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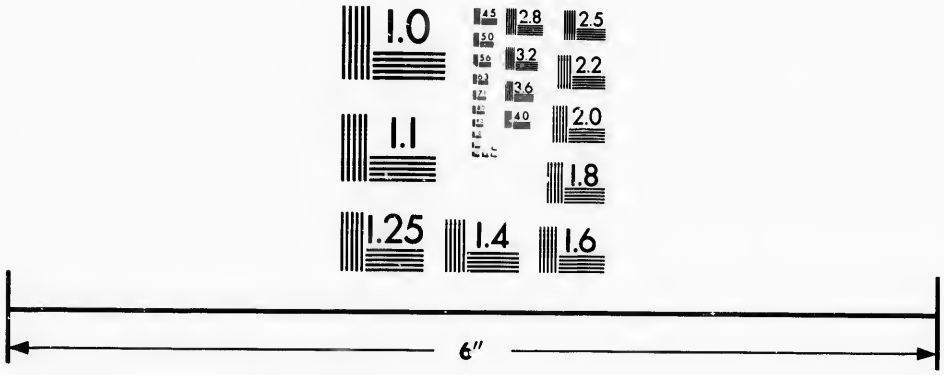

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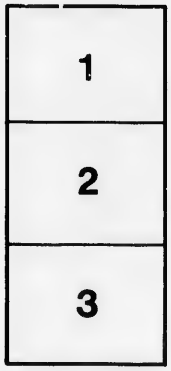

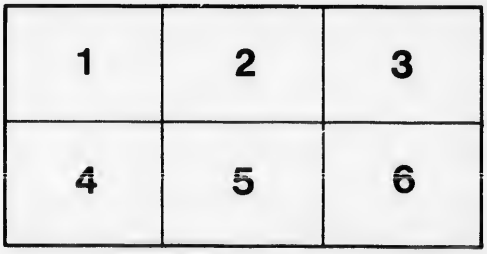

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PRINTE

A TREATISE

ON

BAPTISM;

INCLUDING

A

REFUTATION

OF THE

ARGUMENTS ADVANCED ON THE SAME SUBJECT

BY THE

REV. G. BURNS, D. D.

LATE MINISTER

OF

SAINT ANDREW'S CHURCH, SAINT JOHN, N. B.

BY JOHN GEORGE NAYLOR,
Minister of the Gospel.

"Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up."—JESUS.

St. Johns.

PRINTED BY ANDREW GARRISON, AT THE OFFICE OF THE CITY GAZETTE,

No 10, SOUTH MARKET WHARF.

1832.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

It may be proper before the attention of the reader is directed to the following pages, to apprize him of the circumstance by which they were occasioned. On the 10th of September, 1831, I arrived at St. John, and, ere I had been long in the city, was recommended to read a pamphlet on Baptism, by Doctor Burns. Having been assured that the subject was impartially considered, and that nothing offensive was displayed, I expected a perusal would be accompanied with pleasure. But alas! not far had I proceeded before meeting with passages which I could reconcile neither with charity or truth, my mind recoiled with pain and disgust.—Passages, referring rather to the Baptists than to their particular opinions; tending more to depreciate the former, than to refute or elucidate the latter. I thought of writing a reply, but waived the design, after reading a review of the pamphlet in the Baptist Magazine. Being called, however, to preach on the subject, I announced my intention of noticing the pamphlet in the pulpit. This I did, with a particular reference to some glaring misrepresentations of the Baptists. The sermon produced a powerful effect. Some persons troubled with the *cacoethes scribendi*, stormed the sermon in the city journals with remarks, which made as much impression as snow upon the rock. My continuance in St. John being uncertain, and not wishing to appear in the armour of a disputant, I thought it advisable to take no further notice of the subject; a change, however, in my circumstances, occasioning me to reside longer in the city, afforded the opportunity which I now embrace—of presenting the substance of the sermon in the following pages.

The reader must not expect the regular order of a sermon, as this is designedly abandoned, for a fuller examination of the subject. The text was from Isaiah 24, 5,—"They have changed the ordinance." The positions of the sermon were—*The ordinance of Baptism is changed, both as to the mode and subjects, either by the Baptists or Pædo-Baptists—To change an ordinance is injurious to the church of the Redeemer—To change an ordinance impugns the authority of Christ, and is offensive to God.*

It has been a matter of regret with some, that this publication should appear, now the Author of the other is absent. Doctor Burns had embarked for Scotland before my arrival. Had I been in the city when the Doctor's book first appeared, it is probable that it would have received an immediate reply.

In the advertisement to his pamphlet, Dr. Burns refers to a work on infant baptism, by Dr. Wardlaw. Dr. Wardlaw and the Rev. Mr. Ewing on that subject, have both been refuted by the Rev. A. Carson, A. M. Mr. Carson has given a critical and elaborate discussion on the verb *baptizo*, and also on the Abrahamic covenant. I cordially recommend this admirable work of Mr. C. to the attention of the reader. This work is the more valuable, as Mr. C. was a decided Pædo-baptist for some years.

J. G. N.

Saint John, March 10, 1832.

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Chap. I.

ON THE MODE OF BAPTISM.

Section I.

Much has been written on the subject of baptism, and not a little that has tended rather to obscure, than to relieve it of imaginary difficulties. Truth may easily be injured by the very means adopted to support it; while error, by the same means, is invested with importance, and acquires the semblance of a character which is not its own. Hence the necessity, in attempting to ascertain the correctness of any proposition, of proceeding as much as possible uncumbered by extraneous matter, that the mind, being free from irrelevant ideas, may facilitate the conclusions of the judgment. This is seldom more needful than when duty is the question. But it is to be feared, that both baptists and pædo-baptists, by referring their differences to considerations too remote, have, though undesignedly, placed truth in the shade, and shrouded her with questionable evidence. Hence, in lieu of confining the evidence of truth on this question to the New Testament, it has been sought with too much confidence, and by the pædo-baptists in particular, from a corrupt age, or an ancient author. Far be it from me to depreciate below their *real* value the testimony of the Fathers, but surely, neither their opinion, nor their practice is necessary, to prove a duty of religion. If such evidence be really indispensable, then what course must be pursued by the way-faring man, whose practice depends on his knowledge of the bible?

