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## ARTICLE I.

### THE HISTORY OF BAPTISM.

What is baptism? How should it be administered? Who are its subjects? What is its meaning? We propose to answer these questions, by tracing the history of the ordinance as unfolded throughout the Scriptures, first in the Old Testament, and then in the New. "To the law and to the testimony."

#### 1.—THE PRIMITIVE SACRAMENTS.

Baptism is one of the two sacraments retained by Christ in the New Testament Church from that of Israel. "A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ, wherein, by sensible signs, Christ and the benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed, and applied to believers." It is an *ordinance*, and not a mere sign and seal. The bow in the cloud, the shechinah of glory overshadowing the mercy seat, the manna and rock in the wilderness, and many other things mentioned in the Scriptures, were sensible signs and seals of grace, but were not *ordinances* to be observed, and so were not sacraments. Extreme unction is an ordinance and sensible sign; but it is of man's devising, and not *instituted by Christ*, and is therefore no sacra-

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ment. The going back of the sun on the dial of Ahaz, was to Hezekiah a sign and seal, but not of *the blessings of the new covenant*, and hence was not a sacrament. Wherever we find these four things—(1) an ordinance, (2) of Christ's appointment, (3) consisting of sensible signs, (4) sealing the blessings of the new covenant of grace and salvation through Christ—there we have a sacrament. Wherever either of these elements is wanting, it is no sacrament.

The essential idea, therefore, in a sacrament, is a significant seal to be set to the covenant between God and his people. Hence, it ordinarily requires two parties—the administrator, acting on God's behalf, and the recipient. As to its matter, it consists of an external sensible sign administered, and a spiritual grace of God to his people signified and sealed by it.

The first sacrament instituted by Christ in the Church was sacrifice. There may be some who discredit the idea of the existence of the Church, and of Christ's presence in it, before the days of his flesh. But what is the Church? It is the society of Christ's covenant people—the custodians of his oracles and observers of his law. Such a people none will doubt to have existed from the beginning—owned of God as his, and sealed to him by covenant and sacrifice. In fact, no true definition of the Church can be given, which will not apply as well before, as after Christ. Not only so, but Jesus himself expressly said to the Jews: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad;" and explained this by the assertion: "Before Abraham was, I am." John viii. 56, 58. Paul declares that Moses "esteemed the reproach of *Christ* greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." Heb. xi. 26. The martyr Stephen cites the testimony of Moses: "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear;" and declares, "*this is he that was in the Church in the wilderness with the angel that spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers.*" Acts vii. 37, 38.

*God has never been without a Church in the world; Christ has always been in it; and his grace has always been sealed to it by sacraments.*

Sacrifice remained for two thousand years the only sacrament in the Church; to the primeval patriarchs, the only seal of God's covenant of redeeming grace. Upon the call of Abraham, another sacrament was instituted, and the covenant as made with him was sealed with circumcision. Both of these ordinances were of unmixed blood, and signified and sealed satisfaction to the law, by the shedding of the blood of Christ; and both are now superseded by that blood.

## 2<sub>1</sub>—THE LEVITICAL SACRAMENTS.

The sacraments afterward instituted, and which are still perpetuated in the Church, set forth in clearer light, and seal, the richer blessings of grace bestowed upon those who have been bought with blood.

Upon the exodus of Israel from Egypt, God sealed himself as the Redeemer and Shepherd of that people by the new sacrament of the passover. In it the paschal lamb was slain and eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, to which, according to the Levitical law, wine was afterwards added.\*

The fourth and last sacrament constituted a mark of separation between those who were privileged to approach the sanctuary, and such as were excluded. Certain animals were stigmatized as unclean, and hence prohibited for sacrifice and food. Persons under specified circumstances were excluded from the sanctuary and society of Israel as unclean; and houses, tents, utensils, furniture, and almost every kind of personal property, was liable to contract ceremonial uncleanness, so as to be unfit for use by the clean or holy people. For the cleansing and restoration of such persons and things, the water of separation was appointed. This was living, that is, flowing, water, mingled with sacrificial blood or ashes, with which the unclean were sprinkled and cleansed.

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\*Numbers xv. 3, 5. All sacrifices were accompanied ordinarily with wine. See Numbers xv. and xxviii. Peace offerings and festival sacrifices, of which the passover was one, were eaten by the offerers.

## 3.—THE SPRINKLED SEAL OF THE SINAI COVENANT.

The first use of this ordinance was at Sinai, when Israel was thereby cleansed from the defilements of Egypt, and admitted anew into covenant with the God of Abraham. After the tremendous scene, amid which the ten commandments were proclaimed, Moses was called up into the mount, while Aaron and his sons, and the seventy elders, worshipped afar off. He was then sent down to the people, and told them "all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do." Moses thereupon wrote the words of the Lord in a book, and having offered sacrifices, again read the book in the audience of the people; and they said, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." Ex. xxiv. 1-7. The covenant thus repeatedly and solemnly ratified by Israel was thereupon sealed by a new sacrament. Moses "took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament (or covenant) which God hath enjoined unto you." Heb. ix. 19, 20, and Ex. xxiv. 8. Thus, by a new and special covenant and seal God took Israel to be his peculiar people, and gave himself to them as their King and God.

## 4.—SPRINKLING OF THE LEPER.

A modified form of this same ordinance was used in the cleansing of restored lepers. According to the ordinances of Sinai, leprosy rendered its victim unclean, and excommunicate from the commonwealth and covenants of Israel. If a leper were healed, his restoration to the privileges of the covenant was sealed in the following manner. He brought two clean birds to the sanctuary. One of these was killed by the priest, and its blood caught in an earthen vessel "over running water." The living bird was then taken, with cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop, and dipped in the blood and water, and the restored leper was sprinkled therewith seven times, and pronounced clean. The

bird was then let loose into the open field. The person afterward washed his clothes and his flesh, and shaved his hair. This was repeated on the seventh day, and then followed with a sacrifice of a trespass offering. Of this, a part was oil, which was sprinkled on the altar and on the person to be cleansed. The offering of the sacrifice completed the cleansing. Lev. xiv. 4-20, 51. A hasty inspection of the directions respecting this ordinance might lead to the inference that the water "over" which (verses 5, 6,) the bird was to be killed was not to be sprinkled with the blood. But verses 51 and 52 justify the conclusion that the water as well as the blood was thus applied. This inference is sustained by the analogy of the ordinance already described, and by that of the water of purifying for those defiled by the dead.

