

Youth's Department.

SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS.

XVI. BAAL.

[Baal is one of the false gods frequently mentioned in Scripture.—Answers to the following questions will shew the more remarkable incidents connected with the idolatry of Baal.—It existed, with very little interruption, during the whole of the continuance both of Israel and Judah as a nation; and did not entirely cease, till the former was taken captive into Assyria, and the latter into Babylon.—After the return of Judah from the Babylonian captivity, no traces of any species of idolatry were to be seen.—So fully had they been taught by the just punishment of their sin, to hate and to avoid it.]

162. What are the two first instances recorded of the Israelites following Baal, Baalim or Baalpeor?—(Numb. & Judges.)

163. One of the Israelitish judges was called Jerrub-baal, on account of his overthrowing the altar of Baal—can you tell the proper name of this great man? and can you relate the whole transaction?—(Judges.)

164. On what occasion did the prophet Elijah contend with the prophets of Baal? and how many of them were then slain?—(1 Kings.)

165. At one period of the Jewish history, the idolatry of Baal was exterminated from out of Israel—his altar broken, and his temple made a draught-house.—By whose means, and by what policy was this accomplished?—(2 Kings.)

166. During the usurpation of the wicked Athaliah, the idolatry of Baal prevailed in Judah: upon her death it was again put down, and his priest slain before the altar.—Under whose superintendence and direction was this effected?—(2 Kings.)

167. The good king Hezekiah during his reign had destroyed all the idolatrous worship constituted by the wicked Ahaz his father.—How did Manasseh, the son of the pious Hezekiah, stand affected towards Baal?—(2 Kings.)

168. What measures did Josiah, that young but pious prince, adopt respecting Baal during his reign?—(2 Kings.)

CHURCH CALENDAR.

Jan. 28.—Fourth Sunday after Epiphany.
Feb. 2.—Purification of Virgin Mary.
4.—Fifth Sunday after Epiphany.
11.—Septuagesima Sunday.

THE YOUNG CHURCHMAN ARMED.

CHAP. II.

ON THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS.

Q. 1. In what way is the rite of Baptism administered in the Church of England?

A. Either by sprinkling with water or by dipping the person to be baptized.

2. Is sprinkling or dipping most common?

Sprinkling, as being most convenient, and in our cold climate less likely to injure the health.

3. What authority is there for this method of baptizing?

The Scriptures give us no express commands on the subject; and do not contain anything which would lead us to suppose, that the one practice was more in accordance with the Divine will, than the other. (1)

4. What appears to have been the practice of the primitive Church in administering baptism?

Both from the cases recorded in Scripture, and from the writings of the early Christians, there is good reason to believe that in the first ages some persons were baptized by dipping and others by sprinkling.

5. Is the mere manner in which a person is baptized, a matter of much consequence?

No; and therefore the Church of England, in the absence of all certain scriptural direction, has left the matter open to choice.

6. At what age are the members of the Church of England usually baptized?

In infancy. But the Church has not neglected to provide a service for the baptism of such grown-up persons as have not been baptized in infancy.

7. Is not the practice of baptizing infants much objected to by some Christians?

Yes, by those who are called Baptists, who say that it is contrary both to reason and Scripture.

8. Can it be proved to be contrary to reason?

No, unless it can be shewn that the circumcision of infants, practised in the ancient Jewish Church by the express command of God, was contrary to reason.

9. But are not repentance and faith required of all who are baptized, according to Acts ii. 38, and viii. 37?

Yes, of all who are capable of these acts; but this is no reason why the ordinance should be withheld from those who are not as yet capable of them. (2)

10. Can it be proved that Infant Baptism is contrary to Scripture?

No; for although there is no particular instance on record of the baptism of a child, there are many passages in the Acts of the Apostles, which imply that such baptisms constantly occurred. (3)

11. Name some of these.

We read, (Acts xvi. 15) that Lydia of Thyatira was baptized, and her household; and again in the same chapter, ver. 33, that the jailer at Philippi was baptized, he and all his. Now we cannot but suppose, that in one or the other of these two families, there must have been a child or children, as well as grown-up persons. (4)

12. In what words did our Lord express himself, when he gave his last command to his disciples, (Mat. xxviii. 19)? "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." He does not say, "baptizing those who are grown up," but "baptizing them," that is, the nations, which consist as much of children as of adults. (5)

13. Is it at all likely, that Christ, in forming the Christian Church, should have omitted to make any provision for children, especially when he said, (Mark x. 14) "Suffer the little children

to come unto me"; and told Peter (John xxi. 15) to feed his lambs or the little ones of his flock? (6)

No; for in that case, the children of Jewish parents would have enjoyed greater privileges than those of Christians; and the latter or gospel dispensation, which was to be better and more perfect, would be less complete and finished than the former or legal dispensation. (7)

14. Should we not have expected to find in the Epistles of the Apostles, some observations respecting the duty of preparing the young persons of the Churches for the important rite of baptism, supposing them not to have been baptized in infancy?