The ordinance of baptism, both as to the mode and subject, is plainly revealed or it is not; if the former, we shall have no difficulty, unless shackled by previous opinion, to find the path of duty; if the latter, it involves a serious reflection on the wisdom of our divine legislator. Let a plain man, whose heart glows with piety to God, read the New Testa-

ment on the subject of baptism for himself, and we may be almost certain of the conclusion to which he will be brought. The immersion of believers will be too prominent to escape his observation, while infant sprinkling, not appearing to his notice, will secure no favor in his judgment. Hence, it is the plainness of revelation in their favor, that universally affords satisfaction to the baptists; while its total silence on infant sprinkling, makes a great number of pædo-baptists question the authority of their system, and renders it easily accountable, "that few, comparatively, even of the *most respectable members* of those churches which have adopted the practice of infant baptism, are prepared to vindicate the practice on *rational* and *scriptural* grounds!"*

In perusing the following pages, the reader will observe, that I have confined myself as much as possible to the evidence of scripture; and, except when necessity required me, in replying to Dr. Burns on that question, have not led him into the maze of antiquity, My object has been to render immersion evident as the only proper mode of baptism, and believers as the only proper subjects. In pursuing this plan with respect to the mode, I have endeavoured to ascertain the scriptural and real import of the verb *baptizo*, and to support it with evidence as ample as this treatise would allow.

It is to late to *inform* the world, that the opinion of baptists on the mode of baptism is restricted to immersion. The radical meaning of *baptizo*, and the metaphors used in the scriptures relative to baptism, render any other mode inconsistent with the sense of the former, and the significancy of the latter. Believing that the Saviour in commanding baptism, commanded immersion, they consider the mode essential to the being of the ordinance. They dare not, therefore, while they consider immersion, not merely as a circumstance of duty, but as a necessary part of the command, swerve from the dictates of truth.

The natural import of the verb *baptizo*, claims the serious attention of every follower of Christ. It relates to a practice of religion, and imports the mode of that practice. If it be univocal, its meaning should be sought, as on that meaning depends the proper mode of baptism. That it imports action, but few will deny, though some assert that the action is not simple, and others attribute to the verb the idea of effect. All words appear in the origin of language, to have contained a specific idea, though owing to the poverty of language,

* Vide Dr. Burns on Bap. page 9.

they have frequently been made to express a meaning foreign from their own. When used in their proper sense, they convey their original idea; when diverted from that sense, their meaning frequently depends on the circumstance in which they are used. Now *baptizo* is either simple or compound; if the former, no diversity of action is implied; if the latter, a diversity of action is included. This can be known only by referring to the root, or to the usage which it has acquired. It is a derivative of *Bapto*, the primary meaning of which is *to dip*; but there is not the least reason to conclude either from its root, or its termination in *zo*, that it is not strictly univocal. The usage which it has obtained, both in the sacred and classic page, in lieu of affording evidence against, abundantly confirms the simple meaning of the verb. If this be false, it can easily be shown; if it be correct, the strict idea of the verb is ascertained. None that I knew of, *directly* attach the idea of sprinkling to the *action* of the verb, but some, supposing an effect produced by the action, argue from that effect to a mere application of water, and so invest the word with a diversity of meaning. For instance, *baptizein* means *to dip*, to dip is to wash, that mode, therefore, which will produce the *effect* of dipping is equivalent to the mode of baptism —An application of water, without restriction to mode, is to baptize. Now this is absurd. It would as much prove, that to baptize is *to pollute*, as that it means *to wash*. It is confounding the effect with the action, and attributing to the verb that which belongs only to the element. If a person be dipped in mire, is he washed? or in dissolved wax, is he cleansed? Such reasoning destroys all distinction in language, and makes it a region of uncertainty.

Baptizein is to dip, without the least reference to element or effect. The idea of cleansing or of substance is not in the verb. Who will contend that the verb *to eat*, contains the idea of food? or that *to run*, contains the idea of legs? These verbs have a simple meaning; the first a certain action, and the other swift motion. I will give two examples* of the strict and simple import of *baptizo*, that may serve as a specimen of many more which the limits of this treatise will not allow me to adduce. Josephus referring to the murder of young Aristobulus, says:—*barountes aei kai baptizontes, os en paidia nechomenon ouk anekan eos kai pantopasin apopnaixai.* "Pressing him down always, as he was swimming, and *baptizing* him as in sport, they did not give over till they

* These examples are taken from Mr. Carson's work on baptism, pages 64, 65.

entirely drowned him." Hippocrates, giving directions how to render a blister less painful, says:—*baptizein, palin es gala gunaikos kai muron aiguption*—"Dip it again in breast milk and ointment." These xamples shew that the meaning of the verb is only *to dip*, and that the idea of effect is not included in the word. Those who obstinately insist that the idea of *effect* is included in the verb, will make *baptizo*, according to the first example, *to drown*; and according to the second, *to dip in milk and ointment!*

But it will be inquired, is there no difference between the root and the derivative? To this I reply—the difference is very trival, and is not in the action which both equally imply, but in a circumstance that affects the native import of neither. *Bapto* means to *dip*, and in a secondary sense *to dye*, while its derivative in *zo*, implies the same action apart from the circumstance. The derivative appears thus to modify the root, without making the least alteration in the action. But are not terminations in *zo* necessarily diminutive? By no means. Is *bluzo* a diminutive of *bluo?* or *alegizo* of *alego?* or *ethizo* of *etho?* or *thuazo* of *thuo?* Dr. Gale has given a number of examples, which prove that terminations in *zo*, are equal in import to their primitive verbs. But supposing *baptizo* were a diminutive of *bapto*, what then? Would that prove it to mean *sprinkling* or *pouring?* It is one thing for a derivative to modify the action of its original, and another for it to imply an action to which its original has no allusion. But *bapto* is never used for the ordinance of baptism. This is correct. Why is *baptizo only* used where the ordinance is the subject? On this the sacred writers are silent. Does it mean *to dip?* They were not bound to assign their reason for using this word in preference to the root. *Bapto* appears in common usage to have obtained the secondary meaning *to dye; baptizo* is more simple, and it is not impossible but this might be the reason for applying it to the ordinance of baptism. This, however probable, is mere speculation, and I neither use nor want it as an argument. Both verbs, though they may, like many other words, be used improperly, strictly mean *only to dip*.

Some persons have supposed, because *baptizo* is figuratively used, where no action is implied, but merely to heighten the effect, that it must contain more than one simple idea. Their argument appears to be this; that the verb in such cases, dropping its primary sense, cannot be univocal. But this notion is erroneous, and would equally make against the liberal usage of language in general. We frequently find in

the best composition, that a word is improperly used, when another might easily be had, merely to produce a powerful effect. But do we ever, on that account, question the native meaning of the word, or argue that its primary sense is necessarily changed? Then why should we adopt a method of argument in this case, which we must abandon in any other? No person will contend that the radical sense of a Hebrew verb is changed, because it is occasionally used for something foreign from its meaning. OReP, though in one place it may mean *to decollate*, does not change its primitive meaning *to distil*. Nor because LUeH is used for, *to borrow*, is its simple sense, *to join*, changed by that usage. And because *baptizo* is improperly used, where its primitive action is not preserved, no more proves that the verb includes diversity of action, than that the verb itself is not active. Words are very frequently used to serve the purpose of an author, and to express a sense that they do not originally mean. The person, therefore, who instead of ascertaining the meaning of the verb by referring to the root, asserts its meaning from the circumstance where it is figuratively used, exposes himself to error, and acts contrary to a known rule of verbal interpretation. Yet has this unphilosophical method been adopted, to elude the evidence in favor of immersion.