#### 5.—THE PURIFICATION FOR THE DEAD.

Whoever touched the body of a dead person became thereby unclean, and whatever touched a corpse was defiled and unfit for use. As sacrifice was lawful only at the sanctuary, and death was of constant occurrence throughout the land, special provision was made for this case. A red heifer was slain without the camp, and the blood of it sprinkled by the priest "directly before the tabernacle of the congregation seven times." The heifer was then burnt, while the priest cast cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet wool into the midst of the burning. The ashes were carefully gathered and kept in a clean place. Thus sacrificial elements were provided in a form suitable for transportation every where, and for preservation without fear of corruption. When, therefore, defilement by the dead occurred, some of these ashes were mixed in a vessel with running water. A clean person then took a bush of hyssop and dipped it into the water, and sprinkled it on the person or thing to be cleansed. This was done on **the** third day, and repeated on the seventh. "And on the **seventh** day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe **himself** in water, and shall be clean at even." Num. xix. 19. **This** ordinance was formally designated "the purification for sin," and the water was called "the water of sepa-

ration." Num. xix. 9, 13, 21. The reader will please to mark the fact, to which we shall hereafter recur, that it was employed, not only for the purifying of persons, but of tents, houses, utensils, and furniture of every kind. Num. xix. 14, 15; xxxi. 23. Compare Mark vii. 3, 4. This water of purifying was used in the cleansing of the Levites when they were separated to the service of the sanctuary, and to have God for their sole inheritance. Josh. xiii. 33: The Lord said to Moses, "Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them. And thus shalt thou do unto them to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purifying upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean." Num. viii. 6, 7.

It seems probable, from the language of Numbers xix. 20, that this water was always to be used for the purification of uncleanness, however contracted. By it proselytes from other nations were cleansed and admitted to the covenant of Israel. Of this we have an illustration in the case of the captives of Midian. When Midian was destroyed by the sword of Joshua, the female children were spared and held as captives. Command was then issued, "Whosoever hath killed any person, and whosoever hath touched any slain, purify both yourselves and your captives, on the third day and on the seventh day. And purify all your raiment, and all that is made of skins, and all work of goats' hair, and all things made of wool." This gave occasion to an exposition of the law by Eleazar. "And Eleazar the priest said unto the men of war which went to the battle, This is the ordinance of the law which the Lord commanded Moses: Only the gold, and the silver, the brass, the iron, the tin, and the lead, everything that may abide the fire, ye shall make it go through the fire, and it shall be clean; nevertheless, it shall be purified with the water of separation; and all that abideth not the fire ye shall make go through the water." Numbers xxxi. 19-23.

It is to be observed that these captives were about to be distributed as bond-servants to Israel; and that all bond-servants were included, from the days of Abraham, with their

masters' families in the privileges of the covenant. Gen. xvii. 13; Ex. xii. 44; Deut. xvi. 14; xxix. 11. This right of purification was therefore the initiatory ordinance, by which, as proselytes from the Gentiles, these children were admitted to the privileges of the sanctuary and the covenants of Israel.

#### 6.—IDENTITY OF THESE ORDINANCES.

In the institutions above described, we see essential identity, with circumstantial variations. They were identical in the fact that, in each, the material symbols consisted of water and sacrificial elements, with cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet wood; that they were dispensed by a second party, a priestly administrator: that they were applied by sprinkling with a hyssop bush; and that they were used for the purpose of cleansing the recipient, and sealing his title to covenant privileges.

There were circumstantial differences as to the sacrificial elements, and as to the administrator. The inferior dignity of a single person to that of the whole nation, and his comparative poverty, rendered proper the offering of a bird in the case of an individual leper, whilst goats and calves were offered for the cleansing of the whole people. For the case of defilement by the dead, the circumstances rendered special provision necessary, as already pointed out. The sacrifice was, therefore, reduced to ashes for preservation and conveyance; and since the proper place of the priests was at the sanctuary, and it might, therefore, be impossible to procure one of them where the death occurred, allowance was given to any clean person of that "kingdom of priests" to administer the ordinance.

Whilst in these circumstantial points there was a difference, it is evident that the ordinance was essentially one and the same in all these diversities.

As we have seen, the sprinklings were followed by certain "washings," which were also prescribed upon some other occasions. These were essentially different from the sacrament of purification in their nature and design. In them the person applied the water to himself, whilst the water of separation was always applied by another. In them the mode of application

was left to the discretion of the individual, who was simply required to *wash* himself, whilst the water of separation was always applied by sprinkling with a hyssop bush. They included no sacrificial element with the water, and did not express grace bestowed from above, but indicated the duty of personal holiness and purity of life in those to whom grace has been given already. For this reason, they were appointed as an observance, after the sprinkling, by those who were cleansed. The meaning of these washings appears in such language as that of God by Isaiah: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well." Isa. i. 16, 17. On the other hand, a sacrificial element was essential in the water of separation, and it signified and sealed to the believer cleansing from the defilement of a depraved nature, and of sin already committed, and life to the spiritually dead, by the efficacy of the imparted blood and Spirit of Christ. In a word, the latter was a sacrament, and the others were not.

7.—THIS SACRAMENT MEANT, LIFE TO THE DEAD.

The meaning of this ordinance is clearly traceable in the Scriptures. The leper was accounted as one dead (Num. xii. 12), and as such was excluded from his family and from the congregation and camp of Israel. It is agreed among intelligent commentators that the treatment thus appointed for the leper had reference to the peculiar nature of the disease with which he was infected, which was regarded as in a special manner a punishment of sin (Num. xii. 10; 2 Kings v. 27; 2 Chron. xxvi. 20), and was its most fitting symbol, alike in its loathsomeness, its deadliness, and its spreading and contagious nature. The same idea was involved in uncleanness by contact with the dead. Death is the wages of sin. Its occurrence is therefore a demonstration of the sinfulness of the victim. Whosoever touched the dead became ceremonially infected with the contagion of his spiritual disease—his depravity and death—and was therefore excluded with the leper from the sanctuary and the camp. Num. v. 2. So, too, the whole Gentile

world were "dead in trespasses and sins," and therefore "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise." Eph. ii. 1, 12. And although they were not excluded from the camp, as were the unclean of Israel, they were excluded from the sanctuary as dead. In all this a view is implied which the intelligent student of the Bible will find to pervade its pages every where. The idea of the ceremonial defilement thus purged, was not that of an extrinsic uncleanness or outward soiling of the living person; but of the putrefaction and loathsomeness of the dead. The remedy, therefore, was not to be found in an outward lavation of the person, however abundant, but in the communication and introduction of a new principle of life.

Such precisely was the significance of the institutions above described. While outward transgression was rebuked and condemned by the personal washings enjoined, the inadequacy of mere external morality was indicated and urged by the institutions of purification and the water of separation. By them the one profound necessity of our lost and ruined nature was most impressively indicated. The corrupt need purifying; the dead need restoration to life. But *how* shall this be accomplished? "Can these dry bones live?" The answer is given by Ezekiel in two successive chapters (Ezek. xxxvi. and xxxvii.), in the former of which, cleansing, and the latter, life, are promised, as the fruit of the Spirit's agency. "Then will I *sprinkle* clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean. . . . And I will put my Spirit within you." "Thus said the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come out of your graves, and will bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you out of your graves, and shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live."

This precisely was the meaning of the ordinance of purification for sin, with the addition that it set forth the value of the blood, as well as the power of the Spirit of Christ. It expressed the bestowal of these both upon his people. His blood redeems them from the curse, while the Spirit imparts cleansing to their

defilement—spiritual life to them, dead. Paul recognises as one, these various ordinances of purifying, and explains their meaning in one significant sentence. “If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” Heb. ix. 13, 14. Here “dead works” are the works of those who are dead in sin, and are put in contrast with the living works of those, who, purified and quickened by Christ, serve, in newness of life, him who is the God, not of the dead, but of the living.