Certainly; in that case the Apostles could not have failed to have mentioned the subject; and the total absence of any hint concerning it in their letters, proves that the children of those persons to whom they were written, were already baptized.

15. Do we find that infant baptism was practised in the Church, in its early and purest state?

It has prevailed almost universally from the very earliest ages; and it is impossible to account for its general introduction into the various Churches of the world, within a few years after the death of the Apostles, if it were a departure from what they taught and did. (8)

16. What then is the conclusion to which you come?

That Infant Baptism, as practised by the Church of England, is sanctioned by Scripture, the custom of the primitive Church, and sound reason; and is therefore highly to be approved of, and steadfastly to be maintained.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

(1) The Baptists sometimes lay much stress on the expression, "went down into the water," as in the case of the Ethiopian, Acts viii. 38. Can it be shewn that any thing more is meant by this and similar expressions, than that the person to be baptized went down ankle deep into the stream or pool, where water was poured on his head by the minister? This conjecture is at least as probable as that of complete immersion; and neither of the two is more than a conjecture.

They also argue in favour of immersion from John iii. 23. "John was baptizing in Enon near to Salim, because there was much water there." Now the literal translation of the original expression is, "many waters"; which conveys to the mind the idea of many small streams, and not of a single one of considerable depth so that this passage gives but feeble support to their practice, if it be not actually against it.

It is very difficult to imagine, and impossible to prove, that the 3,000 persons who were added to the Church on the day of Pentecost, were all individually immersed in water in so short a time, and by so few ministers.

(2) The real question is, are we to withhold baptism from infants, because they are not yet capable of entering into the spiritual signification of the rite, or the proper feelings with which, in the case of an adult, it should be approached? We answer, no, because circumcision was not withheld from the children of the ancient Church, though equally incapable of understanding it, and of feeling rightly with regard to it. It was clearly the will of God, that Jewish children should be brought into covenant with Him. From what are we to infer, that it is his will that ours are to be left to his uncovenanted mercies, and be suffered to have no more interest in the promises, than the babes of the Heathen or the Turk?

(3) There is no case on record in Scripture of a woman partaking of the Lord's Supper, nor any special direction on the subject. But does any one think this a good reason why the sex should be excluded from the Communion?

(4) St. Paul also says, (1 Cor. i. 16) that he "baptized the household of Stephanas." Was this another childless family?

The casual and incidental way in which these baptisms are recorded, proves that they were not uncommon and extraordinary cases. If, therefore, the first ministers of the Gospel baptized whole households at Philippi and Corinth, what reason have we to suppose that they did not do the same in every place, where their preaching was successful? Some of the families so baptized, must surely have contained children.

(5) Take, as an illustration, a nation of slaves, as the negroes in the West Indies lately were. The decree goes forth that it shall be emancipated or made free. Would not such a decree infer, that all individuals of this nation, young as well as old, infants as well as adults, are to be made free? And would the incapacity of the children to understand the principle on which the thing was done, the nature of the change from bondage to liberty, and the moral responsibilities involved in it, preclude them from participating in the benefit?

It is argued from the word "teach" in our Lord's charge to his Apostles, that it can have no reference to infants, who are incapable of being taught. The word, however, in the original signifies, "make disciples," an expression synonymous with "make proselytes." To understand the force of this term as used by our Lord, we must recollect that the Jews were accustomed to admit the children of their proselytes into the Church, if males, by circumcision and baptism, if females, by baptism. Of this the Apostles must have been fully aware; and when our Lord gave them the charge referred to, would naturally conclude that the children of Christian proselytes or disciples, were to be admitted into the Church under the new dispensation, as was the custom under the former one.

(6) For what purpose were these children brought to our Lord? Certainly not for the cure of any bodily disorder. If then their friends were not looking for any good to be done to their bodies by Christ, they must have expected that some good would be done to their souls—some spiritual blessing would be imparted to them by his touch. Now, if these little children, in consequence of their youth, were incapable of receiving any such blessing, would not our Lord have said so, and dispelled the delusion at once? On the contrary, He chides the interference of the Apostles, takes the babes into his arms, puts his hands upon them, and blesses them, declaring that of such was the kingdom of heaven. And thus, unless this putting his hands upon children with blessing be considered as a vain, unmeaning, inoperative form, (and far be it from us to look upon this solemn and

delightful transaction in such a light), He fully sanctions our belief, that infants are capable of receiving grace.