The reader will observe as he proceeds, that these observations on the word, are more fully elucidated in the examination of those passages of scripture where it occurs. Ample evidence might be easily adduced, to confirm the facts, that the proper import of *baptizo* is only to immerse. Pædo-baptist writers, when referring to the etymology of the word, and the ordinance with which it is connected in the scriptures, support the proper meaning of the term without the least equivocation. That some of them think it a *generic* term, I readily admit, though even these allow, that the *first* and *primary* meaning of the verb is to immerse. They found their error opon an imaginary effect, produced by the verb, and from that, in defiance of testimony, argue for a mere application of water. But others, submitting to the force of evidence, notwithstanding the danger to which their system of sprinkling is exposed, exclude every idea from the verb but to *immerse*. The quotations we adduce from pædo-baptist authors are of the latter sort, and prove that they believed only in immersion, whatever they might practise.

SALMASIUS :—" Baptism is immersion; and was administered in ancient times. according to the *force* and *meaning of the word*. Now it is only *rhantism**or sprinkling; not im-

* From Rantizo—Greek—to sprinkle

mersion or dipping."—De Cæsarie Virorum, p. 669.

Buddeus:—The word *baptizein* and *baptism*, are not to be interpreted of aspersion, but *always* of immersion."—Theol. Dogmat l. 5. c. 1. § 5.

Beza—"Christ commanded us to be baptized; by which word it is certain immersion is signified.—To be baptized in water, *signifies no other than to be immersed* in water, which is the external ceremony of baptism."—See Booth vol. 1 p. 42:—

Venema:—"The word *baptizein*, to baptize, is *nowhere* used in the scripture for sprinkling; no not in Mark 7th chap. 4th. verse, otherwise than appears to some."—Institut. Hist. Eccles. Vet et. Nov. Test. tom. iii. secul. 1. § 138.

Rogers—"None, of old, were wont to be sprinked; and I confess myself unconvinced by demonstration of scripture for infant sprinkling. It ought to be the church's part to cleave to the institution, which is dipping, and he betrays the church, whose officer he is, to *a disorderly error*, if he cleave not to the institution which is to dip. That the minister is to dip in water, as the meetest act, the work *baptizo denotes it:* for the Greeks wanted not other words to express any other act besides dipping, if the institution could bear it. What resemblance of the burial or resurrection of Christ is in sprinkling? *All Antiquity* and *scripture* confirm that way. To dip, therefore, is *exceeding (ly) material* to the ordinance; which was the usage of old, without exception of countries, hot or cold."—Dr. Russel's Doc. & Prac. of John, &c. Epist. Ded. p. 5.

Dr. Hammond:—"The word here used, *baptizesthai*, (as it differs from *niptesthai*, verse the 3d,) signifies not only the washing of the whole body, (as when it is said of Eupolis, that being taken and thrown into the sea, *ebaptizeto*, he was immersed all over, and so the baptisms of cups, &c. in the end of this verse, is putting *into the water all over*, rinsing them,) but washing any part of the hands here, by immersion in water, *as that is opposed to affusion or pouring* water on them." Annot. Mark, 7th chap. 4th verse.

Zepperus:—"If we consider the *proper* meaning of the term, the word baptism signifies plunging into, or the *very act* of dipping and washing. It appears therefore from the very *signification* and *etymology* of the term, what was the custom of administering baptism in the beginning; whereas we now, for baptism, rather have *rhantism* or *sprinkling*."—Leigh's Crit. Lond. 1646.

Anonymous:—"That the letter of the scripture is in fa-

vor of baptists, (or as they are still *absurdly* called Anabaptists,) cannot without *evasion* and *equivocation* be denied."—London Review, for June 1776.

ALSTEDIUS:—*Baptizein*, to baptize, signifies *only to immerse*; not to wash, except by consequence."—"LEX. THEOL. CAP. 12. p. 221.

GROTIUS:—In his annotations on Matthew, 3d. chap. 6th verse, says "That baptism was accustomed to be performed by immersion and *not by perfusion*, is evident, both from the *meaning of the word*, from the places chosen for the administration of this rite, and from the many allusions of the Apostles, which *cannot refer to sprinkling*."

LAWSON:—"John the baptist, that is John the dipper; so called, because he was authorized to baptize in water. Such as rhantize or sprinkle infants, have *no command from Christ, nor example among the Apostles*, nor the first primitive christians for so doing. See the author of rhantism, that is sprinkling; not Christ, nor the Apostles, but Cyprian; not in the days of Christ, but some two hundred and thirty years after."—*Baptismalogia.*

Dr. TOWERSON:—"But, therefore, as there is so much reason to represent the *rite of immersion*, as *the only legitimate right of baptism*, because the only one that can answer the ends of its institution, and those things which were to be signified by it; so especially if (as it is well known and undoubtdedly of great force,) the general practice of the primitive church was agreeable thereto, and the practice of the Greek church to this very day.*—ON CH. CATECH. ART. BAP.

These learned authorities, as the reader may observe. overleap the mounds of prejudice and system, and present us with the truth. Abiding by the strict etymology of the term, and the evidence of scripture, they appear not to have entertained the idea, that *baptizo* is either a frequentative, generic, or diminutive verb. Indeed, it is difficult to see, how any person, who has subjected his mind to research, and serious attention to the subject, can possibly entertain any other opinion. He must be closely wedded to the system of sprinkling, who, with the evidence before him, feels not that system falling from his own hand. We have heard of the influence of education, of the potency of error, and of the imperceptible influence of questionable motives, but which of these is the most powerful in confining the mind to an hypothesis once entertained, it is, perhaps, impossible to say. Should the

* These examples, with the exception of the three last from Gibbs on baptism, are taken from Booth.—Vol. I.

reader inquire, how the authorities above, with not a few of a similar description, adopted in practice what they opposed in sentiment, this is a problem for which I can afford him no possible solution. Their reasons for such a method of procedure, lie not within the limit of my comprehension.