The significance of this passage is yet more apparent when viewed in the light of the context. Paul had referred to the services of the sanctuary, “which stood only in meats, and drinks, and divers *baptisms*,” (so it is in the original) “and carnal ordinances.” “But Christ being come,” “neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place,” etc. It is with reference to these “divers baptisms” that Paul goes on to speak of the blood and ashes as identical in their meaning, and their sprinkling as the means of the purification of the flesh. He then immediately proceeds, in the language which we have already noticed, to describe the sealing of the covenant at Sinai with the sprinkling of blood and water.

#### 8.—CLEANSING WAS ALWAYS BY SPRINKLING.

Here the fact is interesting and significant, that in all the various forms of purification and consecration, the element significant of grace imparted by the Spirit, whether it was blood, water, or oil, was invariably applied by sprinkling or pouring. Thus it was with the blood of the passover, sprinkled with hyssop on the lintels and doorposts, by which Israel was sanctified unto God. Thus it was with the blood of the various sacrifices, whether sprinkled upon the altar as an offering of atonement to God, or upon the person, as a purgation from sin. See Ex. xxiv. 6, 8; xxix. 16. Lev. i. 5, 11; iii. 2, 8, 13; v. 9; vii. 2, 14;

viii. 30; ix. 12, 13; xvii. 6. Num. xviii. 17; xix. 4. Heb. ix. 21.

So also it was with the oil of consecration sprinkled on the tabernacle and its vessels (Lev. viii. 10-12), and with the oil of anointing sprinkled and poured upon the cleansed leper (Lev. xiv. 16, 17, 18, 29). The consecration of the priests is especially worthy of notice in connexion with this, in view of its analogy to and difference from that of the Levites. The latter, as already described, were purified for their office by sprinkling with the water of separation. The priests were consecrated by the sprinkling of blood and oil. They were first washed with water by Moses (Lev. viii. 6), who was to Aaron "instead of God" (Ex. iv. 16). This rite seems to have symbolised that original purity of nature which the Father, by the Spirit, bestowed upon that "holy thing" which was born of Mary. After this washing, "Moses poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him, to sanctify him." "And Moses took of the anointing oil and of the blood (of the ram of consecration) which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon his sons' garments with him, and sanctified Aaron, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him." Lev. viii. 12, 30. So it was with prophets and kings, who were anointed to their offices by *pouring* the anointing oil upon them. See 1 Sam. x. 1; xvi. 1; 1 Kings xix. 16; 2 Kings ix. 6, etc. When it is considered that whilst *water* is the accepted symbol of the cleansing, life-giving agency of the Holy Spirit, *oil* is the symbol of his comforting, enlightening, endowing grace, the bearing of these observances upon our present inquiry will be manifest. See Isa. lxi. 1; Luke iv. 18, 21; Ps. xlv. 7; ii. 2; lxxxix. 20, 21; 1 John ii. 20, 27.

Here, too, the fact is significant, that Moses makes no mention of water in connexion with the sealing of the covenant of Sinai, although Paul assures us it was used, (Ex. xxiv. 8; Heb. ix. 19). This gives probability to the supposition that in all those places where the sprinkling of blood on the person was appointed, water was mingled with it; as evidently the nature and in-

tion of the rite were in all these cases essentially the same. The blood sprinkled on the altar and mercy seat signified satisfaction to the justice of God by the blood of Christ offered in the holy place in heaven. Its sprinkling upon the person of the offerer expressed the *application* of that blood for the cleansing of sin; which is always by the Holy Spirit, and accompanied with his imparted graces. Jesus "came by water and blood," as John so earnestly insists, (1 John v. 6,) and the mingled stream which that apostle saw flow from the pierced side, (John xix. 34,) was but a type of these two inseparable virtues which flow to sinners from the wounds of the Crucified.

#### 9.—MEANING OF THE RITES OF PURIFYING.

There are some things in the details of the administration of the ordinances of purifying of which we have no explanation in the Scriptures. What was meant by the cedar, hyssop, and scarlet, we know not, unless we may suppose, from Isaiah i. 18, that the scarlet meant to indicate the conspicuous and ineradicable stain of sin; and the cedar and hyssop may have had some coincident sense. In the two birds used for the cleansing of the leper, there is a manifest and very beautiful type of the death, resurrection, and ascension of Him who "liveth, and was dead, and is alive for evermore, and hath the keys of hell and of death." Rev. i. 18.

In the red heifer, slain without the camp, and its blood sprinkled before the tabernacle, we see a type of Jesus crucified without the gate, (Heb. xiii. 11-13,) and his blood offered in the holiest place; whilst the ashes and water sprinkled on the unclean signified the incorruptible virtue of that blood applied to sinners by the Holy Spirit. Why the unclean were required to be sprinkled, specifically, on the third day, and on the seventh, in order to cleansing; and why it is so emphatically stated, that "if he purify not himself the third day, then the seventh day he shall not be clean," (Num. xix. 12,) is not stated in the Scriptures. But the nature and meaning of the ordinance would seem to indicate that the third day's cleansing was typical of the resurrection of Christ on that day, and taught that we must

have a part in the power of that resurrection, and become "alive unto God, through Jesus Christ," (Rom. vi. 11,) if we would not be excluded from the resurrection of the saints at the last day, which was here symbolized by the seventh day of purification, that being the number of perfection and completion.

The reason why the water of purification must be living or flowing water, as was constantly required, (Num. xix. 17, etc.,) is evident. It was the type of the Holy Spirit, which "proceedeth from the Father" (John xv. 26); the river of the water of life, proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb. The first scriptural symbol of that blessed life-giving Agent was the river of Eden, which, from thence flowing, was parted into four heads to water the whole earth. Hence, throughout the Scriptures, "the river of God" constantly recurs with the same significance, until at last in the vision of the Revelation we see its crystal waters forever flowing through the restored paradise of God, now no longer the solitary garden-home of one human pair, but grown to be a great city, filled with an innumerable throng of the redeemed; yet still identified by the river flowing through its street, and the tree of life in the midst on the banks of the river. See Rev. ii. 7, and xxii. 1, 2. Compare Ps. xlvi. 4; lxxv. 9; Ezek. xlvi. 2, 9; John iv. 10, 14; vii. 38, 39.

#### 10.—OLD TESTAMENT ALLUSIONS TO THEM.

It was of the Levitical ordinance of purification with ashes and water that David spake, when, in the fifty-first Psalm, with intense self-loathing he recognised the depth of his native depravity, and the enormity of his sins, and cried: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." "*Purge me with hyssop*, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Ps. li. 2, 7. To it Isaiah refers, when speaking of the atonement of Christ, and his introduction of the Gentiles to its benefits, he says: "So shall he *sprinkle* many nations," (Isa. lii. 15,) a promise anticipated in the privileges of the infant daughters of Midian. This passage finds a very beautiful parallel and illustration in the language of the Psalmist, descriptive of the comforting and sanctifying work of

Christ by the Holy Spirit. "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass (or stubble); as showers that water the earth." Ps. lxxii. 6. Ezekiel, in a passage to which we have already referred, anticipates the future restoration of Israel, and utters promises which evidently take their form from the scene at Sinai, when the same people, rescued from Egypt, were restored to covenant by the sprinkling of water and blood—"I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and 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 I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. *And I will put my Spirit within you*, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Ezek. xxxvi. 24-27.

