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THE CHRISTIAN.

No. 3. } SAINT JOHN, N. B., AUGUST, 1839. } Vol. 1.

CONDUCTED BY W. W. EATON.

Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.—*Peter*. On this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.—*The Lord Messiah*.

[FROM THE CHRISTIAN BAPTIST.]

AN ACCOUNT OF A REMARKABLE OCCURRENCE IN A LATE JOURNEY.—AN APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

The following is copied from the first volume of the *Christian Magazine*, printed in Edinburgh, in 1819.

Having occasion, some time ago, to travel in the county of —, I arrived, on Saturday evening, in the town of —. Being a stranger, I made enquiry of my host respecting the places of worship in the town. He told me there were two established churches, a Burgher and an anti-Burgher meeting, and an Episcopal chapel, and of late, said he, another meeting has been set up, whose mode of worship is different from all the others. I was curious to learn wherein it differed; but he could give me no distinct answer, only he said, that many of the town's people did not approve of it, though he had heard some of the graver kind liked it very much. Next morning I enquired where I should find the new place of worship he had mentioned, and being directed, I repaired to it.—Two persons whom I supposed to be the elders of the church, soon entered.—One of them, after a short prayer, imploring the divine presence, gave out a hymn, celebrating the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. He then read a portion of scripture from the Old Testament, and another from the New. That from the New Testament was judiciously chosen, as illustrating some part of what had been read from the old. Having mentioned several of the members by name, who were variously afflicted, he called on one of the brethren to pray. He was an aged disciple of grave appearance; his prayer seemed to be the effusion of a heart alive to God—plain, artless and appropriate. I was particularly struck by the affectionate manner in which he prayed for these distressed brethren. It reminded me of the apostle's description of the body of Christ, "Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it." After again uniting in praise, the elder addressed the church, in terms which made such an impression on my mind, that I believe I repeat his words almost *verbatim*—"I have now," said he, "brethren, to lay before you a matter peculiarly painful, it is the case of our brother —. His crime is described in the fifth chapter of the

Galatians, the 19th verse. The fall of our brother, I lament to say, is well known to the world, and has caused the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. By the offence of this person, (for he did not again name him) the church is called to deep humiliation before God. In this mournful case, we have a striking instance of the fatal effects of unnecessarily mingling with the world. This was the first step of his defection, and it paved the way for all that has followed. When first spoken to on the subject, he positively denied it; but has now confessed it to me and two of the brethren." [Here these two brethren simply attested to the truth of the statement.]—After a short pause he proceeded—"With the law of our Lord and Master in our hands, we can be at no loss as to our duty in this case. That law is explicitly stated in the fifth chapter of the 1st epistle to the Corinthians, from the fourth verse to the end, (which he read). Here then, you perceive, brethren, there is no alternative; the Lord Jesus commands us, both for this person's good, and that of the body, to separate him from our fellowship." The church, (who I now perceived were sitting together in one place) having signified their conviction that this was their duty, the elder with much solemnity said, "We, then, as a church of Jesus Christ, and acting by his authority, do, in obedience to his commandment, separate — — from our fellowship." He then prayed in a very appropriate and impressive manner, for the unhappy subject of discipline, that the ordinance of God which had now been attended to, might be blessed to his soul by bringing him to repentance—and to the church, in leading them to watchfulness, self-abasement, and continual dependence on the grace of Jesus. After prayer, the 101st psalm was sung, which formed an extremely suitable conclusion to the solemn service. I never witnessed a scene more deeply affecting. The countenance of every person present bespoke his feelings. How is it, said I to myself, that I have lived so long among christians, and have never, till now, seen this plain and positive law of Jesus carried into effect? How beneficial are the laws of his kingdom! how much are they calculated to promote the spiritual life of his people, and to awaken the thoughtless and inconsiderate! The church now proceeded to—what I afterwards understood was a stated part of their service every Lord's day—the observance of the Lord's supper. The simplicity with which the divine ordinance was attended to, was, in itself, edifying. I beheld a representation of the unity of the body of Christ, which I never before witnessed. The words of the institution were read by one of the elders, a few remarks were then made on the nature of the Lord's supper, and on the spirit in which it ought to be observed. He then gave thanks; and then breaking the bread gave it to the disciples, who divided it among themselves. Having again united in thanksgiving, he gave also the cup, and when all had drank of it, concluded with a short exhortation, and singing an appropriate hymn. This part of the service being closed, the elder said, "Let us now, brethren, attend to the ordinance of mutual exhortation"; when some of the members spoke for a few minutes alternately, with much simplicity, earnestness, and evident humbleness of mind. The addresses of the brethren were, proper-

ly speaking, exhortations—calculated to excite to the performance of duty, and to bear, with patience, the various sufferings of the present life: each of them had some relation to the others, and their combined influence was highly salutary. Is not this, said I to myself, an exhibition of what the apostle means, when he speaks of “the body of Christ edifying itself in love?” The exhortations of the brethren were followed by an address from one of the elders, in which he briefly recapitulated the topics brought forward by the members, and enforced the duties to which their attention had been called. One of the brethren was again called on to pray. After again uniting in praise, the elder, in a short prayer, implored the divine benediction on their services, and entreated the blessing of God while they attended to the fellowship of the saints. The church then sat down, when a collection was made, and the worship closed. The two hours which I thus spent with these dear people, were among the happiest and most profitable I ever enjoyed on earth. I bless God, that unexpectedly I had an opportunity of witnessing the order of a church, which commended itself to my mind, as combining all the ends of christian association, and of which I had previously formed some idea from reading the New Testament. After an interval the service proceeded, and the time was occupied by prayer and praise, the teaching of the elders, and the reading of the word of God; which last, I observed, throughout the day formed a conspicuous part of their worship.

Being under the necessity of leaving this town early next morning, I was very desirous of learning their history. Accordingly, when worship was over in the evening, I accosted a person whom I had noticed among the members: “Sir,” said I, “I am a stranger in this place, and was happily led to your place of worship to-day. Although unknown to any of you in the face, I trust I am one with you in the faith and hope of the gospel. I was very much edified with your order, and would esteem it a great favor if you would give me some particulars of your history.” He very kindly invited me to his house, and gave me the following interesting detail:—“I have no doubt,” said he, “that the motives of your enquiry are good; I shall, therefore, without reserve, give you the information you request. We have met together as a church for these six years past. The original members were intimately acquainted with one another. Each of us had, for a considerable time, been groaning under the defects of the societies with which we were then connected. We clearly perceived that they bore none of the features of the churches set in order by the apostles; but we sinfully contented ourselves with our condition. Our chief comfort, as to christian society, arose from assembling together once a-week in what is called a fellowship meeting. On one of these occasions a member spoke with some freedom on the distress he felt, arising from the cause above mentioned. This led the way to a free conversation; and we soon found that our distress was not that of an individual, but common to us all. We therefore resolved to walk together as a church in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord Jesus, diligently searching the scriptures to know his will. and fervently praying to be