(7) The Baptist considers all persons baptized in infancy, as not having been baptized at all. Now the immense majority of Christians in every age and country, have, incontrovertibly, been baptized at that period of their lives. It follows then, according to the above notion, that the immense majority of saved sinners, dead and alive, consists of unbaptized persons! which is somewhat inconsistent with our Lord's declaration, (Mark xvi. 16,) "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved."

(8) In a council held at Carthage, A. D. 253, which was attended by sixty-six African bishops, the question for consideration was not whether infants should be baptized at all, but whether the rite should be administered to them before the eighth day after their birth. This council is important, as it proves that infant baptism was practised in at least sixty-six dioceses only about 150 years after the death of St. John. How could the practice have already spread so widely, and been received so unanimously, had it been an innovation, and contrary to the Apostles' custom?

Tertullian, who lived about A. D. 200, a man who held many strange and heretical opinions, and was of no influence nor authority in the Church, thought that baptism might as well be delayed in some particular cases; and Gregory, who was converted A. D. 325, and became Bishop of Nazianzen, did not bring his children to baptism in their infancy. These are the only symptoms of Antipædo-baptism we meet with for the first eleven centuries of the Christian era.

About the year 1130, appeared in Dauphiny a sect, called Petrobrusians, which denied baptism to infants. It was, however, not numerous, and soon became extinct.

About the year 1522, soon after Luther began to preach the doctrines of the Reformation, arose the sect of the Anabaptists in Germany. This sect is the parent of the various Baptist congregations now existing in different parts of the world. In our own country, (England) there appear to have been persons who denied infant baptism in Henry the Eighth's time, having received the new doctrine from Holland or Germany. But it was not until the Great Rebellion, that any considerable number of persons joined their party.

SCRIPTURE DIFFICULTIES.

In places of dark and ambiguous meaning, it is sufficient if we religiously admire, acknowledge, and confess, maintaining neither side, reproaching neither side, but rather recalling ourselves from such bold presumption. To understand belongs to Christ, the author of our faith; to us is sufficient the glory of believing. It is not depth of knowledge, nor knowledge of antiquity, nor sharpness of wit, nor authority of councils, can settle the restless conceits that possess the minds of many doubting Christians—Only to ground our faith on the plain, incontrovertible text of Scripture, and to wait and pray for the coming of the Lord—this shall compose our waverings, and give final rest unto our souls.—Hales.

GEORGE THE THIRD.

The king and queen have suffered infinitely from the loss of the sweet little prince, who was the darling of their hearts, (Prince Octavius.) I was charmed with an expression of the king's; "Many people (said he) would regret they ever had so sweet a child, since they were forced to part with him; this is not my case. I am thankful to God for having graciously allowed me to enjoy such a creature for four years." Yet his sorrow was very great.—Hannah Moore.

The Church

Will for the present be published at the Star Office, Cobourg every Saturday.

TERMS.

To Subscribers resident in the immediate neighborhood of the place of publication, TEN SHILLINGS per annum. To Subscribers receiving their papers by mail, FIFTEEN SHILLINGS per annum, postage included. Payment is expected yearly, or at least half yearly in advance.

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT.

The Hon. and Ven. The Archdeacon of York; The Rev. Dr. Harris, Principal of the U. C. College; the Rev. A. N. Bethune, Rector of Cobourg; the Rev. H. I. Grasett, Asst. Minister of St. James's church, Toronto;—to any of whom communications referring to the general interests of the paper may be addressed.

EDITOR for the time being, The Rev. A. N. Bethune, to whom all communications for insertion in the paper (post paid) are to be addressed, as well as remittances of Subscription.

AGENTS.

The Clergy of the Church of England in both Provinces.
Robt. Stanton Esq., King Street, Toronto.
Mr. C. Scadding, New Market.
Dr. Low, Whitby.
Charles Brent Esq., Port Hope.
H. Hughes Esq., P. M. Emily.
W. Warren Esq., Darlington.
J. Beavis Esq., Clarke.
B. Y. McKyes Esq., Colborne.
J. B. Ewart Esq., Dundas.
Brooke Young, Esq., Guelph.
John Burwell, Esq., P. M. Port Burwell.
J. White, Esq., P. M. Camden West.
A. Davidson, Esq., P. M. Niagara.
Mr. J. Ruthven, Hamilton.
T. S. Shortt, Esq., Woodstock.
Hon. James Kerby, Fort Erie.
G. W. Baker, Esq., Bytown.
Alfred Knight Esq., Wm. Henry, L. C.
Mr. Jas. McLaren, Quebec.
Messrs. Swords Stanford, & Co. New York.

[R. D. CHATTERTON, PRINTER.]