With respect to these teachings of the Old Testament, it only remains to point out the fact, that the figure of sprinkling or pouring used to signify the bestowal of the Holy Spirit, was derived from the descent of the life-giving rain of heaven. Says God to Israel: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring; and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses." Isa. xlv. 3, 4. Compare Ps. lxxii. 6, above; Joel ii. 28, 29; Acts ii. 17, 18.

Such was the sacrament of purification under the old dispensation, the seal of admission to the communion of the clean or holy house of Israel, and to the blessings of the covenants made with them. In all the law, there is no trace of any sacramental cleansing, except by sprinkling or pouring upon the person. In one case only, in all the Old Testament Scriptures, is there any appearance of immersion or dipping being used—the case of Naaman the Syrian—and the circumstances make it very questionable whether even he was immersed. The command given him by Elisha was, "Go and *wash* seven times in Jordan." 2 Kings v. 10. The word in the original here used is that which

describes the washing of Ahab's bloody chariot in the pool of Samaria, (1 Kings xxii. 38); and that of the new-born infant before it is clothed, (Ezek. xvi. 4,) neither of which certainly was immersed. The same word is here used in the Greek, which is elsewhere employed, as we shall presently see, to describe the purification of one defiled by the dead. The original word, moreover, which in the narrative is translated "dipped," is that which is used in Genesis xxxvi. 31, where it is with evident correctness rendered into the Septuagint by a word meaning to bespatter. Had the coat of Joseph been *immersed* in blood, and so dyed all over, the imposture must have been detected at once; as no one could imagine that the garments of one slain by a wild beast would receive more than a bespattering or besmearing of blood. When to these facts are added the circumstance that, according to the law, the cleansing of a leper was by sprinkling him seven times, it seems scarcely to be doubtful that such was the mode of Naaman's seven times washing. Be that as it may, this extraordinary case is the only one in the Old Testament, in which it can be maintained that immersion even *seems* to be enjoined.

#### 11.—BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD.

After the close of the Old Testament canon, the conquests of Alexander and the Greeks brought the Jews into intimate contact with that people, by whom they were greatly favored. The Greek language was in consequence so extensively adopted by them, that not only was it employed by all the writers of the New Testament, but the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into it in the Septuagint version for the use of the Jews. This version was much used by Christ and his disciples, and is still extant in our hands. Transmitted to us with these Greek Scriptures, there are certain other Jewish writings of that age in the Greek language, which shed much light on the history, manners, and customs of the Jews of the time; although the attempt of the Church of Rome to give them canonical authority has tended to disparage and fix a stigma upon them, under the name of Apocrypha.

We do not here cite the Apocrypha as of divine authority; but as documents unquestionably of Jewish origin, written before the coming of Christ, and therefore competent evidence of the sense in which the Greek language was at that time used by the Jews. Among these writings is the book of Ecclesiasticus, or the Wisdom of Sirach. In chapter xxxi. 30, of this book, (xxxiv. 25, of the English version,) is a proverb which reads literally thus: "He that hath been *baptized* from the dead, and again toucheth the dead, what availeth his washing?" The Greek word here translated "washing," is from the same verb which was used in Elisha's message to Naaman, to *wash* seven times in Jordan. That the proverb has reference to the ordinance of purification for sin is very manifest. That it designates that ordinance by the name, *baptism*, is also evident. This passage is not only in itself very important on the subject under discussion: it is also a key to a most significant passage in the writings of Paul—a passage which has no little perplexed expositors: "What shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they baptized for the dead?" 1 Cor. xv. 29. Here Paul alludes to the Levitical purification for the dead. He urges that the resurrection of those who are physically dead is attested by that typical ordinance in which, by the sprinkling of water and ashes, the subjects of it were restored from ceremonial death to life. He insists that the type must have an antitype. From this passage, it appears that this ordinance was not only designed to subserve the purposes which we have already indicated, but to be a most cheering pledge and seal to bereaved friends, that, by the efficacy of the blood and Spirit of Christ, those that are in their graves shall rise again—a fact so vividly present to the faith of the sorrowing Martha, as she wept at her brother's sepulchre. John xi. 24. The profession of her faith, there uttered to Jesus, took place the very day after she and her house must have received the baptism of purification according to the law. How congruous and appropriate to all this was our Saviour's announcement of himself as the resurrection and the life, which were proclaimed in that ordinance, is at once apparent.

Our exposition of Paul's argument on the resurrection may be questioned, upon the supposition that the apostle would not presume the Corinthian church to be familiar with the Levitical sacrament of purification, as they were probably Gentiles. But in the tenth chapter of the same Epistle, verses 1-11, he addresses them as children of Abraham, familiar with the Pentateuch, and with baptism by sprinkling. "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea," etc. That Israel was not immersed in the sea, we know. That they were not *in* but *under* the cloud, Paul here testifies. How, then, were they baptized? The Psalmist expressly tells us: "The clouds poured out water" (Ps. lxxvii. 17); and we may reasonably presume that the east wind which piled up the waters as Israel passed through the Red Sea (Ex. xiv. 21) would cast a spray upon the people. Thus they were *baptized* in the cloud and in the sea.

#### 12.—BAPTISM FAMILIAR AT THE COMING OF CHRIST.

It is evident that the purification for the dead must have been one of the most familiar, impressive, and influential of all the Levitical institutions. Familiar, because it was brought home to every house in which a death took place, and to every individual who fulfilled the last offices to the body of the dead. Impressive and influential, because of its exceedingly instructive character, and of the circumstances in which, and the frequency with which, its lessons were conveyed. It did not, however, escape the corruptions of the elders, who made the law of God of none effect by their traditions. Not satisfied with simple obedience to the law, in purifying themselves, their utensils, and furniture, under the circumstances specified in it, they multiplied occasions for such observances, both as to the personal washings and the sacramental sprinklings prescribed. "Except they wash their hands oft, they eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they baptize, they eat not. And many other things there be which they have re-

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ceived to hold, as the *baptizing* of cups and pots and brassen vessels, and of tables." Mark vii. 3, 4. The statement of Mark is here given as it is in the original. In our English version, the words *baptize* and *baptisms* are rendered "wash" and "washings." The margin also substitutes "beds" for "tables." Neither of these *could* very well be immersed. Both of them, as we have seen, as well as pots, and cups, and brassen vessels, were occasionally to be purified, according to the law, by that sprinkling which Sirach designates by this very word *baptism*. Evidently the evangelist refers to an unauthorised and improper use of the water of separation. The same superstition is referred to by Luke. He says that a Pharisee with whom Jesus dined " marvelled that he had not first *washed*" (in the original, *baptized*) "before dinner." Luke xi. 38.

