*, and the "*pit*" was quickly opened. And from the blackness of darkness issuing therefrom, swarms of infernal locusts, like

* A word against Popery then was called heresy.

scorpions were hatched into life, full grown, with fire and brimstone heads, and smoke and brimstone tails, and all the warlike habiliments, and armor of Mahometan invaders, for the more extensive establishment of Satanic government; on a foundation of more extended *religious principles of unbounded licentiousness*, openly avowed as the *ne plus ultra* enjoyment of earth, and the *superlative source of happiness* in the Mahometan paradise of endless sensuality.

Satan is styled in Scripture "Prince of this world." Thus, "The prince of this world cometh, (said Christ,) and hath nothing in me." "The prince of this world is judged." "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out." These titles, well accord with the posts of honor which Satan has acquired by indefatigable "*works*" of opposition to God and holiness, in seeking to wrest from Jehovah the government of the universe. Human princes are confined to geographical *limits* of small portions of the earth—their *time* of reign is limited, at longest, to the end of life, and not one of them was ever known to have attained to any degree of principedom over "*the power of the air.*"

But the king of the bottomless pit, while ranging over the whole earth, working all evil in the "hearts of all the children of disobedience," and tempting the heirs of an heavenly inheritance to apostatize from the service of their Redeemer, sits, majestically, on the throne of his earthly dominions high in the *air*, between earth and heaven, so that the whole earth and atmosphere are subject to the power of his false,

deceptive, and *diabolical works* of destructive incantations! Such were the popularity, success, and honorable distinctions of the *prince of darkness* during the dreary centuries of the dark ages of Christendom, from the investiture of Boniface the III. with the supremacy of pontifical power, and the simultaneous rise of Mahomet, to the days of the Lutheran and Calvinistic Reformation, a period of more than nine hundred years.

But what had become of the Church of Jesus Christ all this term of Satanic prosperity? Alas! for the soul-destructive "*signs of those times* ; but everlasting praise to the "infinite, eternal, and unchangeable" King of Zion, his Church on earth still remained unmoved and unshaken on the rock of ages. Though few in number, yet God's hidden ones, whose names were in His Book of Life from the foundation of the world, and whose spiritual "life was hid with Christ in God," were *safe* under divine protection. They were taught by the "*Word and Spirit*" that "the name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe." This, they believed. And in evil times, "when days grew dark and storms appeared," the friends of Jesus ran into the fortress of salvation by the grace of the gospel; and thus proved their interest in the righteousness of their Redeemer, and were "*safe*," living or dying. No persecution, nor torture, nor death, in all its horrid forms of Satanic stratagem, carried into effect by human haters of God, could *shake* the faith of the friends of Jesus, nor

drive them from their strong tower of safety, nor frighten them into pacific capitulation to the enemies of God and their souls. A few such Christians existed in the darkest seasons of the world's apostacy—they were divinely kept in life, from Satan's power and delusions, and from the pollutions of the world; but they were born to live and die, without popularity or influence; and, if a word was preached, or "*spoken in the ear in closets,*" against the anti-Christian abominations of the "*times,*" reporters, under pay from Satanic superintendence, betrayed them into the hands of their enemies—they were denounced as heretics—their lives were forfeited, and death by torture was the inevitable consequence.

But Satan learned by *experience* that his methods of destroying the *bodies* of Christians, was a most direct way to people heaven with the happy *souls* of those whose *bodies* only could feel the power of his wrath. And the worst of all for Satan's cause was, that the persecution of Christians to death by torture, was the means of the *conviction* and *conversion* of thousands of impenitent sinners to the faith of the gospel of Jesus, whose pious, self-denying, cross-bearing, devotional *lives*, bore daily testimony to the world of sinners—" *That the blood of martyrs was the seed of the Church.*" Thus Satan learned that all his persecuting stratagems to defeat God's purposes, by driving the religion of Jesus out of the earth, was only heaping intolerable loads of confusion on his own head!

Such fatal repulses, led the adversary to adopt a different course, by devising ways and means for the more effectual destruction of men's *souls* instead of their *bodies*. This has been done by a perversion of God's truth into various systems of doctrines, compounded of false principles—the corruption of divine ordinances—a rejection of essential Bible doctrines of grace, supplied with a variety of amusing forms and modes of worship substituted in their stead; and the modification of gospel conditions of salvation, to an accordance with the propensities of the carnal mind, amounting to an *emendation* of the gospel plan of the sinners reconciliation to God, so as to bring *God to terms of compliance* with the sinner's method of reconciliation, by way of *compromise*, namely, the sinner will engage to *forsake all sin*, repent and believe, on the *condition* that God will then convert his soul, make him happy, and give him a high seat in glory.

This *device* of Satan, may be considered as having been plotted about the time of the Protestant Reformation, which designated in the Apocalypse by "War in Heaven," [*i. e.* the Papal Church,] when Michael (Christ) and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought, and his angels. And the great dragon, that old serpent called the devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world, was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

"This falling of the dragon from heaven, took place in the Reformation, in the sixteenth century, by the instrumentality of Martin Luther and his associate

Reformers. The Papal system was then stript of its gaudy, hypocritical attire, and was exhibited to the world as a corrupt, blasphemous, and most abominable system of the wicked one. Satan had formerly seen the fall of his beloved system of Paganism in the Roman empire. With vast labors, his still *more* beloved system of Popery had most fully answered his purpose for many centuries. But this, too, was exposed in its hateful abominations. His rage was then full.*