guided by him. From that period we have assembled regularly on the first day of the week. The Lord has been pleased graciously to countenance us. Our beginning was indeed small; we were few and despised; but walking, as I trust, in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit we have been greatly multiplied. We had soon the satisfaction of choosing two of our brethren, with whose qualifications we were entirely satisfied, as our elders. Their labors of love have been much blessed, and one and another has from time to time been added to our number. Our communion commenced," he continued, "in the full conviction that we were yielding obedience to the Lord Jesus. And now we have increasing experience of the truth of our Saviour's declaration, that if any man do his will he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God. We have no standard but the will of our Master; and this we find so clearly stated in the scriptures, that, with the teachable spirit of disciples, we are in no danger of misunderstanding it." "The brethren," said I, "appear to have much love to each other."—"Yes," he replied, "we know the benefits of christian fellowship, by coming together into one place on the first day of the week, and regularly observing the ordinances of Christ, we not only get better acquainted, but our interest in each other is greatly promoted. If a brother or a sister be absent, they are immediately missed, and inquiry is made for them. Our elders know well the situation of every individual; and in case of distress the church is particularly informed. Thus our sick or otherwise distressed brethren, are not neglected.—Christian sympathy is excited, and we are stirred up to the duty of weeping with those that weep. In short," continued he, "we have convincing proof of the wisdom of all the appointments of Christ, and how eminently the observance of them is calculated to cherish and mature every christian grace, the people of God are not aware of the loss they sustain by neglecting any one of them." "I was much gratified," said I, "by the short exhortations of the brethren to-day; is every brother called on to exhort in the church?" "Yes," he answered, "we think the commandment to exhort one another, can be limited no otherwise, than by a brother possessing no talent for it. It is the duty of our elders to take care that the edification of the church be not marred; and if a church be composed of real disciples, abuses will rarely occur. We have no right to make laws to ourselves; it is our province to follow implicitly the injunctions of our master. A few Sabbaths ago, one of our brethren spoke on the consolations which the gospel affords to believers under the heaviest trials, and with much feeling urged the duty of cordial submission to the will of God. The advice came with peculiar impression from one whose deep affliction was well known to his brethren. Indeed, who that knows the Lord is not fitted to suggest a word in season, and how gracious is the Saviour's appointment, that his disciples should comfort one another with the words of truth. Individual experience thus becomes a general benefit. The Lord Jesus, my friend, bestows gifts on his people, and every one knows that gifts are improved by exercising them." But does not the singularity of your observance, draw upon you the censure of others?" "I believe it does;

but," added he, with a look of peculiar satisfaction, " a full conviction that we are obeying the commands of the Lord Jesus, raises us superior to these little obstacles. While we follow our own convictions of duty, and are thankful, that, in this highly favoured country every man enjoys liberty to worship God according to his own conscience, we, at the same time cherish a loving spirit towards all who truly fear God ; we earnestly desire the universal spread of the Gospel ; and use every means in our power for the salvation of perishing sinners around us. I thanked this worthy man for the free and open manner in which he talked with me, and with much regret, bade him adieu !

Next morning I pursued my journey, but not without casting a wishful eye on the spot where these disciples sojourn. The occurrences of this day I shall not soon forget. Never do I read of the churches of the New Testament but I realise the christians at —. Send forth, O God ! thy light and thy truth, unite thy people. Thou hast indeed given them a good law ; thy commandments concerning all things are right. " Thus says the Lord, I am the Lord your God, who teaches you to profit, who leads you by the way that you should go. Oh ! that you had harkened to my commandments, then had your peace been as a river, and your righteousness as the waves of the sea !"*

DISCOURSE ON POSITIVE INSTITUTIONS.

BY JOHN TAFFE.

(Continued from page 33)

My second proposition is, that God's positive institutions have appeared most unlikely means to super-induce the evils, that have flowed from the violation of them, or to secure the good, that has resulted from obedience to them.

How unlikely a thing was the eating of an apple, to entail upon the human family death and all the ills, with which man has been visited, since our first parents plucked down upon their guilty heads, the vengeance of heaven, by plucking the fruit of the prohibited tree !

Unlikely as it may seem, that violation of positive divine law, is the seminal principle, from which has sprung that deadly Upas, that all blasting tree, that darkens both the heavens and the earth, and " rains down plagues on men like dew, disease, death, bondage, whatever woes we see, and worse than this, whatever woes we feel," that pierce our souls with all the pangs of scorpion stings.

Can you imagine a more unlikely means of obtaining the pardon of

* Would the churches at Jerusalem, Phillippi, &c. the models of the above be esteemed orthodox now ?

sins, than through the blood of a slain beast ; that by laying a bleeding victim upon an altar, a man should have all his guilt removed, that cleaves to him like his own identity. Little as the means may seem adapted to the end, yet the patriarch or the Jew, who presented his sin offering upon God's altar according to the divine appointment, had the assurance of the pardon of his sins, the removal of all his guilt.

Was not circumcision a most unlikely institution to introduce a person into the privileges and immunities of the commonwealth of Israel?

Was not a brazen serpent suspended upon a pole a most unlikely remedy for the venomous bite of the fiery flying serpent, of which the afflicted Israelites were dying?

Yet unlikely as was the remedy, if the poor perishing Israelite, could neither move hand nor foot, but could only turn his dim eyes feebly in their sockets, the moment they rested upon the brazen serpent, the poison was all struck from his system. His heart that had almost ceased to pulsate, again beat with its wonted vigor, and sent the vital fluid, that had been congealing at its very fountain, in warm and healthful currents, through all his veins and arteries.

When Moses proposed this remedy, had the poor perishing Israelites said, why Moses will you mock our sufferings by telling us to look upon a brazen serpent to heal the bite of the dreadful fiery flying serpent, of which we are dying?

We feel the poison circulating through our system, carrying death with it as it circulates, and will you have us to spend the brief moments of life that may yet remain, and be employed in taking medicine, in vainly gazing off yonder upon a brazen serpent?

Who, since time was born ever heard of such a cure for the bite of a serpent? Why Moses do you think we are such very simpletons as to believe, that looking upon brass wrought into the form of a serpent, can cure the bite of a snake?

Had they thus reasoned they would have proved that they had more confidence in their own wisdom, than in the wisdom of God, and they would have perished for their folly.

How unlikely a cure for the leprosy to dip seven times in the river Jordan! A little captive maid of Israel, who waited on the wife of Naaman, a leper, captain of the hosts of the king of Syria, told her mistress that there was a prophet in Samaria, who could cure her lord of the leprosy.

Naaman upon receiving this information, comes with his horses and chariot, and stands at the door of the house of Elisha. The prophet does not even go out to salute the distinguished Syrian nobleman; but merely sends a messenger to him, to tell him to go and wash seven times in Jordan, and that his flesh should again come upon him, and he should be clean. When the proud Syrian nobleman heard this, he was offended. Why, says he, I thought the prophet would come out and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and

Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel, may I not wash in them and be clean?

Round he turns in a rage, and is dashing off to Damascus; when he is reproved by his servants, who say to him, my father, if the prophet had bid you do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much rather then when he says to you, wash and be clean! Struck with the common sense reasoning of his poor simple hearted servants, he turns about, and complies with the commands of the prophet. He goes down to Jordan, and dips himself, once, twice, thrice, four times, five, six times, and the leprosy, that dreadful malady that had baffled all the skill of physicians, still cleaves to him with all its virulence. Had he gone away then, he had gone a rebel and unblessed: but he dips himself the seventh time, and as he rises from the waters the leprosy departs, and his flesh comes upon him like that of a young child.