It would seem probable that the Pharisees who regarded the body of the people as accursed (John vii. 49), held themselves to be defiled by any contact with them. Compare Isa. lxxv. 5. Hence, on return from market and other occasions of such contact, they resorted to the water of separation for their purifying. "Except they baptize, they eat not;" and hence the water-pots of stone, which, "after the manner of the purifying of the Jews," were set at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee. John ii. 6. These "held two or three firkins apiece," that is, fifteen or twenty gallons. Such were evidently inadequate for immersion, even if full, which they were not, until "filled up to the brim" at the command of Jesus; and had they been used by the multitude of the feast for any manner of bathing, our Saviour would hardly have appropriated them as receptacles for wine, nor made it of the water. But when we recollect that sprinkling with hyssop was the invariable mode of purifying according to the law, all is clear, and the water of purification, converted by the Redeemer into the wine of the marriage feast, anticipates the Lord's Supper, and foreshadows the wine of the kingdom. These facts elucidate the circumstance that "a question about purifying" should bring some of John's disciples and the Jews to John, with the report that Jesus was *baptizing*. John iii. 25, 26. They also illustrate the language of Jesus to

Nicodemus. John iii. 3-5. Persons who had been ceremonially dead, and were restored by the baptismal rite, were spoken of among the Jews as new born, since they thus entered upon new life. When, therefore, Nicodemus was perplexed by being told of the necessity of being "born from above," as the margin literally renders our Saviour's words, he was at once reminded of the spiritual significance of the familiar water of separation which was just then rendered so conspicuous by the baptism of John. "Except a man be born of water, even of the Holy Spirit, the true water of life, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." The conjunction here—"water *and* the Spirit"—is used in the same sense as in Matthew xxi. 5: "Thy King cometh sitting on an ass, *and* a colt, the foal of an ass." It is equivalent to *even*, and marks the one clause as expository of the other.

The facts here set forth confirm the meaning which we have already attributed to Paul's statement respecting the ordinances of the old dispensation, which "stood only in meats, and drinks, and divers *baptisms*, and carnal ordinances." Heb. ix. 10. Plainly he refers, as the context shows, to the water of purification as variously dispensed.

### 13.—IT WAS KNOWN AS BAPTISM.

From what has been presented, it appears that at the time of the coming of Christ, the word *baptism* was unquestionably in familiar use among the Jews, to designate *some* ordinance of the Old Testament; that it was so used by Sirach, by Mark, Luke, John, and Paul, in repeated instances; that, whatever the form of the rite thus named, it was a purifying; that in the Old Testament there is no trace whatever of any ordinance of immersion for any purpose whatever, and that purification was invariably accomplished by sprinkling or pouring; that Sirach expressly designates the sprinkling of the water of purification by the name of *baptism*; and that the New Testament writers here referred to, in their use of the word, plainly refer to the same ordinance. The Scriptures already cited show abundantly the meaning of this ordinance. It expressed the bestowal by Christ

of that Holy Spirit which, wherever and whenever given, is always the Spirit of life, and of that blood which cleanseth from all sin. It set forth the separation of the recipient from the world, dead in trespasses and sins, and was therefore called "the water of separation." It signified the consequent deliverance of the soul from the power of sin and death; its cleansing from spiritual defilement, and the implanting of new life to holiness and God; and it announced the final resurrection of the body, by the power of the Holy Spirit of life dwelling in it. All that was thus signified by this ordinance, it also sealed to the faith of the receivers. Its distinctive scriptural designation is, *the baptism of purification for sin*. Compare Num. xix. 9, with the other places above cited.

#### 14.—JOHN'S BAPTISM.

After four hundred years of withdrawal from Israel because of their sins, God's mercy again returned to that people, and the forerunner John was sent to herald the coming of the long expected Messiah. Under similar circumstances, after centuries of alienation, God had renewed his covenant with Israel at Sinai by the baptismal sprinkling of blood and water; and in the restoration, which is yet to take place, of that people, now out-cast from God, the covenant is again to be renewed in a similar manner, as we have seen Ezekiel testify. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean." John was a priest, and came under the old dispensation, of which he was a minister, and to the ordinances of which he did not pretend to make any addition. Of his baptism, no description is given, as is the case in all new institutions. Neither he nor any of his contemporaries appear to view it as a novelty. On the contrary, as we have seen, it is spoken of as an institution of familiar use and significance, and only seems to have been remarkable for the extent of its administration by John, and the preaching with which he accompanied it. See John i. 25. In view of these facts, it would appear impossible to avoid the conclusion that "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" which John preached (Luke iii. 3) was identical with that

“baptism of purification for sin” which Moses ordained, which always conditioned its spiritual benefits upon true repentance and faith, and with which the whole nation were more familiar than with any other ordinance whatever of their religion.

It will hardly be denied that this baptism was eminently adapted to the intent and end of John’s ministry. No supposable modification of it would have rendered it more appropriate to the purposes of that ministry. There were, moreover, paramount reasons why this baptism and no other should be administered by John. He came to herald the advent of Him of whom all the law and the prophets spake—in whom all the types and shadows were fulfilled. He came especially to proclaim him as the promised Sprinkler of the nations, the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost. Of him, John the beloved afterward wrote that he came “by water and blood, not by water only, but by water and blood” (1 John v. 6)—by that gift of his blood and Spirit which was so strikingly prefigured by the Levitical baptism. Had John employed any other ordinance for this purpose, the unavoidable effect would have been to obscure and cast doubt upon the design and significance of this baptism, by which for fifteen hundred years the faith of believers had been sealed and pointed forward to the Coming One. It would have implied uncertainty as to whether it was fulfilled in Christ. But when John, calling Israel to repentance, administered to them the old baptism of purification, and announced the coming of him, the true Baptizer, with the Holy Ghost, who should search and distinguish between professed and real repentance, “thoroughly purge his floor, and gather the wheat into his garner,” but “burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire,” (Luke iii. 17,) he set his seal to the testimony and the faith of many ages, and pointed out in Jesus the antitype of all the meaning of this most conspicuous and richly significant rite. “I knew him not,” said John, “but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.” John i. 33, 34. Thus, like the star of Bethlehem,

did this type illumine the darkness of ages and point down their track, guiding the faith of kings, prophets, and saints, until, through the ministry of John, it singled out and designated Jesus of Nazareth as he of whom it was the herald and witness.

In the remarkable transaction of his own baptism, the Son of man, as the head of his people, received for them the seal of purgation from sin. In it he enjoyed, with the Levites and the priests, pledges of his separation to his office, and of those gifts and graces which adorned his ministry. In it the water of baptism sealed to him the promise of the Spirit of life by which he should triumph over sin and death. And immediately thereupon he received the thing so signified by the descent upon him of that eternal Spirit, through whom "he offered himself without spot to God," (Heb. ix. 14,) and through whom he rose from the dead. Compare Rom. viii. 10, 11. The priests were anointed with holy anointing oil. But Jesus was anointed with the Holy Ghost. He was thus revealed as the sole possessor, fountain, and administrator of the Spirit; which thenceforward abode upon him as his; and which therefore he only can impart. And since his distinctive office and endowment thus was to baptize with the Holy Spirit, he would never baptize with water, as did both John and the disciples of Jesus. John iv. 1, 2.

In the light of all that has gone before, we see a beautiful propriety and significance in the use, by John, of the water of Jordan for the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. As we have seen, purification for sin could only be accomplished with living or running water, as typical of the living Spirit which Jesus gives. John therefore selected the waters of that one river which flows through Israel's earthly inheritance, to represent that river of the water of life, which flows from the throne of God and the Lamb for the refreshing of the heavenly Canaan. The same remark applies to the rejection, by Elisha, of Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, and his selection of the waters of Jordan as alone adequate for purging the leprosy of Naaman the Syrian. See 2 Kings v. 10-14.

