

mode of Baptism, than to prove that the three thousand on the day of Pentecost—the delicate and faithful Lydia—the sable chancellor of Ethlopiæ—the Philippian Jailor and his family,—in a word *all* whom they baptized were immersed, naked. That immersion was anciently practiced we know—but through precisely the same medium, we know that it was deemed essential to its appropriate administration, that the individual baptized—male or female—infant or old person—should be *perfectly naked*—a strong presumption that like several of its unscriptural and indecent accompaniments ‘it was one of those additions to the ancient rite, which superstition originated.’ From translations of the Bible therefore, made subsequent to the introduction of “such a *variety* into the ritual of the primitive churches, as to render it very difficult” says Moshcim, “to give such an account of the worship, manner, and institutions of the *ancient* Christians, as will agree with what was practiced in all those countries where the gospel flourished,”* no evidence can be adduced, of the slightest weight or authority, to vindicate the claim of immersion to Apostolic sanction. But let us press into a purer period of the church, than those, in which any of the translations referred to by Mr. Crawley were made,—let us carry our inquiry back to the old Syriac translation of the New Testament, and ascertain how *it* renders *baptizo*. “‘This version” observes Stuart “is the oldest of all the translations of the New Testament that are extant; for in all probability it should be dated during the first half of the second century. Withal, it is admitted by those who are able to consult it, *to be one of the most faithful and authentic of all the ancient versions.*” ‘The Syriac, let it be remarked, has a word which signifies to *immerse, plunge, or dip*, but it never employs it to designate, in any way the baptismal ceremony. This is a most striking fact, since if baptism and immersion had been deemed correspondent terms at the time when this most venerable, from its antiquity, of all translations of the New Testament was formed, the Syriac word which means to plunge or submerge would have undoubtedly been used, and used invariably in such cases.’”

In this translation, however, all the words used for *baptizing, baptism, and baptist*, are taken from the Hebrew word *HOMAD*, which signifies ‘to stand, continue, subsist, to cause to stand, to support as by a pillar—to set or raise up—to place, present, or establish, &c. It is the same word, also, which is used for baptism in the Arabic version. This word is, certainly worthy of particular

* Eccles. Hist. Cent. I. pt. ii. ch. 4.