I come now to the positive institution of baptism, which is the door of entrance into the church of Christ. It is a most unlikely ordinance to secure the pardon of sins, for which it was instituted! Unfit as it may seem for this purpose, Jesus says, he that believeth (the gospel) and is baptised shall be saved, not saved from temporal dangers, not saved from the grave, but saved from his sins—pardoned. Does this stagger you? Do you believe that, if you believe the gospel, repent of your sins, and forsake them, and are baptised in submission to the authority of the Lord Messiah, that he will pardon all your numerous sins? Or will you reject baptism for the remission of sins, because you perceive in it no adaptation to such an end? Because you perceive not the relation of cause and effect, existing between baptism and the pardon of sins? Is there not as much fitness in baptism for the remission of sins, as there was in the children of Israel looking upon the brazen serpent, to heal the bite of the fiery flying serpent, of which multitudes of them were dying? Is there not as much fitness in baptism for the remission of sins, as there was in Naaman's dipping seven times in Jordan, to heal him of the leprosy, that mocked all the skill of the physicians? Or as there was in the eating of an apple to entail death on all the world's inhabitants?

If there were any natural connection perceivable between baptism and the remission of sins, it would require very little faith to induce persons to submit to it; if there were here any natural adaptation of means to ends, men would be baptised from considerations drawn from the reason and fitness of things, without any regard for the authority of the lawgiver; it would therefore be no test of respect either for the divine word or the divine authority: But God would test your confidence in his word and your respect for his authority, and therefore he commands penitent believers to be baptised for the pardon of sins.

Many reject baptism for the remission of sins because they perceive in it no fitness for that purpose; but this is the very reason why God has instituted baptism for the remission of sins; for if there were any natural fitness in baptism for that purpose, men might attribute the virtue to the water. Hence while some reject baptism for the pardon of

sins, that they may obtain pardon, they do penance, or fry for weeks on the coals of conviction ; and because there is no natural fitness in baptism to take away sins, they reject it, as not instituted for remission of sins, and nickname it by way of reproach, cold water baptism, as if any person supposed that mere water could wash away sins. We have never been quite so green as that, we have never held or taught any such views.

Did the children of Israel who looked upon the brazen serpent, believe that the mere looking upon that brazen serpent healed them of the bite of the fiery flying serpent ?

Did Naaman when he had dipped seven times in Jordan, according to the direction of the prophet, and was healed of his leprosy, suppose that the waters of the turbid Jordan, had washed away that dread and loathsome disease ? No ! in both instances they attributed the cure to God.

The Israelites knew that the looking upon a brazen serpent could not cure the bite of a fiery flying serpent, but they knew that God could. Confiding in God they looked and were healed. Naaman after he had taken a lesson from his simple hearted servants, knew that the waters of Jordan could not heal his leprosy, but he knew that God could ; relying on God, he dipped seven times, as was healed. So the penitent believer who understands the Gospel, knows that baptism cannot take away his sins, but he knows that God can pardon them. Relying on God's promise, he is baptised, and all his past sins are pardoned, blotted out of the book of God's remembrance, to be remembered against him no more forever. God's word is pledged for the pardon of every penitent believer, who is baptised.

Was man ever more true than God ? Has God ever failed to do what he has promised ?

O for the faith of Naaman ! how many souls might be cleansed from the dreadful leprosy of sin ! O for the faith of the Israelites that were bitten by the serpent in the wilderness, and looked upon the brazen serpent that they might be healed ! how many souls might be healed of the dreadful bite of the old serpent, the devil ! I would that you had the faith of Saul of Tarsus. Ananias said to him, arise and be baptised and wash away thy sins ? Does he stop to cavil about waters washing away sins ? No ! but he immediately arises and is baptised, in submission to the authority of the Lord of Lords and King of Kings. He was ready to do any thing that the Lord commanded, if he had commanded him to break a rye straw for the pardon of his sins, he would have submitted to the dread sovereign of the heavens and the earth ; and so would you my friends if you had any loyalty towards heaven's king : if you had any respect for his word and his authority.

There is no more fitness in prayer for the forgiveness of sins than in baptism, yet God has told his children, if they confess their sins he is faithful and just to forgive their sins, and to cleanse them from all unrighteousness. The sacrifice of Christ is a positive institution. In his blood which was shed eighteen hundred years ago I perceive no fitness to cleanse a guilty conscience from the pollution of sin ; yet we are

clearly taught by the word of God that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sins.

It is the procuring cause of the remission of sins, and without it there could be no remission; baptism administered to penitent believers, is the means by which they enjoy the pardon of those sins, which they committed while aliens, and confession is the means by which the citizens of Messiah's kingdom enjoy the pardon of those sins which they commit after baptism.

The objections urged by many against baptism for the remission of sins, arise from their supposing the remission of sins to be something wrought in the heart, but the pardon of sins is not any thing wrought in the heart of man, but is an act passed by the Executive of the Universe in the palace royal of heaven.

A rebel against a temporal government cannot tell by his feelings that the executive has pardoned him. It is only by the pardon of the executive, duly authenticated, that he can be assured of pardon.

A portion of a king's subjects have revolted, he issues his proclamation, bearing the seal of state and his own royal signature. It meets the eyes of one of the rebels, he immediately complies with its conditions. Ask him if he is not afraid he will be executed for treason. No sir, says he, here is the king's proclamation, proposing pardon upon certain conditions. I have complied with those conditions, and unless the king deny himself, I am a pardoned man.

So man has revolted against the divine government. The great King eternal, immortal, and invisible, has issued his royal proclamation, bearing his own divine signature, and sealed with the broad red seal of the blood of his beloved son. Ask a man who has intelligently obeyed the gospel, whether he is pardoned or not, and he will not tell you he thinks so, because at a certain time he dreamed a dream, saw a vision, heard a voice or had peculiar feelings, but he will point you to heaven's royal proclamation.

He will tell you that the great king has issued his proclamation, bearing the divine seal and inscription, proposing pardon to his rebel subjects upon the conditions of faith, repentance, and baptism. I am assured that this is the proclamation of the great king himself. I know that these are its terms, and I know that I have complied with them. I know that I believe the gospel with all my heart, and did before I was baptised. I know that I repented, broke off from my sins by righteousness, and I know that I was buried with Christ in baptism. My faith, my repentance, and my baptism, are all matters of consciousness about which I cannot be mistaken; and here is the proclamation of the king attesting my pardon. And if I could this moment enter his audience chamber, and solicit an answer from his own divine lips, his word is the only evidence I could have of my pardon.

[To be continued.]

ESSAYS ON MAN IN HIS PRIMITIVE STATE, AND UNDER THE PATRIARCHAL, JEWISH, AND CHRISTIAN DISPENSATIONS.—NO. III.

PRIMITIVE STATE.—NO. III.

[From the Christian Baptist]

ADAM, by his fall, lost the image of God, and thereby ceased to be the object of his complacent affection and esteem. To love, delight in, and esteem, what God loves, delights in, and esteems; and to disapprove what he disapprobates, constitutes man's moral likeness to God, and proves him to be in his image. God cannot but love those who are like him, and he cannot but dislike those who are unlike him. His benevolent regard towards man as his creature, even when fallen, may, and we are assured does continue, while he is susceptible of being reconciled to him: though he cannot love with complacent affection one of the species, until his moral image is restored.