## 15.—JOHN'S BAPTISM ADMINISTERED BY CHRIST'S DISCIPLES.

The preaching and baptism of John soon came to an end, in his imprisonment and death. His ministry, whilst it continued, was perfectly identified with that of Christ and his apostles. John came, says Matthew, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. iii. 2. And when Jesus heard that John was cast into prison, the same historian tells us that "from that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. iv. 12, 17. Thus, taking up the fallen trumpet of John's testimony, Christ and his apostles continued to the end of his ministry to preach the same gospel which John proclaimed, the gospel of the kingdom of the Coming One; and to call Israel by repentance and the fruits of it to prepare for admission to the privileges and blessings of that kingdom. Preaching thus the very same gospel, they sealed it with the same baptism that John administered, the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

We are not informed whether the disciples of Christ continued to the close of his ministry to accompany their testimony with baptism. In fact, it is only incidentally in connexion with the excited jealousy of some of John's adherents, (John iii. 26; iv. 1, 2,) that we learn the fact that Christ's disciples, in their earlier ministry, baptized at all. No mention is made of its discontinuance, and the same reasons which actuated the administration at first, would seem to render probable its continued use; thus proclaiming and sealing the fulfilment of that gospel which was shadowed forth in the water of purifying.

Until the ascension of Christ, the gospel thus proclaimed by John and by Jesus and his disciples, was in the name of the Coming One. Publicly, Christ generally announced his true character and mission in parables and obscure intimations. Matt. xiii. 10–15. Except on a few occasions, it was only to his immediate disciples that he openly revealed himself as he that should come, the promised Messiah. But at the close of his ministry, he indicated to his apostles a change in this respect. After his resurrection he appeared to them in the upper chamber and

told them, "Thus it was written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that *repentance and remission of sins should be preached in HIS name* among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Luke xxiv. 46, 47. He thus appropriated to himself that gospel and baptism of repentance and remission of sins, which had hitherto been preached in the name of the Coming One. A few days afterward, meeting them again, he announced himself more fully, as having acquired the promised kingdom and assumed the throne. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I command you." Matt. xxviii. 18-20.

Again, when he had for the last time met his disciples on the Mount of Olives, he commanded them to remain at Jerusalem, and "wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me." Acts i. 4, 5, 8. Leaving such commands and promises, Jesus was received up to the throne.

#### 16.—THE BAPTISM OF PENTECOST.

The day of Pentecost came, and the promised baptism of the Holy Ghost was received. Of the mode of it, Jesus had said that the Holy Ghost should "*come upon*" the disciples. Acts i. 8. Peter declared that it was a fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel, "I will *pour out* my Spirit on all flesh," and represented it as "*shed forth*" and as "*falling upon*" the disciples. Acts ii. 17, 33; xi. 15. Immediately upon receiving it, Peter began to preach the gospel and baptism of repentance and remission of sins in the name of the Lord Jesus—the gospel of the kingdom. He proclaimed that the kingdom and power were now given to Jesus. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts v. 31. The baptism of the Holy Ghost,

Peter declared to be both the proof of Christ's exaltation and power, and the means of his dispensing repentance and forgiveness. "Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this." "Repent, and be baptized 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." Acts ii. 33, 38, 39. How intimately all this connects itself with John's preaching and baptism, and how directly it follows in the line of the Old Testament baptism of purification for sin, and the promises and prophecies relating thereto, is apparent.

Now, for the first time, baptism was administered in its distinctively New Testament form. Sacrifice and circumcision had been fulfilled in Christ. The passover, which hitherto had commemorated the deliverance from Egypt, and sealed a covenant of peace in the blood of the Coming One, had now been constituted the memorial of Calvary, and the seal of salvation through the blood of Jesus, the true paschal lamb; and his blood, now at length shed, took the place of the lamb of that feast. 1 Cor. v. 7. In a manner precisely similar and coincident, the baptism of purification for sin was now modified. No longer pointing in shadowy anticipation to the Coming Baptizer, it henceforward designated him in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. His blood, already shed, took the place of the blood of goats, calves, and birds, and the ashes of the heifer; and as Christ came to declare the Father, and to send forth his baptizing Spirit from the Father, the ordinance was administered thenceforth in the names severally of the Three blessed authors of our salvation, who are now, in Christ, so clearly and graciously revealed. Its meaning and office still the same as of old—to discriminate the clean from the unclean—its form was unchanged, except by the omission of the ashes of sacrifice, of which Christ's blood takes the place.

#### 17.—BAPTISM BY THE APOSTLES.

The history of baptism in connexion with the ministry and teachings of the apostles, is brief. On the day of Pentecost, it

was administered to those who believed, as the seal of the promise of the remission of sins, and of the gift of the Spirit to them and their children. The Ethiopian eunuch was found by Philip reading Isaiah's prophecy of the atoning work of Christ. The reader is aware that the division of the Scriptures into chapters and verses is a modern invention without divine authority, and unknown to Philip and the eunuch. The argument of "the place where he read" begins with Isaiah lii. 13, and closes with the end of the fifty-third chapter. In very clear and striking terms, the prophet describes Him who, exalted to dignity and power at the expense of suffering and shame, should become the baptizer of the nations with the Holy Ghost. "He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: so shall he *sprinkle* many nations." With this, compare Peter's citation from Joel: "I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh." It was therefore natural, that when, from that place in Isaiah, Philip preached Jesus, and told of the ministry of John, the sufferings and exaltation of Christ, and the baptism of Pentecost, the eunuch should have sought baptism. Nor is there, in these circumstances, room for doubt as to the mode in which he expected and the evangelist administered the ordinance.

Peter was called to preach the gospel to the house of Cornelius, the first-fruits of the Gentiles; and when the Holy Ghost *fell upon* them, he demanded, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." Acts x. 47, 48. Here the *falling* of the Holy Ghost *upon* the house of Cornelius is recognised as the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The *bringing* of water is also distinctly implied in the expression, "Can any man forbid water?" language altogether incongruous to the idea of *going to water*, for the purpose of immersion, but distinctly suggestive of the bringing of water in order to its sprinkling on the converts, as a symbol of the Spirit which had "*fallen upon*" them. "As I began to speak," says Peter, "the Holy Ghost fell on them,

as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water: but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost." Acts xi. 15, 16.

#### 18.—MEANING OF THE ORDINANCE.

We are now prepared to appreciate the significance of the language used in the Scriptures every where, to express the mode of the Spirit's mission and agency. That by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, is meant the communication of the Holy Ghost by Christ, will not be questioned. That he never comes, except as he is sent by and from Christ, is also certain. But we will search the Old Testament and the New in vain to find any allusion to his mission by Christ, his coming, or his agency, in terms derived from the idea of immersion. On the contrary, the idea of outpouring or sprinkling is presented continually in both the Testaments. He is described as *poured out* and *shed down* by Christ. He is described as *descending*, or *coming down* as rain, as *falling upon* men, and *shed upon* them, and *received* by them. In fact, such forms of expression are the accepted and only ones used to indicate the baptizing office of Christ and agency of the Holy Spirit.

