

securely, and so, to prefer such charges is forever to ruin one's christian influence over minds thus impressed. That we have never held any such doctrines; that we have never had any connexion with these or any other parties as such, is a fact demonstrated a thousand times, and a thousand times again repeated. "But who art thou O man that judgest another?" says the Apostle. I have not again recurred to this imputation for the purpose of discussing the subject, or even to proclaim my own mode of speaking in relation to these doctrines; but to shew that while many of you have given currency to these slanders, on another subject of great moment you have reasoned precisely like Socinians! I shall therefore, carry the war into Carthage, and on your own ground shew that to be consistent you must be Socinians. Your opposition to certain principles which we have endeavored to keep prominent has driven you to this. Give us your attention, and if we do not make this as clear as sun-light, then have we listened to Socinianism and baptist opposition to baptism for remission of sins without attention!

Our glorious Redeemer said, with the cup before him, when about to institute the glorious ordinance which during all time should commemorate his sacrificial death: "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for many for remission of sins." Matt. xxvi. 28. Peter, the apostle, under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit, about to preach repentance and remission of sins in his Master's name to all nations, in answer to the agonizing inquiry of the thousands pierced in the heart—Men and brethren what must we do—answered, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts ii. 38. Paul, also, to the Colossians (i. 14,) utters his Lord's sentiments thus: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, [even] the forgiveness of sins." And Peter, after being a witness of the influence of his preaching and the wonder working power of the doctrine of the Lord for more than twenty-five years, exclaims (1 Pet. iii. 21), "The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer [rather the 'seeking'*] of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

* "Answer of a good conscience." The word translated *answer*, is *eperotema*, which is found but once in the whole volume. The verb *eperotas*, which occurs fifty-nine times, from which it is derived, signifies to ask, interrogate, question, inquire. Parkhurst says, that "the Apostle very probably alludes to the question and answer which we learn from Tertullian were used at baptism. The bishop asked, 'Dost thou renounce Satan? Dost thou believe in Christ?' The candidate answered, 'I renounce, I believe'" * * "This, Tertullian calls an engagement of salvation" Grotius, Mill, and Wolfius, concur in interpreting *eperotema* (1 Peter, iii. 21), the *response* or answer.

We have little or no confidence in the many comments and criticisms we have had on this word, and the whole construction of this passage, and we have examined not a few. The common French render it *the response*; others *the engagement* of a good conscience. Macknight is in doubt, though he gives *answer*, which cannot be the meaning of a word naturally descended from a verb more than fifty times rendered to *ask*, to *seek*, to *desire*, to *beseech*, in the common version. After much examination of all the alleged difficulties, both in the punctuation, the relative *he*, and the word *eperotema*, we adopt the following punctuation and translation of this passage, which is most natural, and we think, obviously most defensible:

"In the days of Noah when the ark was preparing. wherein few (that is eight) souls were saved through water. Immersion, which is the antitype, does also now