

*I.* I think that any common reader of the Bible would believe as I do.

*S.* A common reader of the Bible is one, who, unacquainted with the learned languages, takes the common English Bible, compares Scripture with Scripture, by a diligent search; and is able and ready from the Bible itself, to give an answer of the reason of the hope that is in him. 1 Peter iii. 15.

*I.* That is what I would call a common reader.

*S.* Would such a reader conclude, from the prophecies, that Christ was immersed? There is no such prophecy. Would he not expect that water would be used in the Redeemer's kingdom, by pouring and sprinkling? There are many such prophecies. Would he be able to discover, from the mode in which God baptizes, that Jesus was immersed? God's mode is pouring out. Could he find out, from the meaning of the word, as used by Paul and Peter, and explained by Moses and David, that immersion was the way? Could he tell from the words, Go—baptize—what part of the body, and in what way it was to be baptized? You have owned that this cannot be shown. How, then, would he conclude that Jesus was immersed, or that baptism means nothing but total immersion?

*I.* Because he would read that John baptized in Jordan, and at Enon, because there was much water there. John iii. 23.

*S.* He would also read that he baptized at Bethabara: and in the wilderness, where there was not much water. Is it not reasonable to conclude, that John would require much water to sprinkle the immense multitudes who came to be baptized; and that they also would require much water to drink? It does not follow that he immersed them, because there was water to do it enough.

*I.* But he would read that John baptized in Jordan.

*S.* True: but the depth of his baptism is what the common reader would have to discover. All that is said about his baptism may be true, even if he baptized on dry ground; as God did the Israelites, and the Congregationalists did me.

*I.* How could that be possible?

*S.* John might have gone a little way from the shore, as the Saviour did (Matt. xiii. 2,) to avoid the press, and to give the people on the bank an opportunity of hearing and seeing. They might have waded in; and after he had sprinkled them, returned out of the water. We might believe all this, without finding a meaning to baptism for which there is no prophecy, which is contrary to prophecy, and to the meaning which God gives of the word. And no man can prove from the Bible that it was not so. Does the Bible give any reason why Jesus was to be immersed?

*I.* I cannot show any particular reason.

*S.* I do not believe that a common reader would think that to be