Now man by his fall, did not lose his susceptibility of being restored to the image of God; nor did he incur eternal death by his original transgression. Had either of these been fact his redemption had been impossible. Man cannot merit eternal death unless he sin against an economy which contains within it eternal life. And had God meant by the promise of death, in the economy under which Adam was first placed, what we understand by eternal death; his veracity required that Adam must go down to eternal ruin. But neither eternal life nor eternal death were proposed to Adam under that constitution; consequently the former could not be merited by obedience, nor the latter by disobedience. So far we proceed upon incontrovertible fact. It is true, indeed, that Adam by his fall was placed in such circumstances as it became possible for him to become liable to eternal ruin. But what we contend for here, is, that this was no part of the economy, nor contained either in the law or promises under which he was placed. He lost his glory. The dazzling splendour of his body vanished, and he was ashamed to look at himself; his understanding became bewildered; he lost the true idea of the similitude of God, as well as his moral image. But he neither lost the susceptibility of being restored to the image of God, nor did he actually incur eternal death. He was therefore still worthy of the divine benevolence, though unworthy of the divine complacency; or, in other words, there was still in man, in the species, as well as in the two progenitors, something which moved the divine benevolence, and which was worthy to move his compassion and kindness. This will not be the case, it cannot be the case, with those who fall from the economy under which we now live. For as eternal life is now promised, so is eternal death; and man can now render himself unworthy of even the divine benevolence, should he so sin against the divine philanthropy as to merit eternal death. But this is in anticipation of our subject.

To return to the fall of man, all speculations apart, the facts are these, man lost all his personal glory. The rays of glory which shone from the face of Moses, and the angelic beauty which appeared in the face of Stephen, the protomartyr, were but resemblances of the pristine

glory which, as the flame encompasses the burning wick, encompassed the persons of our illustrious progenitors.—Man lost his mental excellence and beauty as he lost his corporeal. The moral image of God vanished; and the complacent favour of God departed with it. Such were the immediate consequences of his fall. But besides the guilt of sin, there is something called the power of it. It has a polluting influence. Remorse is not the only feeling of which we are conscious when we transgress. There is shame as well as remorse, and this arises from the pollution or defilement of sin.

One transgression necessarily leads to another, and the power of sin increases in an exact ratio with the overt acts. Let us look at some species of transgression. Take theft for example. The confirmed thief began by pilfering or purloining, perhaps, some trifle. He is much disturbed by this first act. In his own estimation, he has fallen. He is conscious of the wrong he has done, and feels the guilt. But half the temptation which induced the first act will be sufficient to impel to a second; and half of the temptation which induced the second will induce to a third, and so on till he become a habitual thief. Now the power of sin increases in the same ratio as the need of temptation diminishes. The reason why half the temptation will induce to a second act is because the power of the first sin renders the second as much more easy to be committed, as the temptation is less than before. This dominion of sin is a most fearful thing. For such is the awful extent to which it triumphs, that persons who could hardly be tempted to the first sin of a certain species, such as theft, drunkenness, lying, uncleanness, can at last sin, not only without any temptation, but even run into all excess with greediness.

A word or two on the *punishment* of sin, and we have the case fairly before us. For there is not only the guilt and the power of sin, but there is the *punishment* also. Remorse and shame are intimately allied to mental pain. Indeed, a sense of God's disapprobation necessarily incurs that fear which torments the guilty. But all the mental pain which sinners feel in this mortal state, though it is sometimes intolerably great, is, in scripture, made but a figure, or a resemblance of that punishment which is inseparably annexed to it hereafter. But it is necessary here to observe that pain, *mental*, or, if you please, *moral*, just as necessarily follows the transgression of moral law, as corporeal pain follows the infraction of the laws of nature. If I thrust my finger into the fire, or swallow a mineral or a vegetable poison, pain as necessarily ensues as a stone gravitates to the centre. It is so in the spiritual system. When men violate any moral restraint which God has imposed on them, pain must be the consequence by an unavoidable law of the moral system. Men, indeed, may be morally besotted, conscience may be seared as flesh with a hot iron, until the unhappy transgressor become past feeling.—But God can, and he has said that he will, make him feel hereafter. These hints on the guilt, power, and punishment of sin, are, we deem, necessary to scriptural views of the divine economy towards man after his fall.

Had man actually lost the susceptibility of being renewed in the

image of God, or had he actually incurred eternal death by his fall, it would have absolutely forbade any benevolent or merciful procedure towards him as a sinner. But again, if God had not set on foot a gracious institution adapted to the circumstances and condition of man, now fallen, and degraded, he never could by any device or act of his own, have been restored to the divine image and favour. These hints, which may be rendered very plain, constitute, in our judgment, the real support of the fall of man, and demonstrate the true basis of the divine economy under which fallen man has existed, under the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian ages, or dispensations.

The *rational* of the Christian religion is founded upon the views which the scriptures give of the fall of man; and the reasonableness of it can be fairly and fully demonstrated on the premises now before us.

When we speak of man's losing the image of God, we include under this phrase his loss of a correct idea of God's image, as well as his conformity to it. And here we find the fountain of all the idolatry ever known on earth. It is almost, if not altogether, impossible for human beings to lose the idea of the existence of a first cause after it has been in any way communicated to the mind. But it is as easy to lose a correct idea of the moral image of God, as it is difficult to lose an idea of his existence. While fallen man retains an impression or a conviction of a first cause or of a divinity, and has no correct idea of his image, he will naturally assimilate his divinity to that object which most engages his imagination or his strongest desires. Hence the deification of heroes, animals, vegetables, vices, or the host of heaven, according to the ruling passion of the idolatrous nation, tribe or individual. These, however, are conclusions from various premises not now laid before our readers, which may afterwards require more attention. To conclude this essay:—Man lost by his fall his personal glory as above described; he lost a true idea of the image of his Creator; and the actual moral likeness he before had to him; with this he lost his favour also, and was thereby not only become obnoxious to all the punishment annexed to his original transgression; but was, far as in him lay, utterly disqualified to regain either a true idea of God's moral character, conformity to him, or the enjoyment of his favour. Now the rational excellency of christianity is, that it adopts the only consistent means in the grasp of human comprehension to restore man to the image, favor, and friendship of God. But of this, more hereafter.

THE TRUTH OF REVELATION.

(Continued from page 41.)

The miracles wrought by Christ and the Apostles were so many, so great, so various, and performed in the presence of such vast multitudes, that they never could have gained credit if they had not been true.—Yet we find they did gain credit, and there in Jerusalem, the principal theatre of Christ's miracles, where he was publicly crucified between two thieves, the very place where the imposture, if it was one, might be

most easily detected, in less than two months from his crucifixion, we find no less than five thousand people openly profess to be his disciples. And it should be remembered that they were not induced to make this profession for the sake of wealth or worldly honours, because Christ had promised them neither, but told them that they should be hated of all men for his name-sake, and that he himself was not as well off in worldly goods as a fox or a bird. He told them plainly, that to be his disciples would cost them their lives; therefore nothing but the clearest conviction of his divine mission could have induced them to become his followers. It is utterly impossible for the Apostles and their associates to have been deceived, because the things on which they rest their testimony are matters of sense, not matters of opinion; besides it is impossible that they should be deceived respecting the miracles they wrought themselves. It is equally impossible that they could have been deceivers, because there is not one mark of deception in their characters.— They always did good, and never did harm; they persevered all their days in preaching and practising the purest morality, and at last laid down their lives in support of the same. If they were impostors, I would enquire, what are the marks of truth and honesty?