There is an argument, to which I have not hitherto alluded, derived from a source which must render it rather difficult to resist.—An argument, were there no other to be had, that might satisfy the mind of an unprejudiced inquirer after the meaning of the verb. *Baptizo* is a Greek word, relating to the ordinance of baptism. How do the Greeks baptize? As they have ever done, by immersion! Do they understand their own language? This impudence itself dares not question. The fact of their having always baptized by immersion, is, surely, decisive as to the meaning of the term. Suppose the Greeks were disputing about the import of an English verb, that related to a practice of religion, what better method could they possibly adopt, than to appeal to the learned religionists of England, and, after examination, allow the result of that appeal to settle the dispute? Let the parties in the present question adopt the same reasonable method, and baptism is immersion! But no! an opinion must be defended; therefore, the practice of the Greek church is to be suspected, though it is supported by the additional evidence of Greek etymology.

It were natural to expect, after such a thorough and continuous discussion of this subject, that those whose time is devoted to Grecian literature, would be able to find another meaning to the verb under notice, if it contained one. But the authors of two or three Greek and English lexicons, which have been recently published, restrict the meaning of the verb to immersion. But what can linguists and the evidence of philology do against the Hercules of prejudice?

Section 2.

The attention of the reader, hitherto, has not been turned to the direct evidence of scripture. If the word from the pen of an inspired writer, and the place selected for the ordinance of baptism, contain proof for any thing, it is in favor of immersion. While the conduct of apostles is a precedent for us, we do not think their examples are ambiguous, nor that they could use language which would involve their successors in uncertainty. Where duty is the question,

we expect the authors of the bible to be explicit. To suppose ambiguity in their language, when directing us in our duty towards God, is to suppose the very thing that would annihilate the nature of revelation itself. And to attach a diversity of meaning to the word which directs the practice of baptism, seems to fall but little short of impeaching the wisdom of Christ and his Apostles. Why, if immersion be not the mode, did they use a verb which expresses the very action? If they wished to convey the idea of, to wash, to rinse, to sprinkle, or to pour, would not the verbs *louo, nipto, rantizo, ekcheo,* have been far more explicit, and have conveyed their meaning with more certainty? It is strange, if while they were select in their expressions, on other topics relating to practice, that in this they should have swerved from their usual exactness. With this it is impossible to think they are chargeable, and an examination of the following passages will confirm our opinion.

The verb *baptizo* is used when there is no reason to suppose any other mode than immersion. The people were baptized by John, Matt. 3d chap. 6th ver., *en to Iordane—in the Jordan.* And Jesus, 16th ver. when he was baptized, went up straightway *apo tou hudatos—out of the water.* According to the obvious aspect of these passages, the preposition, *en,* in the 11th ver. ought to have been translated as it is in the 6th. * It refers to the same subject and at the same time, its common signification and the nature of the verb require it. John would then have said, " I indeed baptize you *en hudati*—in water"—" He shall baptize you—*en Pneumati hagio kai puri*—in the Holy Ghost and fire. Now I ask any reasonable man, what is the impression most likely to be made by this account on the mind of a reader as it respects the mode of baptism? Not, surely, that John selected the river Jordan to sprinkle or pour! A person who has no hypothesis to serve, will suppose his choice was fixed on the river for the convenience of immersion. But how could he dip so many? By taking a sufficiency of time. It is not said that he baptized them in a day, in a week, or in a month. His ministry continued a considerable time, and he had a number of disciples. But determined to elude the force of evidence if possible, pædobaptists inquire, where was the convenience for changing their raiment? Do pædo-baptists know,

* Some translators whose interest lay not with this particular translation, render the preposition *in.* Campbell: " He shall baptize you *in* the Holy Spirit and fire." Wickliffe: " He schal baptize you *in* the hooly goost, and fire." Others have translated it the same.

that during the ministry of John, there were not temporary dwellings in the wilderness? Are they certain that a change of raiment was necessary? A friend of mine, who resided for a considerable time in the east, assured me that he had seen the Mahometans perform their ablutions in their dress, and walk about until it was dry: and that they considered this one of their greatest luxuries. But this is silencing one supposition with another; they were baptized, and to baptize is to immerse.

Dr. Burns has quoted a vague quibble from Mr. Beckwith, * on the baptism of John, which is fit for nothing but, to *darken counsel by words without knowledge;* but he "does "not consider it necessary to reply to any argument from that quarter."! The Dr. after assigning two reasons for the difference in the baptism of John from that of Christ, informs us, that "Mr. Booth, the great champion of the baptist cause, asserts that all modes of purification previously in use, are not to be the least regarded as guides in the performance of christian baptism, which he designates a *positive institute of Christ.* Of course he is cut off from all the aid accruing to his system from the baptisms in Jordan and Enon." Of course he is not. *The aid accruing to his system,* depends on the meaning of the verb, and the mode adopted by John, sufficiently explains its import. Mr. Booth never considered that the difference between the two, nullified the evidence of one in favor of the *mode* of the other. If he ever resigned his claim to the baptism of John, in favor of immersion in that of Christ, the Dr. should have pointed to the place. I could easily imagine the Dr. was aware, that the mode adopted by John accorded with the etymology of the verb, and was in favor of immersion; therefore he introduces Mr. Booth to make an apology for his silence.

And John also was baptizing, John 3d. chap 23d. ver. in Enon, *hoti hudata polla en ekei,* because there was much water there. † Here *hoti hudata polla* is the reason assigned for John baptizing in Enon, because there was much water, and the word Enon appears to be significant to that effect. But resolved if possible to obviate the force of the text in favor of

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* Dr. Burns on bap. page 59.

† At Enon,—*because there was much water there.* "But nothing surely can be more evident than that *polla hudata,* many waters, signifies a large quantity of water, it being sometimes used for the Euphrates, Jer. 51st chap. 13th ver. Sep. tuagint. To which I suppose there may also be an allusion. Rev. 17th chap. 1st ver. Compare Ezek. 43rd chap. 2d ver. and Rev. 1st chap. 15th ver.—14th chap. 2d ver.—19th chap. 6th ver. where the voice of many waters does plainly signify the roaring of a high sea."—*Doddridge in Loc.*

immersion, some pædo-baptists affirm that *hudata polla* means *many* waters; hence, they construe them into a number of small rivulets too shallow to immerse! But this wretched whim affords no relief, and proves too feeble to support their unwarrantable conclusion. Do pædo-baptists think that John required many waters for the convenience of pouring? or, if he merely sprinkled the people, that many waters were necessary? That opinion must be liable to suspicion, which suppresses the dictates of reason. Keep to the etymology of *baptizo* and all is easy. There will be then no necessity for committing an assault on the word of God, nor of forcing an unnatural construction. John baptized where there was *much* water for the convenience of immersion.