On the significance of baptism, clear light is shed in the New Testament. In the first place, it is recognised as a purification for sin, in precise coincidence with the Old Testament ordinance. "Purge me *with hyssop*," says the Psalmist, "and I shall be clean; *wash me*, and I shall be whiter than snow." Psalm li. 7. "Arise," said Ananias to Saul, "and *be baptized*, and *wash away* thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts xxii. 16. So says Peter: "The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. iii. 21. In the second place, as Peter here intimates, it is life to the dead. Of this we shall have illustration in what follows.

The manner in which this cleansing is accomplished and this life bestowed is clearly set forth. "As the body is one," says Paul, "and hath many members, and all the members of that

one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13. The Holy Spirit, dwelling in Jesus and poured out by him as the baptizer, enters and dwells in the believer, thus engrafting him into Christ, and giving him part in the unity of Christ's body. The result is, that we acquire thus a part in all that Christ is, or has done or suffered. In a word, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Gal. iii. 27. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Rom. vi. 3, 4. The baptism of the Spirit makes us one with Jesus Christ—members of his body. By consequence we are partakers with him in all that is proper to him as Redeemer: we are crucified with him (Gal. ii. 20); we are dead and buried with him (Rom. vi. 4, 8); and with him we are quickened and raised from the dead to new life and to heavenly places (Eph. ii. 5, 6.) Hence Paul's argument to the Colossians. He proclaims the mystery of ages, now revealed, to be "Christ *in you*, the hope of glory," and his own labor and aim to be to "present every man perfect *in Christ*." (Col. i. 27, 28.) He urges them, "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye *in him*—rooted and built up *in him*." He tells them that, whilst "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," the saints "are complete *in him*," "*in whom* also ye are *circumcised* with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him," not by a burial made with hands and a rising out of the water, but by the faith bestowed by the baptizing Spirit; "through the faith of the operation of God, who raised him from the dead," and has "quickened together with him" you "who were dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh." Col. ii. 6-13. Thus every where the thoughts and arguments of the apostle have respect, not to a supposed immersion of the body in water, but to the effect of the baptism of

the Holy Ghost, administered by Christ, and uniting us to him. In all the forms of expression, one idea prevails. The eternal Spirit by which we are united to Christ, imparted to and dwelling in us as his Spirit, separates us from the world to him, imparts to us Christ in all his offices and works, and will cleanse and quicken us by destroying sin in us, and rendering us, as he was, dead to sin, and alive only to God. Not only so. It is the pledge of the resurrection of the body also. "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Rom. viii. 11. In a word, baptism signifies and seals to us deliverance from death and him that has the power of death, that is, the devil, and from every thing involved in the curse, and the enjoyment of all that is implied in the presence within us of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus—union with each other and with him by membership in his body, and consequent part in his life and glory.

#### 19.—THE BAPTISM WHEREWITH CHRIST WAS BAPTIZED.

We are now ready to understand the meaning of Jesus in two remarkable places. Said he, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" Luke xii. 50. And again, when the mother of James and John besought him that her two sons might sit, the one on his right hand and the other on his left, in his kingdom, he asks, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" Matt. xx. 22. Baptism is cleansing from defilement and life from the dead. The Lord Jesus was defiled with our sins, and dead under the curse, and straitened thereby until the morning of the third day, prefigured by the third day's baptism of purification, when his baptism was accomplished and he arose from the dead. When, therefore, the two disciples sought rank in his coming kingdom, Jesus admonished them of what must intervene as intermediate and conditional to the dignities which they sought. They must taste the bitter cup of sorrow and death which he drained, and

partake in the power and glory of his resurrection, which was the baptism of his admission to the covenant kingdom and glory.

The reader can now see how it is, that in the New Testament baptism is so intimately connected with the doctrine of death and the resurrection; and how unmeaning, in comparison with the true conception, is that view of the ordinance which finds its significance in the burial of Christ, represented by immersion. According to that view, both the sacraments of the New Testament derive their form and meaning from the death of Christ—the one from his crucifixion, and the other from his burial; while the baptism of the Spirit shed down by him, and all the various, vast, and glorious results thence following, have no place in the symbolism of the gospel, although they are so fully set forth under the law, in an ordinance so significant, and to which the New Testament writers so constantly refer, as identified with Christian baptism and fulfilled in Christ.

#### 20.—SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

We have seen that, under the old dispensation, baptism was administered at Sinai to the whole congregation without distinction of age or sex, and in like manner to all the Levites upon their separation to the service of God. So in the case of leprosy and of defilement by the dead, the water of separation was applied to all, old and young. We have seen that the first ingathering of Gentile proselytes to the Church of Israel numbered thirty-two thousand infant daughters of Midian, and that they were all received to the fellowship of the covenant people by baptism. When John and Christ came, reviving the covenant of Sinai, calling Israel to new repentance, and anew sealing the covenant with baptism, they came to a people with whom that covenant at Sinai had been sealed to old and young—a people all whose religious institutions, received from God, had recognised the children as entitled to the privileges and seals of the covenant, in common with their parents. Neither John, nor Christ, nor his apostles, ever hint at the idea of a change in this respect—a withdrawal of the privileges or seals of the covenant from the children. On the contrary, when Christ was preaching

the gospel of the kingdom, of which baptism was the distinctive seal, and his disciples forbade the bringing of infants to him, "he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them." Mark x. 14-16. And can it be that he notwithstanding deprived them of his covenant of love, or forbade them its seal, which they had enjoyed from the days of Abraham, under whatever form administered?

No less significant is the language of Paul to the Corinthians. "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." 1 Cor. vii. 14. Baptism is the ordinance expressly set apart, both in the Old Testament and the New, as we have seen (Heb. ix. 13; 1 Pet. iii. 21), to discriminate and seal the separation of the clean from the unclean. The Jews recognised children, one of whose parents was a Jew and the other a Gentile, as clean, and entitled as Jews to the privileges and seals of the covenant. Hence the circumcision of Timothy by Paul, although his father was a Greek. What, then, can have been Paul's meaning in here using the well known language of the law, and appealing to the familiar customs of Israel? He was insisting upon the sanctity of the marriage tie subsisting between Christians and unbelievers, and his argument seems clearly this: Your children are confessedly clean, and so recognised by baptism, the seal of cleansing. They must, therefore, be the fruit of lawful wedlock; since by the law bastards were expressly excluded as unclean. At least this much is clear, Paul being witness. The children of believers are *clean*. But baptism is to the clean the seal of their rights and privileges.

#### 21.—HOUSEHOLD BAPTISMS.

To all that has been presented already, it is not necessary to add any minute examination of the household baptisms, of which

we have repeated exemplifications in the New Testament. The house of Stephanas, the first-fruits of Achaia, (1 Cor. xvi. 15,) were baptized by Paul. 1 Cor. i. 16. So were the household of Lydia, and that of the jailor of Philippi; (Acts xvi. 14, 15, 30-34;) and in both of these cases, the emphasis is wholly given in the sacred narrative to the faith of the heads of the families. The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, and she was baptized and her household. That is all we are told of the case; and the former fact is related as the appropriate and sufficient reason for the latter. In the account of the jailor we see a like recognised dependence of his house upon his conversion and baptism.