This fall from supremacy in his papal heaven, was only a prelude to the final destruction of Satan's works; and as such the Protestant Reformation was thus hailed in the inspired writings—"Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." But Satan is never discouraged in the prosecution of his works of darkness for the destruction of human souls. When one stratagem fails, he devises another. And hence, under the *chagrin* and *wrath* occasioned by blasted fruits of his tares, his subtle powers of invention were once more extended to full vigor in the formation of a stratagem to *counterfeit Bible religion*, based solely, on anti-Christian principles, designed to "*scatter the power*" of the evangelical Church of Christ, by filling

* Smith's Key to the Revelations

it with discord, enervating controversies, and multiplied divisions into sects, party animosities, emulations and strifes about words and forms, and modes of worship not made essential to salvation by express nor implied divine command. And this *masterpiece* of Satan's works is designed to fill the Church of Jesus Christ with foolish virgins, whose religion consists in various forms of self-righteousness, without the knowledge of regenerating grace, saving faith, or gospel repentance for sin, wrapped up in supreme love to *self*, filled with bigoted zeal for modes and ordinances of worship of human invention, the very performance of which fills them with supreme extacies of glory on earth, and a *certain knowledge* of worthiness to fill exalted seats in the eternal world of glory; and all such earthly enjoyments here, and confident expectation of perfection of happiness hereafter, are confirmed by infallible Satanic passwords for safety from all that is to be feared or dreaded in the gloom and terrors of the sick bed and the dying hour of unbelievers in the Bible, of self-righteous neglecters of the great salvation of the gospel, and self-confident despisers of all divinely-appointed means of grace, ordinances of Bible religion, and terms of gospel salvation.

Such are the tendency and fruits of Satan's woeful and wrathful works in these latter days of the earth's existence, previous to the divinely revealed Millenium, when the earth shall be filled with righteousness and peace, united communion, fellowship and love, after having been divested of the influence of Satan, by the

destruction of all his works and imprisonment of his infernal person in the regions divinely appointed for his endless residence.

One immutable principle of the divine government is, that impenitent violators of divine laws, shall not go unpunished. Satan is the *first* known transgressor of God's laws. And the revealed history of his works, in connection with the signs of the present times, shows clearly that the predicted time of the overthrow of his works is hastening on, by the preparation which he himself is making for it, by a universal combination of anti-Christian powers in hostile array against the Holy Bible, the God and religion of the Bible, and against the evangelical Christian Church.

Satan's plotted atheistical government of this globe of earth as his infernal majesty's dominion, in combination with the influence of a Christless, Bibleless system of popular religion for all the inhabitants of the earth, is no fiction. It is the cap of the climax of all his works to quell the fears and terrors of death, and is the sure precursor of the endless ruin of all who are ensnared in his wiles of destruction.

This Satanic stratagem was divinely foreseen by the Omniscient eye, foreknown and foretold by divine inspiration, under the apocalyptical appellation of Babylon the Great, a name designed to represent the great anti-Christian power of the latter days, just before the Millennium.

An accurate Scriptural knowledge of this important prophetic object, will show that the sacred writers

of the Bible were inspired to foretell, and did abundantly predict and describe, (in the figurative style which the Holy Ghost dictated) the *purpose* of Jehovah, to permit Satan, as the finishing stroke of his preparation for the destruction of his works, to succeed in establishing on earth, a universal system of national polity, combined with a system of Christless and Bibleless religion, founded on atheistical principles—to be sustained by the power of the sword—in vindication of laws, and *popular* religious forms and ceremonies, in direct and inveterate opposition to Christ and all that appertains to the Holy Bible and orthodox Christianity.

This object is to be understood as the great anti-Christian Power of the latter days—the apocalyptical Babylon the Great, seen by the Prophet Daniel, and Apostle John in vision—and by them prophetically described in the Bible in relation to its origin; the complicated materials of its formation; its successful operation by divine permission; the duration of its existence; the measures divinely adopted for its final subversion; and the subsequent condition of the earth after the total overthrow of this atheistical Babylon the Great, the masterpiece of all the works of the devil.

This was, doubtless, the fourth great *beast* of the prophet Daniel's vision, (550 years B. C.,) with power to “devour the whole earth—to tread it down, and break it in pieces.” But, what became of this *beast* above all rival powers of earth? What became of it?

Daniel, in vision saw its end. "And I beheld, even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame."—[Daniel, Chap. vii. v. 11.]

About A. D. 95, the Apostle John, on the isle of Patmos, saw, *in prophetic vision*, the same anti-Christian power of all earthly dominion, and admiration, and worship.

This *beast* comprised all the idolatry of ancient Paganism; all the political intrigue of Popery; and all the blasphemy of modern Infidelity. It was the legitimate monster of Satan's begetting; its power was derived from Satan. It was *one* with its *father* in sentiment, object, and aim. And the prophetic destination of both Satan and his beast is revealed in words of eternal truth, which will come to pass as certain as that their record is now in the Bible. For thus it is written in Revelations, "I saw a beast having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the dragon gave him his power, and seat, and great authority. And all the world wondered after the beast.

And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him? And there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blasphemise his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

But what is foretold in the Bible respecting the overthrow of this great beast and its master? Let John, the Revelator, answer from his prophetic vision on Patmos.

"And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air (the throne of Satan.) And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him was called faithful and true — — King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to make war against Him that sat upon the horse. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet; these both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the devil was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever."

Such will be the overthrow of Satan, and the destruction of all his works; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

THE END

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An allegorical dialogue
between a proposed messenger
from heaven and an old
man...

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