"Then they who gladly received his word, Acts 2d. chap. 41st ver. were baptized; and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls." Dr. Burns * seems to beg leave of absence from the evidence afforded by this passage, by the gratuitous assumption, that "under our Lord's commission we find only one instance of baptism recorded, in which our translation leads to the conclusion that the subject was immersed." Here the etymology of *baptizo* is overlooked, while he *presumes* a practice opposite to its import. To baptize is to immerse, but three thousand were baptized, therefore, three thousand were immersed. But the objection of pædo-baptists here, is not so much against the verb, as to difficulties which exists no where but in their own imagination. So many, they affirm, could not be baptized in one day. The text does not say they were. But, supposing they were, this might easily be done. There were twelve apostles, and the three thousand, give them only two hundred and fifty each. I once baptized, in an awkward baptistery, nineteen persons in eight minutes and a half. The *seventy disciples* were most likely at Jerusalem during the pentecost, and we read of *one hundred and twenty* assembled together, on whom the Holy Spirit descended. So far as the above quibble relates to labour and time, it is easily disposed of. The administrators, whose number was not few, had the day before them, and would feel no difficulty in discharging their duty. But pædo-baptists cannot find water sufficient in Jerusalem to immerse such numbers! It was a dry season of the year, how could a quantity of water needful for such a multitude be found? A lucid display this, of Jewish and oriental knowledge! There were ten lavers and a molten

* Page 61.

sea in the temple, two pools, Siloam and Bethesda, in the city, and how many private baths,* according to the custom of the east, pædo-baptists must ascertain as they can. There was water sufficient in Jerusalem *to drown* their objection, were it not for the tenacity with which they cling to a system. But the *onus argumenti* depends not on the supposition with which their suppositions must be silenced: the people were baptized, and baptism is immersion.

"And they went down both into the water, Acts 8th chap. 38th ver. both Philip and the Eunuch; and he baptized him." Dr. Burns, says, † "the *probabilities of the case* are against the belief that Philip immersed the Ethiopian convert." The Dr. thinks that the translation in this place might lead us to conclude in favor of immersion; therefore, to preserve us amidst the jeopardy of delusion, he devotes more than two pages in attempting to reduce the translation to a mere nullity. The Dr. calls in the aid of Mr. Isaac, and they both endeavour to conjure up the horrors of a wilderness, void of water sufficient to immerse the Eunuch. But the breath of *probability* will annihilate for ever, the sombre gloom in which they envelop us. Their hypothesis is built upon the idea, that the desert did not afford water sufficient for the purpose of immersion. But if these gentlemen had taken the trouble to examine, they would have found that a desert may be very well supplied with water. John was baptizing in the *eremos*, wilderness or desert, of Judea, and there he found an ample quantity of water—the river Jordan! In the same neighbourhood he baptized because there was *much* water—in Enon near Salim. The Eunuch was passing through an *eremos*, desert, or as the same word is translated in Matthew, wilderness; and, according to the evidence of history, if he went by the village of Bethsur, he would come in contact with a fountain; and if he went by Diospolis, and Ascalon, the river Eleutherus was at hand. ‡ If reliance may be placed on Volney, Arrianus, and the Talmudists, Gaza, the place to which the Eunuch was proceeding, was not more than two miles and a half from the sea, had several brooks in its vicinity, and the *surrounding country* was well watered. If the reader will turn his attention to Joshua, 15th chap. 61st and 62d ver. he will find that a wilderness is not always the desolate

* Vide Dr. Gill, on Acts, 2nd chap. 41st. verse. † Page 68.

‡ Vide Dr. Gill, on Acts, 8th chap. 26th verse.

place that these gentlemen would make it; but may have cities and villages, and be well supplied with water. The figment that the Dr. grounds upon the exclamatory sentence is nothing to his purpose; it might arise from the quantity of water, rather than the mere circumstance of finding it. Mr. Isaac says, and the Dr. coincides, that "they came to the water before they saw it." Where is the proof of this? Their whole argument depends on the silence of Scripture, and is opposite to probability itself. One thing I would ask, and that upon their own shewing, is it likely that a person so eminent as the Eunuch, would travel the desert which they create, without water in his carriage?† And if he had any, why need he leave his vehicle, and descend into the water to be sprinkled? But my argument *depends* not on such a mode of reasoning—Philip baptized the Eunuch, that is, he immersed him. The reader will find a reply to the Doctor's remarks on the Greek prepositions in page 32.

"Then answered Peter," Acts 10th chap. 47th and 48th ver. "can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized?—And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." Dr. Burns * on this passage argues as usual, without evidence, against immersion. "Had *immersion* been the mode," the Dr. says, "the words would have been, can any man forbid these to be taken to the river and plunged,—to the tank or cistern to be dipped." How does the Dr. know this? We have such slender evidence of his omniscience, that unless he can bring proof that the source of his information on this point is good, we shall venture to deny it. "But the question," the Dr. proceeds, "as put by the Apostle, obviously means, can any *forbid water to be brought?*" Now the question *obviously* means no such thing, because there is no word in the original to support such a meaning. The Dr. has begged a word upon which to found his hypothesis. Why might not I assert, that the question *obviously* means, can any man forbid *the use* of water? Because the word *forbid* refers to water, the Dr. thinks it must have been such a quantity as was portable, for which supposition he can find not the shadow of a proof. Let us imagine for

† "It would seem very unnatural to suppose that they went down to the water, merely that Philip might take up a little in his hand, to pour on the Eunuch. A person of his dignity had, no doubt, many vessels in his baggage on such a journey thro' so desert a country, a precaution absolutely necessary for travellers in those parts and never omitted by them.—*Vide Doddridge in loc.*

* Page 68

a moment, that Cornelius and his friends stood in the capacity of labourers, and that Peter inquired, who can forbid food that these should not be refreshed, who have laboured as well as we? This would no more prove that food was to be brought, than it would that they were to go to it. The Dr. has to argue in this, as in other cases, with the silence of scripture on his side. The persons referred to were baptized, and baptism is immersion.

The baptism of Saul, Acts 9th chap. 18th ver. affords no materials for speculating against immersion; unless it should be said that *he arose and was baptized, therefore*, he received the ordinance in the house, and could not be immersed—A brilliant specimen, in the absence of every reason to support it, of false reasoning!

