

from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you:" and Isaiah,—“So shall he sprinkle many nations.” And it is strengthened still further by the reasoning of Peter. He is giving an account of the conversion of Cornelius. He has already told the apostles and brethren in Judea how he was led to preach in the house of a Gentile; and continuing his narrative, he adds (Acts xi. 15),—“And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.” Now here not only was the descent of the Spirit upon the converts equivalent, in the mind of the Apostle, to their being baptized with the Holy Ghost; thereby showing that Baptism was not necessarily immersion, but rather a coming down upon—a pouring; but the descent of the Spirit reminded him of Baptism—it suggested this to his mind. He had no difficulty in calling the descent of the Spirit “Baptism of the Spirit.” Nay, so much was this mode of application associated in his mind with the promise of the Lord, that it at once suggested itself to him. But this it never could have done if the only proper mode of Baptism was immersion.

The last argument we would adduce in favor of sprinkling, is *its universal adaptation*. Christianity is not the religion of one nation or country: it is for the world. It is as much adapted for one people as another. It is distinguished by no national peculiarity. Its rites and observances may be performed anywhere: this is necessary to its universality.

Now, apply this to Baptism—the initiatory rite of Christianity. Would we not suppose that it could be administered, without inconvenience and without delay, wherever it was required? The apostles found no difficulty in all their experience. But could this be the case if immersion, and not sprinkling, were the only proper mode of administration? There are many cities in the East that have no more water than is sufficient for daily use, and during certain seasons of the year, suffer severely for want of it. There are other countries where, during the greater part of every year, intense frost converts the water into ice, and where, consequently, it would be frequently inconvenient, if not impossible, to immerse. In Greenland, for instance, and Iceland and Siberia, and countries similarly situated, water can only be had, during a great part of the year, in small quantities, and that only by dissolving the ice or snow. Again, there is sometimes danger in immersion, arising from the delicate state of the body, and instances are not unknown where death has been hastened by this means. Does God require sacrifice rather than mercy? Can the ordinances of our religion be, in some cases, inconvenient—in some perilous—in some impracticable? How unlikely that Infinite wisdom would institute a mode for dispensing an important ordinance that was ill-adapted for universal adoption! But let sprinkling be the appointed mode, and these difficulties vanish; and Baptism may be administered without inconvenience in all countries, at all seasons of the year—in health or sickness—without fear and in perfect safety; whether as it regards ministers who officiate—be they young, or old, or infirm; or converts—be they robust or delicate.

Thus have we briefly noticed some of the arguments by which it is shewn that immersion is not, as the Baptists constantly assert, the only Scriptural mode of administering Baptism; but that sprinkling is sanctioned and supported alike by reason and revelation. A more lengthened exposition of these arguments, and others that have not been noticed, would doubtless have enabled us to present this subject in a clearer light; but enough, we believe, has been written to shew the Scriptural authority for sprinkling.

We cannot close, however, without remarking how prone the human mind is to cling to a mere form, at the expense sometimes of the truth it is meant to exhibit. Let us never forget that it is possible to put too much stress upon the symbol, and overlook the thing signified. Baptism is important as an outward ordinance; but far more important is it in its higher and spiritual