Either God or man must be the author of the Bible; this position is too plain to admit of dispute. And it is equally certain that if men are the authors of it, they must be either good men, or bad men. The prophets and apostles who recorded the truths of the Bible, could not have been bad men, for the following reasons. 1. Because in their characters there is not one trait of bad men; they never spoke nor acted wickedly in all their lives, after they became prophets or apostles. 2. Because the histories of their lives exhibit every characteristic of good men; they unremittingly taught and practised righteousness, and laboured all their days, and at last laid down their lives to support virtue. To say they were bad men, would be an outrage on common sense; it would be the same as to say that very good men are very bad men.

It is impossible that bad men could have been the authors of the Bible, because it teaches all men to be good, and threatens bad ones with the wrath of God, and the torments of hell for ever and ever. If the apostles and prophets were impostors, they did not believe what they preached, and if so, then undeceived, wilful impostors, must have invented the purest system of morals that ever was preached on earth, denied themselves of nearly all the comforts of this life, and voluntarily submitted to the most ignominious and painful deaths, all in support of virtue; when, at the same time, they hated it in their hearts, and did not believe that either God or man required them to do so, or that they would receive the least benefit by so doing.

It is equally clear that good men could not be the authors of the Bible; the men who wrote it constantly and unequivocally declare, they were not the authors of it, but that they only spoke and wrote what the Lord revealed to them; therefore, if they did not receive these things by divine inspiration, they must have been constantly in the practice of lying wilfully and knowingly, and therefore could not have been good men. If then neither bad nor good men were the authors of the

Bible, the conclusion is irresistible, that it cannot be a human production, but must have come from God.

If the evidences of christianity, and the divine power attending it, had not been irresistible, it could not have prevailed at the time, and in the places where it was first preached. Its author neither accommodated the prejudices, customs, appetites, ambition, nor worldly interest of those to whom it was addressed, but required them to take up a cross against all these things ; and told them plainly, that unless they would forsake parents, wives, children, houses, lands, and even their own lives, they should have no part in him ; while at the same time all the prejudices, customs, superstitions, learning, and civil authorities of those countries, were arrayed against it ; so that every one knew that to profess christianity, was certain disgrace, and suffering, and almost certain death. Yet under all these disadvantages it triumphed ; and not by military force, and in the regions of the greatest ignorance, and barbarism as Mahometanism did, but by the spirit of truth, and in the precincts of science and civilization, so that in a short time it became the prevailing religion of scientific Greece, and political Rome ; and has ever since held its empire over civilized man. There was no train of natural causes sufficient to produce this great change in the moral condition of mankind, but on the contrary every thing in the dominion of nature, and in the state of society stood in opposition to it ; therefore to deny that it was effected by supernatural agency, would be the same as to say that great effects have arisen from no cause.

If the miracles said to be wrought by Christ and the Apostles were false, why were they not then detected ? Learning, the prejudices of the age, numbers, and civil authority were all on the side of their enemies, and if they were impostors, nothing could have been easier, than for those enemies to defeat them ; and by murdering Christ, and more than a hundred thousand of his followers, they proved that they were disposed to suppress both him and his religion.

If a man should be arraigned at the bar for forgery, and his enemies should have every advantage over him, that the enemies of Christ and the Apostles had over them, and when the trial would come on, his accusers would assert that they had more than a thousand living witnesses who saw him commit the crime, and then, after manifesting the greatest zeal and rancor, so completely fail to bring one proof against him, either positive or circumstantial, that the judge would declare of him, as Pilot did of Christ, that he found no fault in the man, surely common sense would pronounce him innocent. Similar to this was the trial of Jesus Christ, and if his enemies with every facility failed to convict him of forgery then, how can they expect to do it now, after his gospel has stood the test of eighteen centuries, and has always proved itself to be the nurse of science, and the promoter of every thing that accords with the best interests of man ?

The Bible informs us that if we will repent of our sins, take up our cross, and persevere in praying to God, he will give us his holy spirit to change our hearts, cleanse us from sin, and fill us with joy unspeakable and full of glory : and the Christians who have complied with these

conditions, have found the promise true ; therefore, with them Christianity is not merely a matter of opinion ; it is a subject of experience, and there are among us tens of thousands of living witnesses, that have felt this supernatural change, whose lives and conversation corroborate their testimony.

No man in the world is naturally disposed to love his enemies, and to do good to them that injure him ; but all men acting under the influence of nature, return good for good, and evil for evil. Therefore this religion which teaches and *disposes* us to love our enemies, and return good for evil, must be superhuman, must be divine. I have long thought that the gospel contains internal evidence of its own divinity.

It was as impossible for this anti-sinful gospel to originate from fraud, as it is for anti-republican principles to proceed from republicanism, or anti-scriptural doctrines to grow out of the Bible. That, which is opposite to corruption, can grow out of it. That, which comes against the current of corrupt nature, chastens it, and turns it into the path of rectitude, must be, *above* nature.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

NO. III.

PRESENT ADMINISTRATION.—During the personal absence of the King, he has committed the management of this kingdom to stewards. These were, first Apostles ; next in rank to them, Prophets ; next teachers ; then, assistants, or helpers ; then directors or Presidents, all furnished with gifts, knowledge, and character, suited to their respective functions. Besides these, many persons possessed of miraculous powers—gifts of healing and speaking foreign languages, were employed in setting up and putting in order the communities composing the kingdom of heaven. Angels also were employed, and are still employed, under the great King in ministering to them who are heirs of salvation. For Jesus now, as Lord of all, has the Holy Spirit at his disposal, and all the angels of God ; and these are employed by him in the affairs of his kingdom.*

The Apostles were Plenipotentiaries and Ambassadors for Jesus, and all authority delegated to them from the King. Hence every thing was first taught and enjoined by them. They were the first teachers, pastors, overseers, and ministers in the kingdom, and had the direction and management of all its affairs.†

The communities collected and set in order by the Apostles were called *the congregations of Christ*, and all these taken together are sometimes called *the kingdom of God*. But the phrases “Church of God,” or “congregation of Christ,” and the phrases “kingdom of heaven,” or “kingdom of God,” do not always, nor exactly represent the same thing. The elements of the kingdom of heaven, it will be remembered, are not simply its subjects, and therefore not simply the congregations of disciples of Christ. But as these communities possess the

* 1 Cor. xii. 28 ; Eph. iv. 11 ; Heb. i. 14. † 2 Cor. iii. 6, v. 18—20.

oracles of God, are under the laws and institutions of the king, and therefore enjoy the blessings of the present salvation, they are in the records of the kingdom, regarded as the only constitutional citizens of the kingdom of heaven; and to them exclusively belongs *all the present salvation*. Their king is now in Heaven, but present with them by his Spirit in their hearts and in all the institutions of his kingdom.