But the Jailer! Acts 16th chap. 33rd verse. How were he and all his baptized? By immersion, if *ebaptisthe* mean any thing. What in the night? So Luke informs us. But where? The scriptures are silent; and that forms, as usual, a *loud* argument for pædo-baptists. Dr. Burns thinks, that the persons in question "were not taken to a river to be plunged into it." But how does he know that? There was a river very near the city, 13th verse. It is plain enough that the ordinance was not administered in the houss; for *after* their baptism, the Jailer "*brought* them into his house, and set meat before them;" which renders it pretty evident that they went out of the house to be baptized. Peter preached to all who were in the house, they then appear to have left it for baptism, and afterwards returned. "Credulous indeed," exclaims Dr. Burns, "and strongly wedded to a favorite system, must those be, who, to prove immersion, make even the *supposition* that the Jailer had convenience for the purpose within his own premises!" But credulous, far more credulous, must he be, who can imagine that a Jail in an eastern country, would be destitute of a pool, or bath, for the convenience of the family and prisoners. Dr. Doddridge is of opinion, that the ordinance was not attended to in the house; and Grontius, that a pool was within the limits of the prison. Dr. Burns is not always chargeable with credulity; but when he seeks infant sprinkling in the bible, he can exert the faith of a latitudinarian. The reader will probably remark, that, in the instance in question, as in many others, I have repelled the Doctor's *supposition* with other *suppositions*. How probable soever it might appear, I know not, and I care not, that the Jailer had convenience on his own premises; he was baptized, and baptism is immersion.

Mark, 7th Chap. 4th ver. "And when they come from the market, except they wash, (*baptisontai*) they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing, (*baptismous*) of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables." Luke, 11th chap. 38th ver. "And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed, (*ebaptisthe*) before dinner." Dr. Burns,* in referring to these passages, places the merit of his argument, not with the etymology of the words, but with a Persian custom, a common mode adopted by the Jews, and a text in the 2nd Kings, 3rd chap. 11th verse. In these places the reader will find the terms *poured*, *affuse*, and *epecheen*† are used; but what have these words to do in explaining the verbs in the passages above? And what necessary connexion have the cases referred to by the Doctor, with the *religous* ceremonies of the Jews? The Dr. says, alluding to Mark, 7th chap. 5th ver. on washing the hands, "*this very ablution* is termed by St. Luke the baptizing of a man." This is an error. The Doctor may know if he will examine, that Mark uses *aniptois*, a derivative of *nipto*, *to rinse*; while Luke uses *ebaptisthe* from *baptizo*. Is washing the hands, *the very ablution* of baptizing the whole body? The Dr. will have it that "the word *baptize* was commonly in use to signify *washing in general*." I deny this. When Mark speaks of a mere ablution of the hands, he uses the verb *nipto*, to rinse, but when referring to the baptism of the whole body, and the utensils, he uses the verb *baptizo*. Can the Dr. see no difference in words? or is he determined to confound their meaning when there is no necessity whatever. When Mark wished to express different acts, he could find corresponding terms; therefore, he expresses the mere washing of the hands by one word, and the baptism of the whole body by another

The reader needs not now be informed that baptism and washing are two distinct things, for which the Evangelist uses two different words. The words from *baptizo* in the passages under consideration are used in their proper sense, and signify *only* to dip. But pædo-baptists inquire, is it likely the Pharisees and Jews, in case of accidental pollution, would dip themselves? or that they immersed their beds, tables, &c.? I answer, yes. What was it that men, who with excessive superstition conformed to the tradition of the elders, while they made void the law of God, would not do?

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*Page 59. †Sep... ...nt.

Those who laid down their property at the foot of superstition, were never likely to spare trouble in the same cause. It has been satisfactorily proved from Maimonides and other Jewish writers, that the ceremonial baptisms of the Jews, were invariably performed by immersion. The word THeBeL, *to dip*, was applied to these baptisms which were performed with excessive scrupolosity. A laver containing forty seahs of water, and pools and cisterns, were commonly used for the purpose; and immersion was so general a practice, that digging cisterns for religious and other services, became a branch of regular business. Not only did the Jews immerse their bodies, but also their *cups, pots, brazen vessels, tables, and beds*, with their very *pillows* and *bolsters*.* Dr. Burns inquires "Now who will be *so foolish* as to affirm that these baptisms or washings were all by the process of immersion?" I will affirm, though at the *peril* of being thought *a fool*, that the *baptisms* of the Jews were *all* by the process of immersion. The Dr. confounds baptisms with washings, Mark makes a distinction, and on the correctness of the Evangelist, I ground my faith.

Heb. 9th chap. and 10th ver.—"Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings (*diaphorois baptismois*) The divers baptisms here were performed by immersion, or the Apostle would not have used a word which means to dip. Had the Apostle intended sprinkling or pouring, he would have easily found a word to express his idea with precision. To invest the language of Scripture with a diversity of meaning, especially when referring to duty, is to reduce it to a labyrinth of uncertainty.

Section 3.

The next class of passages, to which I shall direct the attention of the reader, is where the verb *baptizo* is figuratively used. Mat, 3d chap. 11th ver. "He shall baptize, (*baptisei*) you (*en*) in the Holy Ghost and fire," Luke 12th chap. 50th ver.—"I have a baptism, (*baptisma*) to be baptized, (*baptisthenai*,) with." 1st Cor. 10th chap. 2d ver.—"And were all baptized, (*ebaptisanto*,) unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." Rom. 6th chap. 3, 4th ver.—"Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized, (*ebaptisthemen*,) into Jesus

*Vide Dr. Gill, on Mark, 7th chap. 4th and 5th verses.

Christ, were baptized, (*ebaptisthemen*) into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism, (*baptismatos*) into death." 1st Peter 3d chap. 20th ver.—"The like figure whereunto even baptism, (*baptisma*) doth also now save us." I have placed these passages at once under the reader's view, as I intend applying to the whole one rule of interpretation. It requires but very little acquaintance with language to discern, that the verbs and nouns in the passages above are figuratively used. To bring them down from the position they have taken, to the simple idea that they primarily contain, is to reduce each text to verbal absurdity. The verbs drop their action, and are used to express a *state*, which could not be expressed with equal effect by any other verb. *Louo*, to wash, *rantizo*, to sprinkle, *ekcheo*, to pour, nor any other verb would have served the purpose of the writer; therefore, *baptizo* is used in a sense foreign from its native import, to give a spirit and beauty to the texts, which could not otherwise have been produced. The idea of actual dipping is laid aside, while an immersed *state* is expressed with animation of style. The Baptist who would torture the above passages to extort from them the *act* of immersion, or the Pædo-baptist who, because the verbs are used figuratively, would invest them with a diversity of meaning, and make them imply to sprinkle, or to pour, deserves censure. The verbs, in their situation under notice, express not *mode*, but *state*; there is an allusion to the ordinance of baptism, but not to the *act* of dipping.