Not only, moreover, is there no hint in the New Testament of the exclusion of the children from their ancient part in the covenant, an exclusion so incongruous to the greater privileges and grace of the gospel day; but we have no intimation of any complaint on the subject among all the questions which agitated the Christian Church, in connexion with the transition from the institutions of the Old Testament to those of the New. We can but, therefore, conclude that there was in fact no change; but the children were sealed as clean and holy by the same rite which was administered to their parents. The same covenant was transmitted to all the spiritual seed of Abraham, (Gal. iii. 29.) And that parental faith and love, which, of old, claimed the bloody seal of circumcision, and were subsequently confirmed with the sprinkling of the water of separation, are now privileged to bring the children as offerings to God, and set upon them the seal of separation from the world and membership in that kingdom which Christ so emphatically declared to be theirs, by baptizing them in his blessed name.

## 22.—GOD AND THE FAMILY SOCIETY.

The parental and family relation originated with God. They descend to us as an heir-loom from the innocence and happiness of Eden, and have been blessed of God as shadowing forth the ineffable relations and society of the adorable Godhead. Hence the respect which, throughout his word, God has shown to the parental relation; and the identity which is there recognised be-

between parents and their children. Hence the consideration given to that parental love which he has implanted which images his own love to his eternal Son, and the first impulse of which, in every pious heart, finds expression in the cry of Abraham, "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" Having created such a relation, imparted such a love, and inspired such desires and prayers, God answers them, by identifying the parents and their children in his covenant of grace. "I will be a God to 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." Gen. xvii. 7, 10. This was given as "an everlasting covenant;" and of it now baptism is the seal. Its proclaimed conditions are repentance and faith; and its benefits inure, not to the believer only, but to him and his seed. The administration, therefore, to infants is not predicated upon their presumed faith; but upon the fact that God recognises them as one with their parents, and, therefore, with and in them, parties to the covenant. Whilst the parents are accepted as authorised to dedicate, not themselves only, but their seed to God, he condescends on the other hand to pledge himself to accept, appropriate, and bless that seed. "Do you dedicate yourselves to me as living sacrifices, and consecrate your children to be trained for my service and glory? Then do I accept and appropriate them as mine. I will be your God and the God of your seed. I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a son. All the blessings of grace and glory, which the Father's love can give, the Son's blood purchase, or the Spirit's power bestow, I give to you and to them; and in pledge of my faithfulness to this covenant, I ordain the baptismal seal."

It is objected that the condition of baptism is repentance and faith; and as infants cannot exercise these, they may not be baptized. But what is the language which is thus interpreted? In the words of Jesus, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but *he that believeth not shall be damned.*" Mark xvi. 16. If this excludes infants from baptism, no ingenuity can avoid the conclusion that it equally excludes them from that

kingdom of heaven which Jesus has so expressly declared to be theirs. That surely is not the meaning of such passages. But they state the terms of salvation as addressed to intelligent hearers of the gospel—the terms on which they may be saved. With the case of infants, such language has nothing to do.

### 23.—RECAPITULATION.

We have now traced the history of this ordinance of baptism. From its first institution, through the successive ages, its glorious significance has been constantly unfolding to the Church in a steadily increasing light. At first it merely announced deliverance from sin and the curse by the blood of atonement and the Spirit of God, and sealed to believers separation unto God from an apostate and outcast world, cleansing from sin, and new life to holiness. Gradually, in the successive pages of the prophets, the Coming One was foreshadowed as the atoning sacrifice and priest, and the baptizer with the Holy Ghost, who should impart thereby holiness and life to the soul and resurrection to the body. All which was thus obscurely intimated in the prophets was set forth by John the forerunner in unambiguous clearness. He identified the promised King of the house of David with the coming Baptizer of the nations, announced his immediate advent, and pointed him out in Jesus of Nazareth. "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Mat. iii. 11. The doctrine of baptism thus set forth by the prophets and John, was yet more fully expounded by Christ and the apostles, who show us how it is that the guilty can live, the defiled be made clean, and the dead arise; how the significance of baptism can be realised. The Baptizer fills the throne—a throne purchased with his blood. Of his exaltation, the baptism by him administered is a conclusive proof; and of his royalty, it is one principal function. In its exercise he pours out his own Spirit upon his people, and causes it to enter into and dwell in them as the Spirit of their life. Thus by one Spirit they are made members of one body and partakers of one life with him. Hence their title to the merits of all he has done, whether of satisfaction to the curse, obedience unto rightness.

ness, or vindication of the Father's sovereignty and glory against Satan. In all this, they, as his members, are one with him, and so recognised by the Father and destined to the inheritance of life and glory.

That same baptizing Spirit, dwelling in Christ's people as a living Spirit, the Spirit of their life, gives them purging from native depravity, and a life of holiness and immortality after the likeness of Christ—a holiness gradual and growing now, and to be complete and spotless at last. Further, this baptism of Christ endows the believer with the adoption of a son of God. "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Gal. iii. 26, 27. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Rom. viii. 14. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Gal. iv. 6.

So, too, the purview of the ordinance comprehends the body as well as the soul, and assures and seals to it a part in the inheritance of glory. "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you?" 1 Cor. vi. 15, 19. And shall a member of Jesus Christ perish? Shall a temple of the Holy Ghost be destroyed? No. If the Spirit dwell in you, "he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Rom. viii. 11.

Of all these precious things, the baptism of water is the symbol and seal. To individual believers, to believing parents, and to Christian households, this is the appointed token of their consecration and faith, the sign and pledge, on God's behalf, that he is their God, and will do these things for them. Thus fully is verified the statement of our Larger Catechism: "Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, wherein Christ hath ordained the washing with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, to be a sign and seal of ingrafting into himself, of remission of sins by his blood, and

regeneration by his Spirit; of adoption and resurrection unto everlasting life; and whereby the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible Church, and enter into an open and professed engagement to be wholly and only the Lord's."

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ARTICLE II.

WHAT IS A CALL TO THE GOSPEL MINISTRY?

In the October number of this *Review* for the year 1869, there appeared an article on this subject, which seems to us to yield too much to the prevailing tendencies of the age. Often while perusing the current literature of the day, have we exclaimed, Surely this is a rationalistic age! Men reason God out of regeneration, out of inspiration, out of providence, out of creation, and, finally, out of existence. There is perhaps no surer proof of the deep-seated, inherent depravity of the human heart than this disposition, so constantly manifested, and so frequently cropping out where least expected, to put God as far away from us as possible. We do not like to come into contact with him; and, therefore, if we allow his existence, we are ever denying him immediate, personal direction of his creatures.

The Christian science of this day is exhibiting unmistakable indications of this tendency. In its "Reign of Law" and enthronement of nature, it has practically legislated Jehovah out of his own kingdom. When professedly Christian men write a "Philosophy of Religion," they dogmatically announce that there can be no such thing as a direct revelation from God to man, and that inspiration is nothing more than a high, though natural, elevation of the intuitional consciousness. When they attempt to treat of that most hallowed, most sublime, and most mysterious work, the regeneration of the soul by the Holy Spirit, they dissect and analyse it with the utmost *nonchalance*, and announce that all of its ineffable facts can be explained by the