Every immersed believer, of good behaviour, is by the constitution, a free and full citizen of the kingdom of heaven, and entitled to all the social privileges and honours of that kingdom. Such of these as meet together stately in one place, in obedience to the king, or his ambassadors the apostles, for the observance of all the institutions of the King, compose a family, or house, or congregation of Christ; and all these families or congregations, thus organized, constitute the present kingdom of God in this world. So far the phrases *kingdom of heaven* and *the congregation or body of Christ* are equivalent in signification.*

Now in gathering these communities, and in setting them in order, the Apostles had, when alive, and when dead, by their writings still have, the sole right of legislating, ordering, and disposing of all things. But it is not the will of Jesus Christ, because it is not adapted to human nature, nor to the present state of his kingdom as administered in his absence, that the Church should be governed by a *written* document alone. Hence, in every city, town, and country, where the Apostles gathered a community by their own personal labours, or by their assistants, in setting them in order, for their edification, and for their usefulness and influence in this world, they uniformly appointed elders or overseers, to labor in the word and teaching, and to preside over the whole affairs of the community. To these also were added *Deacons*, or public *ministers* of the congregation, who under the direction of the overseers, were to manage all the affairs of these individual families of God. This the very names *Bishop* and *Deac.*, and all the qualifications enjoined, fairly and fully import.

But as all the citizens of the kingdom are free men under Christ, they all have a voice in the selection of the persons whom the Apostles appoint to these offices. The Apostles still appoint all persons so elected, possessing the qualifications which they, *by the Holy Spirit*, prescribed. *And if a congregation will not elect to these offices the persons, possessing these qualifications; or if by a waywardness and selfwill, ness of their own, they should elect those unqualified, and thus despise those marked out by the possession of those gifts; in either case they despise the authority of the Ambassadors of Christ, and must suffer for it.* It is, indeed, the Holy Spirit, and not the congregations, which creates Bishops and Deacons. The Spirit gives the qualifications, both natural and acquired, and, speaking to the congregations in the written oracles, commands their ordination or appointment to the work.†

In the present administration of the kingdom of God, *faith is the PRINCIPLE, and ordinances the MEANS of all spiritual enjoyment.*—

* Rom. xii. 4-8; 1 Cor. xii. 27; Heb. iii. 6. † Acts vi. 2-7. xix. 23, xx. 17-36. Philp. i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 1-16; Titus, i. 5-10; Heb. xiii. 7, 17, 24.

Without faith in the testimony of God, a person is without God, without Christ, and without hope in the world. A Christless universe, as respects spiritual life and joy, is the most perfect blank which fancy can create. Without faith nothing in the Bible can be enjoyed; and without it there is to man no kingdom of heaven in all the dominions of God.

In the kingdom of nature, *sense* is the *principle*, and *ordinances* the *means* of enjoyment. Without sense, or sensation, nothing in nature can be known or enjoyed. All the creative, recuperative, and renovating power, wisdom, and goodness of God, exhibited in nature, are contained in ordinances. The sun, moon, and stars—the clouds, the air, the earth, the water, the seasons, day and night, are therefore denominated the *ordinances* of heaven, because God's power, wisdom, and goodness are *in* them, and felt by us only *through* them.* Now sense, without the ordinances of nature, like faith, without the ordinances of religion, would be no *principle* of enjoyment; and the ordinances of nature, without sense, like the ordinances of religion, without faith, would be no *means* of enjoyment. These are the unalterable decrees of God. There is no exception to them; and there is no reversion of them. To illustrate and enforce the doctrine of this single paragraph is worthy of a volume. The essence, the whole essence of that reformation for which we contend, is wrapped up in this decree as above expressed. If it be true, the ground on which we stand is firm and unchangeable as the Rock of Ages; if it be false, we build upon the sand. *Reader, examine it well!*

In the kingdom of heaven, faith is then, the *principle* and ordinances the *means* of enjoyment; because all the wisdom, power, love, mercy, compassion, or *grace of God*, is in the ordinances of the kingdom of heaven; and if all grace be in them, it can only be enjoyed through them. What, then under the present administration of the kingdom of heaven, are the ordinances which contain the grace of God? They are, preaching the gospel—immersion in the name of Jesus, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit—the reading and teaching the Living Oracles—the Lord's day—the Lord's supper—fasting—prayer—confession of sins—and praise. To these may be added other appointments of God such as exhortation, admonition, discipline, &c: for these also are ordinances of God; and, indeed all statutes and commandments are ordinances; † but we speak not at present of those ordinances which concern the good order of the kingdom, but of those which are primary means of enjoyment. These primary and sacred ordinances of the kingdom of heaven are the means of our individual enjoyment of the present salvation of God.

Without the sun, there is no solar influence; without the moon, there is no lunar influence; without the stars, there is no sidereal influence; without clouds, there can be no rain; and without the ordinances of the kingdom of heaven, there can be no heavenly influence exhibited or felt. There is a peculiar and distinctive influence exerted by the

Jeremiah, lxxxi. 35, 35; Job, xxxviii. 31—33; Jeremiah, xxxiii. 25. † James, i. 25.

sun, moon, and stars; yet they all give light. So in the ordinances of the kingdom of heaven—although they all agree in producing certain similar effects on the subjects of the kingdom, there is something distinctive and peculiar in each of them, so that no one of them can be substituted for another. Not one of them can be dispensed with—they are all necessary to the full enjoyment of the reign of heaven.

In nature and in religion all the blessings of God bestowed on man are properly classed under two heads. These may be called, for illustration, *antecedent* and *consequent*. The antecedent include all those blessings bestowed on man to prepare him for action and to induce him to action. The consequent are those which God bestows on man through a course of action corresponding to these antecedent blessings. For example, all that God did for Adam in creating for him the earth and all that it contains, animal, vegetable, mineral; in forming him in his own image; giving him all his physical, intellectual, and moral powers, and in investing him with all the personal and real estate which elevated him above all sublunary beings, were antecedent to any act of Adam; and these furnished him with inducements to love, honor, and obey his creator and benefactor. All that God did for Abraham in promises and precepts before his obedience—all that he did for the Israelites in bringing them up out of Egypt, and redeeming them from the tyranny of Pharaoh, were antecedent to the duties and observances which he enjoined upon them, and to the privileges which he promised them. And all the blessings which Adam, Abraham, the Israelites enjoyed through conformity to the institutions under which they were placed, were consequent upon that state of mind and course of action which the antecedent favors demanded and occasioned. *God never commanded any being to do any thing but the power and motive were derived from something God had done for him.*

[To be continued.]

EASTPORT, July 3, 1839.

Brother Eaton,—Will you, or some of your correspondents, answer the following questions:—

1. What constitutes the worship of God?
2. At what time and place must that worship be performed?
3. Who, and who only, are true worshippers of God?

L. B.

My dear Brother,—Having no doubt that your queries were dictated by your love of the truth, and your desire to promote the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, by ascertaining the true worship of God; the time, place, and manner of its performance; and the character of acceptable worshippers; we do the more cheerfully take our pen, in order to spread before the readers of *THE CHRISTIAN* their scriptural answers.

One of the first principles by which we promised to be guided in the conduct of this work, was, to answer important questions relating to the faith and practice of christians. Another promise that we made, was,

that the Bible should be our *only* criterion by which to settle all religious controversy. Should you, or any of our friends, in the course of our labours, furnish us with questions not to be answered from the Book, you must not feel yourselves slighted, should we not attempt a reply; but, if the queries have any connexion with the conduct of a sinner, or a disciple of the Lord Jesus, you may be assured that they shall receive our undivided attention.