I lay it down as a principle of criticism, that the primary meaning of a word cannot be *proved*, from those places where it is used in a figurative sense. The baptism of the Holy Ghost in Matthew, refers not to the *action* of the verb, but to the result of that action when performed in water: that, as the body in baptism is immersed, and the ordinance is typical of purity, so the Holy Spirit when he produces an entire change of the person, places the soul of his subject in an immersed and purified state. This change, being represented by the ordinance of baptism, but not by the *action* of that ordinance, presents us with an exalted idea of its completeness. Some have supposed this baptism to refer *particularly* to the descent of the Spirit on the 120 in the House on the Day of Pentecost, and they have founded on their supposition an argument for *mode*; but for the former I cannot find any *proof*, and the latter is absurd. John, addressing the multitude, spoke of the moral and ordinary, rather than the miraculous influence of the Holy Spirit. To contend, as some have done, that the baptism of John as to *mode*, is symbolical of the baptism

of the Spirit, proves a lamentable inattention to language, or is a mere conceit, to buoy up a false supposition. Who can imagine, when the Apostle reasons from circumcision to the circumcision of the heart, that he has the least allusion to mode? The cases are parallel: the speaker nd writer drop the idea of action or mode, and refer to an effect produced by the spirit of God.

The passage from Luke, compares the sufferings of Christ to a *state* of total immersion. The verb, while it drops its natural import, gives a glowing idea of His sufferings, and produces a powerful effect on the reader. The wildest interpreter will not endeavour to extort sprinkling or pouring from this passage; and Dr. Burns judiciously avoids it.

The text from the Epistle to the Corinthians, has been the subject of much speculation. The passage of the Israelites through the Sea, is called a baptism of the people unto Moses, and blindly attaching the idea of *action* to the verb, the inventive genius of many an interpreter has been exerted, in order to make the text speak about sprinkling. Dr. Burns says, "we are certain that there was no immersion in the case." If the Doctor refers to the act of immersion, he is right; but if to the *state* of the Israelites in the sea, he is wrong. The Dr. wishes the text to imply some *mode* of baptism, and, therefore, thinks it "reasonable to suppose," that the people were sprinkled by "the agitation necessarily created in the waters" by the wind. Inferences, where the Scriptures are silent, are not always *very reasonable*; and as the verb is used figuratively, has no reference to sprinkling, and the text is silent on that part of the subject, I question whether the Doctor's conclusion be correct. The resemblance of this Baptism to the Christian ordinance is not in the *action*, nor is there the least reason to suppose that the people were annoyed with a sprinkling of water. As to their *situation*, the immersion was real, but there was no *real act* of baptism. The people were *under* the cloud, they went down into the sea, the water was on either hand, and they went out on the other side. Here was the resemblance; but the *act* of immersion or sprinkling is not implied. I do not wish to prove that the people were dipped, and I deny that any person can prove that they were sprinkled. To attempt either the one or the other, is to attribute a literal sense to a figurative expression. If people will abuse a figure of speech, to support a conceit of fancy, there are but few absurdities which may not be extorted from the Bible.*

* Of all the wild chimeras that ever generated in the head of man, that of attempting to *prove* the subjects and mode of *Christian Baptism* from the ext in Corinthians, is the most unaccountable and absurd. Yet this attempt has been made.

The text from Romans is very striking, and is an evident allusion to the Christian ordinance of Baptism; but the allusion is by figure: I do not mean a mere figure of speech, but a strict *emblem* of the thing to which it alludes. Baptism is emblematical of our death to sin, of being buried with Christ, and rising to newness of life. Now it is necessary that the likeness between the sign and the thing signified should be striking, and whoever refers the expression of the Apostle to the ordinance of Baptism by immersion, will observe that likeness to be strong and conspicuous. While the verb *baptizo* drops its simple idea *to dip*, it is used to form an emblem altogether incompatible with sprinkling or pouring. Pædobaptists have found it impossible to torture this passage so as to speak in their favor, and Mr. Wesley, with Dr. Doddridge and many others, has conceded that it alludes to the *ancient mode* of Baptism by immersion. We can see an aptness in the allusion when baptism by immersion is called a burial and resurrection; but the supposition that sprinkling or pouring is Baptism, renders it impossible to imagine the meaning of the writer. Dr. Burns thinks that it "is natural for those who have fixed it in their minds that immersion was the scriptural mode, to consider" the text in question "as a *distinct* and *expressive* allusion to that mode." But it is natural for those who oppose immersion, in spite of prejudice, to think the same. The evidence in favor of immersion is too conspicuous not to be observed, and he who will resist it must make an effort that will prove an opposite conviction. The Doctor pressed the figure in Corinthians very hard to make it sprinkle the people, but he finds the emblem in Romans too unmanageable, and, therefore, cannot "allow a mere figure of speech to give law to the Church." To dispose of this passage, as a *mere figure of speech*, only proves that the Doctor could not mould it into any thing like his system. It is something more than a *mere figure of speech*: it is an *emblem* of Baptism. It expresses a burial and resurrection; Baptism has a likeness to these. When the person is immersed, and rises from the water, his situation answers to the text. If by committing an assassination on this passage, the Dr. could have turned it to his own account, his talent that way would have met with no restraint; but he seems determined to involve it in confusion. The Dr. refers to the expression "put on Christ," and asks "if putting on of clothes resembles the mode of baptism?" Is "put on CHRIST" ever used as an emblem of baptism? If it be not, what end does it answer in the present argument? When they are said to be "baptized into his death," the Dr. inquires "does it follow, that there is any

resemblance between crucifixion, the manner of Christ's death, and the mode of baptism?" Where do the scriptures compare the mode of baptism to the *manner* of Christ's death? Are we said to be baptized into the *crucifixion* of Christ? Can the Dr. see no difference between death and crucifixion? Or does he consider the latter synonymous with the former? Is there no distinction between the *manner* of dying and the *state* of death? We are said to be baptized into the *death* of Christ, but not into his *crucifixion*. The Doctor, as usual, tries to make the scriptures speak that which they do not mean, and, in this case, contrary to the very letter. "When," he proceeds, "they are said to be 'planted together in the likeness of his death,' is it to be presumed that the operation of planting has any likeness to the baptismal ceremony?" Certainly not. But does the apostle speak about *the operation of planting?* or the *state* of being *planted?* The Dr. begs the argument by the very means with which he reproaches the Baptist's—an *English criticism*. The word *planted* is the translators; *sumphutoi* is the apostle's. The apostle does not adopt a new argument, but refers the expression to the figure which he has just used. The sense of the word must be sought in the emblem with which it is involved, and then the idea of *close union*, not the *operation of planting*, will be the meaning of the term. The apostle had just said *we are buried with him by baptism into death*, and carries on the idea of our union with him in death by the term, *sumphutoi*, to the resurrection. *If we have been joined with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection*, appears to be the correct idea of the expression. But if the Dr. will insist upon the English, what will it prove? As the term *planted* refers to the emblematical burial, it can only mean the state of the root as buried in the earth. The Doctor says that the "word *sunetaphemen*, does not relate to *living* men, but to *dead* men, not to *water* but to *earth*." But I deny this, and insist that it *relates*, in the figure of the apostle, to *living* men and *water*. The Doctor attempts to destroy the emblem of the passage, and, to serve an error, to reduce *sunetaphemen* to its literal import. "And what striking resemblance," the Dr. asks, "can any unprejudiced person discover between a man's being dipped or plunged into water, and Christ's being laid in a sepulchre hewn out o a rock?" For resemblance to the *act* of dipping I do not contend, the verb *baptizo* is used in a figurative sense: but can the Doctor discover no resemblance between the state of a person *buried* in water, and Jesus buried in a sepulchre? I fear the

