

not in the original) what doth hinder me to be baptized? In a desert in the east, every one, acquainted with books of travels in such parts, knows, that the discovery of a spring, though ever so shallow, is recorded with peculiar interest and delight.

The inspired narrative relating to Cornelius and his family, Acts x: 47, presents incidental evidence of a nature peculiarly forcible, that the rite of baptism was administered in the times of the Apostles by pouring or sprinkling. "Can any *forbid water*?" said Peter, "that these should not be baptized?" "When of two things," says Mr. Isaac, "the one is active, and the other passive, you never think of applying a restraining power to the passive subject: the supposition is absurd: the restraint must be imposed on the active agent. Now in what possible way could the water be forbidden, if it had not been customary to bring it upon the subjects of the ordinance? The Apostle evidently means, 'can any man forbid water being brought into the room for the baptism of those persons.'" Mr. Crawley egregiously trifles in remarking, it is as easy to say, "can any forbid water to be used, or the use of water, for immersion, as to say, can any forbid water to be brought for sprinkling."* There is this difference in the two suppositions, Mr. Crawley,—yours involves the idea that all in the company were not agreed as to the propriety of using *water*, as the element in baptism,—to the other method of supplying the ellipsis, no such extravagant inference can attach.

It is impossible to survey the multifarious and contrasted circumstances associated with the different accounts of baptisms, to which our attention has been called in this chapter, without being struck with the plastic energy of prejudication, by which our opponents never fail to mould all circumstances into a perfect adaptation to their own views. Like the Israelites in regard to manna, our friends, with respect to water, never have too little, neither is there any over. Place them in Jerusalem at the *driest* season of the year, and thousands of hogsheads of the pure and limpid element are at hand—transport them from 'the city full' to a barren waste—a miracle is instantaneously wrought for their accommodation,—'the parched ground becomes a pool!' What then shall their condition be in the 'swellings of Jordan,' and amid the *much water* of Enon? No complaint shall that abundance elicit—it is all of course needed for *baptism*. Into such incongruities does a determined adherence to the system of exclusive immersion lead its votaries.

* Treatise on Baptism, p. 125.