We are much pleased with your questions on account of their decided practical character. The discussion of such questions, although they may for a time agitate the community, must eventually result in good. The inquisitive, independent and honest, with such questions before them, would naturally enquire—"Do I possess the character of a true worshipper of God? Am I really a worshipper of him? What shall I do that I may worship him in spirit and in truth?" With such views and feelings, and the Bible in his hands, the result can only be salutary.—But, to the questions before us:—

1. What constitutes the worship of God?

ANSWER.—*It is to serve and adore him in the way he has ordained.* But with this answer you may enquire—"And what is it to *serve* and *adore* the Lord?" Here we are thrown back on the first query.

Under various dispensations there were men who served the Lord in that way which was pleasing in his sight; *they worshipped him.* Were we living under that dispensation, we should endeavor to ascertain what they did to serve and please him; and then just in proportion as our conduct and character corresponded with these worthies, should we be getting nearer to the standard of true worshippers. Let us see, then what these men say, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

We have lying before us a splendid edition of Cruden's Concordance, and have glanced at the word "worship" and its derivatives, in its various occurrences, in the Holy Volume. You, no doubt, well remember the interesting account given by Moses, (Gen. xxii.) of Abraham offering up Isaac. In this narrative, the word worship first occurs in the Bible. In this, you perceive, that the service of the Lord did not consist in pleasing one's self; but in obeying the mandate of Jehovah. No doubt, Abraham had all the feelings and sympathies of a parent for a child, when he was making preparation for his journey to Mount Moriah, to offer up his son, his well beloved son Isaac. He did not, however, stop to cavil or even to reason, when he was convinced that it was a requirement of the only living and true God. Enough it was for the good old patriarch to know, that he who had kept him all his life long, when a stranger in an unknown land, commanded him so to do. We are not informed that he waited until he began to feel a disposition for such an act. It is not apparent that he communicated the object of his journey to his servant, or even to his beloved Sarah. With his servant and his son, he journeyed near to the place appointed. Then said he to his servants—"Abide ye here—and I and the lad will go yonder and worship."

From this, and other facts, we learn, that in those days; and during

the patriarchal dispensation, none worshipped the Lord acceptably, but those who offered such sacrifices as he required ; and made confession of their sins before him against whom they had transgressed.

Thus in the case of Cain and Abel, it is apparent that the Lord had promised, that, should they approach him with proper sacrifices, they would be accepted. Abel believed the word of the Lord ; offered his sacrifice, and was accepted. Cain, being a tiller of the ground, considered it most convenient to sacrifice to the Lord with the fruits of the earth. Abel worshipped in the Lord's way, and Cain in his own.—Cain was angry that he was rejected ; but the Lord says to him, " If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted ? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at thy door.—Gen. iv. 7.

The above citations are sufficient for the patriarchal dispensation.—There can be no question concerning the manner in which men worshipped, or what constituted the worship of God in those days. May the blessing of Abel, and the rejection of Cain, be a beacon to all of us, until the end of time, to choose the Lord's ways, and ever fear the devices of our own hearts, however plausible, lest like Cain we also be rejected !

Under the Mosaic dispensation, the duties and privileges of the Lord's people increased ; and, consequently, more was required of them, in order to worship God acceptably. They were to follow the Lord fully ; to be separated from all other nations and people ; to leave Egypt, and journey to the land of promise. Certain sacrifices, feasts, fasts, and observances, were imposed upon them, doing which, " they should live in them ;" should enjoy peculiar blessings and privileges ; but, neglecting them, the displeasure of heaven should be manifested in the judgments poured upon them.

While they were diligent in the performance of these duties, they were happy, and recognized as the worshippers of God ; but when they forsook the Lord, went after other Gods, and served them, then they were called worshippers of idols—idolaters. To keep them in remembrance of their obligations to serve the Lord at all times, they had their daily sacrifices and their numerous institutions. One in particular let us consider in order to get a clear idea of the genius of this dispensation. The passover was of divine appointment, to remind them that the Lord passed over them, the night that his destroying angel cut off all the first-born in the land of Egypt. The law on this ordinance was very positive. The soul who should neglect to eat of this, at the appointed time, " should be cut off from among his people."—Num. ix. 13. Nor less positive were the prohibitions. During the feast of unleavened bread, " that soul, who should eat any leaven should be cut off from the congregation of Israel."—Ex. xii. 15—19.

Such is a small specimen of the requisitions and prohibitions of the Lord in those days, by which they were enabled to determine what constituted the worship of God. You are aware that much more might be written on this head, especially by those who have correct views of the typical character of the Jewish congregation, worship, *et cetera* ; but this must suffice for the present. In the essays on " Man in his Primitive State, and through the various dispensations," these subjects will

be elaborately discussed. They are touched by a master hand, and we have not the vanity to suppose, that any thing that we could add would make them appear more lummous.

The devout, in the days of Israel's glory, with the Psalmist would say, "O come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker." But with the wise man also they were to learn, "that he who turneth away his ear from hearing the law, his prayer is abomination." Thus their prayers and their sacrifices mingled, and they rejoiced in the goodness of God.

When the Harbinger of our Lord Messiah made his appearance, something additional was required. He came to prepare the way of the Lord. The questions which he seemed desirous of discussing were: Who believes the Messiah is coming? Who will pledge themselves to be ready for his appearing? Prepare a way for the Lord—a high road in the desert for our God! I am not he—I am sent before him. I am not worthy to untie his shoe strings! I baptise you in (*Gr. en*) water—he shall baptise you in the Holy Spirit and fire—bring forth fruits of repentance!

Those who believed in the coming of the Messiah, and repented, (reformed) were baptised in Jordan, confessing their sins. This was preparing a people for the Lord. Who now are constituted worshippers of God? *Answer.*—Those who not only hear what Moses has said; but also lend an ear to John's instruction. Some did not thus act, and of such the Saviour said—"The Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, *not being baptised of him.*" Luke, vii. 30. While, on the other hand, the "publicans justified God, being baptised with the baptism of John,"—verse 29.

After the resurrection of the Saviour, those who adhered to him, believing this glorious event, were the materials for the beginning of his church, and at that time were the true worshippers. To these, the three thousand were added on the day of Pentecost. We have many reasons for believing that many who came to John's baptism, rejected the Messiah before his crucifixion; for even the disciples of the Lord, (those too, who were under his immediate instructions,) sometime before his death, "went back, and walked no more with him."—John, vi. If this was the case with those who had become *his* disciples, what are we to think of the followers of John!

From the above, and many other circumstances, we are led to the conclusion, that those, the number of whose names together, were about one hundred and twenty, constituted the only true worshippers in Jerusalem, at that time.

You, my dear Brother, need not be informed that those persons who first form a government, are not usually subjected to the same acts to constitute them legal citizens, as those who subsequently desire to enjoy that privilege. This, however, is not the place to show the difference between the disciples of John and the Lord, since the christian dispensation began. That subject must be the theme of another article, at "some more convenient season."

We have noticed the character of worshippers previous to the Chris-

tian era. Now, as a worshipper of God in the days of Abraham could not continue in the favor of God after the Law was given on Mount Sinai, without conformity to that, so the Jew, under the law of Moses, however pious, could not be considered a true worshipper of the Lord, after the glorification of the Lord Jesus Christ, without submission to his authority. Even Nicodemus was taught that he should be born again of water and spirit, before he could enter the kingdom of heaven. The subsequent constitution always convicted those under the previous of a want of conformity to the Lord, because the dispensations of heaven have always been advancing.

