

the time, have been immersed by John Baptist, or any other man. It will be remembered that John completed his proceeding with the people before Christ was baptized. "Now, when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus, also being baptized," &c.—Luke iii. 21. Well, Christ was baptized, "when he began to be about thirty years of age."—Luke iii. 23. John was only six months older than Christ (Luke i. 36); and he could not enter upon his work, till he was thirty years old, (Num. iv. 3-47, and 1 Chron. xxiii. 3.) He thus began his ministry only six months before Christ's baptism; by which time he had baptized all the people. The numbers that, in these six months (and perhaps less), he baptized, were probably two millions. If he occupied the whole six months in the operation, he passed through his hands 12,800 a-day, a number which it is physically impossible to immerse, but which he could have sprinkled in large numbers with great ease. Every thing, therefore, forbids the supposition of plunging at *Ænon* or *Jordan*: in the former spot, there is only a "well;" in the latter, a deep rushing stream; while crowds of people, unprepared with a change of clothes, were baptized at the rate of 1070 an hour, or 18 a minute. To suppose all this, merely because John selected the neighbourhood of these waters to carry on his ministry for six months, amongst such crowds, twenty-five miles from Jerusalem, is to discard the natural view of the case, in order to buttress a distinctive scheme. But it may be said, that John baptized in *Jordan*. You will, however, recall what was said about Philip going down into the water of *Gaza*, and the fact that it would be as correct a reading of the original to read "at" *Jordan*, or "with" *Jordan*; for these are as ordinary meanings of the prepositions used by the Scripture historians, as "in" or "into;" and if John only baptized "at" or "with" the *Jordan*, it does not shew any immersion. But the question is closed by John's own statement in our text, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance," "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." Now, what was the mode of baptizing with "the Holy Ghost, and with fire?" Clearly, by the descent of the Holy Ghost, "and cloven tongues of fire" which sat upon them," Acts ii. 3. Now, as the