The Apostle Paul, in the 7th chap. Romans, personifying a Jew, from the patriarchal dispensation down to the proclamation of good tidings to every creature, says, "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." The Jew in Egypt might covet his neighbour's goods—have strong desire for many things contrary to the law of God, and feel no condemnation—not be convinced of sin; but when from Sinai's flaming top Jehovah proclaims, "Thou shalt not covet," then a consciousness of his previous desires, arrays his sins before him—he dies! Hence Paul says, "I should not have known that strong desire was sin, if the law had not said, thou shalt not covet." *

A new dispensation presented new acts of obedience; new motives; and blessings, more glorious, suspended upon entire submission to the Lord. The Saviour said to his disciples just before his departure, "You believe in God, believe also in me." Here there was an additional fact to be believed, viz. The divine character and mission of the Lord Jesus Christ. After he arose from the dead, and ascended to glory, more objects of faith were presented, and conduct corresponding thereunto, in order for a preparation to constitute an individual a worshipper of God under the christian economy. Faith, repentance, and baptism, were proclaimed as the conditions of discipleship. What now constitutes the worship of God? To answer this, all of our previous remarks were designed to pave the way. With those who recognise the scriptures as the only rule of faith and practice, we shall soon settle the question.—Remember, we now have to do with those who are in the kingdom of the Lord—the Church of Christ. None will dispute the position—that the churches set in order, and governed by the Apostles, in person, were true worshippers of the Lord. And how did they worship? What constituted their worship? This question is plainly answered in their history; recorded by Luke, Acts, ii. 42: "And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." This, then, we are assured, was their church or congregational worship. 1. The Apostles' doctrine—learning of them. Hearing, *viva voce*, from them while they were present; and in their absence reading their testimonies and epistles, and thus seeking to become acquainted with all the will of the Lord. 2. Fellowship, (translated sometimes contribution and distribution). Making provision for the necessities of the Saints. Thus in the above Acts of worship, in

the one they showed their love and respect for the Lord, by obeying his Apostles; and to each other, by contributing to their various wants.

3. Breaking of bread—or, more properly, breaking *the loaf*—thus, obeying that command of their Lord—“Do this in remembrance of me.”

4. Prayers.—The Apostles taught the disciples to pray. They continued steadfastly also in prayers. Their assemblies were not called together—the church did not meet in its congregational capacity for one of these alone, or for part of them, but for all. Let us notice very particularly this fact, viz. That which constituted the worship of the first assembly of christians—the Jerusalem congregation—the mother church is that which constitutes the worship of all christian congregations since that time. This church was designed to be the pattern. Here the gospel was first announced to individuals all over the then known world. When persecution raged against them, they were again scattered through the whole country, and soon became members of other congregations. From this fact, who can doubt that the above order of worship became that of all the other churches. The disciples would say to an innovator—This was our order when the Holy Twelve assembled with us in Jerusalem, and this order of worship must continue.

There is not an intimation of the church coming together on the first day of the week but for this purpose. These acts of worship are not spoken of as extraordinary—as that which was to be attended to once in four, thirteen, or twenty-six weeks; but they, says the Apostle, continued “*steadfastly*,” (sometimes rendered *unremittingly*,) in these acts of worship. These acts of devotion, then, constituted the outward worship of God. With contrite hearts, possessing the spirit of the Lord, they were perfect worshippers. We are under the same dispensation. These things must be attended to now, or the worship of God is not performed. Let it be distinctly understood that by every argument that you, my dear Brother, can present to disprove the necessity of attending on all of the above duties every Lord’s day, by the same arguments we can show, that it is not necessary for christians to meet on every first day to hear preaching, or to attend to what is ordinarily called “the worship of God.” All of these duties, and the public worship of the Lord every first day of the week, stand or fall together!

We have much more to write on this subject, but our little Christian can hold no more at present. The other questions shall be noticed in our next, the Lord willing.

In the mean time let us think of the last occurrence of the word *worship* in the New Testament. The angel said to John, when about to pay him divine honours—“See thou do it not,”—“Worship God.”

That which an individual has uppermost in his affections, is the object which he most devoutly worships. If we think more of the sayings and doings of men, than of the Lord and his word, then we are idolaters.—There are as many idolaters now as ever there were! Some worship their gold and silver, and many worship themselves! How large a number of professors, who never pray in their families, or retire from the business of the world to spend five minutes in secret prayer. If they dart up a petition occasionally, it will be in consequence of affliction,

sickness, or fear of death. Such pay the preachers to pray and worship God for them. They call singing the worship of God, and hire the ungodly, the profane, the drunkard, and infidel, to sing praises to God for them while they "worship" in profound silence and reverential awe! From such worship and worshippers, "Good Lord deliver us!"

Your's, in the best of bonds,

EDITOR.

[FROM THE CHRISTIAN KEEPSAKE.]

THE DYING BOY.

BY MRS. LARNED, OF PROVIDENCE.

The following lines were written after reading an account of the death of a young mother and three children, from the inhuman neglect of the husband and father—The wife was taken suddenly ill, and left alone with her little ones, while her husband went to procure a physician, and other needful assistance, the nearest house being over two miles distant, but he forgot everything, save his own depraved appetite, became drunk before doing his errand, remained so for a week, and on his return found them all dead. It is supposed that the mother died soon after the birth of her child, and that the boy struggled longest—that in trying to soothe his expiring sister, he sank down from weakness beside her, and could not at last release himself from her grasp.]

O, mother dear! my lips are dry,
And Bessy's hands are cold;—
Mother, dear Mother! help me nigh
Your bosom—surely you can hold
Your little boy, I will not cry,
Nor ask again for drink or bread.
If you will only let me lie
Upon your breast and hold my head.

Oh, mother! call your little boy
To your bedside—he'll try to crawl,
You said I was your only joy,
Your darling Henry, and your all.
And then you looked and screamed out so—
"Boy! to your cruel father go.
Why do you weep and wail to me?
Fly! fly! I've nothing here for thee!"

Don't stare so on me, mother dear,
I'm still—though Bessy will not stir—
And she's too cold to lie so near—
O, why don't father come to her?
Poor Bessy cried herself to sleep;
I wish I could—but when I try,
My lids won't shut—and always keep
Wide open on your staring eye!

Mother! how can you lie so still,
With the dead baby in your arms?
Who did the little dear one kill?
You said 'twas now safe from all harms—

Can't I be dead too, mother, say?
I'm sure 'tis very lonesome here—
Is heaven a very great long way?
And 's our father waiting there?

I'm tired now, and cannot go,
And the bright sun does blind me so:—
Oh, shut your eyes, dear mother, do!
And let me love to gaze on you.
How can you see us lying thus,
On this iced floor—our feet so cold?
Once you would fondly run to us,
And round us both the blankets fold

I'm falling—O, the room turns round!—
I cannot see you now;—but hark!
I hear a soft and pleasant sound;
Perhaps it is the little lark.
I love such sounds as these to hear,
And it is dark no longer now;
Dear little girls with wings are near,
And they are smiling on me too.

O, 'tis their songs so sweet and clear—
I think I hear them softly say,
Dear children, stay no longer here;—
Come, come with us, we'll lead the way—
It must be heaven where they dwell:
I come!—I come!—Mother, farewell!

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