Doctor is not *unprejudiced* if he *will not* see this. "The figure," says the Dr., "is not complete unless the individual has gone through the process of drowning." It is well if the Dr's weapon does not strike the apostle before it touches the baptists; and to the judgment of the apostle I consign such a venturous assertion. Never did any man labour more to reduce language to a mere nullity, than the Doctor has done in the present case. He saw the text frowned on his system, and appears determined on revenge.

The text from Peter, asserts our salvation by water in baptism in a figurative sense, and likens it to the salvation of the eight persons who were saved by water in the Ark. Here I want not to prove a dipping, nor any other mode. Doctor Burns thinks nobody will assert that the ark was *wholly under* the water, or that its occupants *were plunged into that element.* It will be more difficult still to extort any meaning from it in favor of sprinkling or pouring. "Thus is baptism," says the Doctor, "in its *spiritual signification*, fitly termed a *figure* of the salvation of Noah and his family." But where is the *spiritual signification* of baptism termed a figure? Is it not *baptism itself* that is the figure?

The Doctor quotes Daniel 4. 33, where we read that Nebuchadnezzar "was wet with the dew of Heaven;" and affirms that "he was not *dipped* in the dew; like the form of sprinkling *it came upon him.*" Certainly he was not *actually dipped* in the dew. But does the Doctor mean that *ebaphe* primarily means to sprinkle? Or that in this place it drops its original idea, and signifies a totally *immersed state?* If the latter, I perfectly agree with him, and discover a beauty in the expression. But why then talk about sprinkling when the verb does not contain the idea? The author in Hebrew, could have found NeZeH, and the translators in Greek *raino* or *rantizo*, if they had wished to express the idea of sprinkling. But they obviously intended to express a *state* for which these words would not have been sufficiently significant. They intended to convey the idea of a total immersion, and, therefore, used a word to correspond with their idea in a case where the *act* of immersion could not take place. It would have been tame, compared with what it is, if the text had represented the king only as sprinkled with dew; and because *ebaphe* is used without its active meaning, to force an idea into it contrary to its nature, is not the brightest display of either honesty or discernment. That the dew *came upon him*, I agree with the Doctor, but that *ebaphe*, or any other word in the text, expresses that mode, I feel confident never can be

proved. His baptism in the dew consisted no more in sprinkling than dipping, but in the state of his person. It was not the *falling* of the dew that formed the baptism, but the *immersed state* of the body *after* the dew had come upon it. *Ebaphe* is not used in its simple sense, therefore, to attach its primitive idea, to it in the text under consideration, or the idea of sprinkling, is unjustifiable.

It will be observed, respecting the texts which we have just examined, that the verb *baptizo* is not used in its proper sense. The person who, to get the act of dipping from the verb, insists upon its active meaning in the texts, will, of course, have some dipped into the Holy Spirit and fire, Jesus dipped into his sufferings, the Hebrews dipped into the cloud and sea, and Nebuchadnezzar dipped into the dew! But on the other hand, because the original meaning of the verb is dropped, to force into it the idea of a mode foreign from its nature, only proves that the person adopting such a method, is determined, at all events, to support his hypothesis. Hence, the passages where the word is figuratively used, have been placed upon the rack, to torture from them a confession in favor of a mode, to which they are irreconcileably opposed. But to strain from language what it was never intended to convey, will inevitably result in absurdity. To attach the idea of *mode* to an expression, where that idea is not preserved, is the sure way to render the language of a writer ridiculous. This method has exposed many a learned and good man to censure. The venerable Wesley, after taking it for granted with good Dr. Guyse, that John could not baptize so large a number of candidates by immersion, says, "It seems therefore, that they stood in ranks on the edge of the river, and that John passing along before them, *cast water on their heads or faces*, by which means he might baptize many thousands in a day. And *this way* most naturally signified Christ's baptizing them with the Holy Ghost and with fire"!!* Laying aside this unaccountable conceit about the mode adopted by John, I ask, did this good man mean that the Holy Ghost and fire were *cast on their heads or faces?* Yet this is the very idea conveyed by his expression. Mr. Wesley seems to have attached the idea of *mode* to the application of the Holy Spirit, because it is termed a baptism: and this error involved him in another.

The reader will not inquire whether the inspired penmen alluded to baptism in the texts referred to, as the allusion is easily perceptible. But why, he may ask, did they

* Vide Comment in loc.

use the word in an improper sense? The answer I have anticipated; but may repeat, that it was owing to some circumstance peculiar to immersion, which afforded them a figure to produce a powerful effect. Dr. Burns, taking it for certain, because we argue from the allusions in favor of immersion, that we insist on preserving the action of the verbs, rallies us with absurdity into which he supposes us involved. But, if the exposition which I have attempted be correct, the satirical puns of the Doctor will be found to fall short of their mark.

It will appear evident to every observant individual, that had the words, which are particularly involved in this debate, been translated according to their meaning, there would have been less excitement to dispute. But it has been affirmed, that the translators could find no word in the English vocabulary to express the sense of the original. But this could certainly never be the reason. They felt no difficulty in giving a strict translation of the original in Lev. 4. 17, 18, where THeBeL, *bapto*, is rendered to dip; NeZeH, *raino*, to sprinkle; and SaPaK, *ekcheo*, to pour. If *baptizo* mean, to *sprinkle*, *to pour*, or *to wash*, why not translate it accordingly, whenever it is connected with the ordinance of Baptism? In Mark 7, 4, *where it has no relation to baptism* they hesitated not to translate it, *to wash*. This is the more remarkable as three derivatives from *nipto* looked them in the face. Why was *baptizo* here translated into the same word as *nipto*? Is there not an absolute distinction between the verbs? and could not that distinction have been preserved in the English? The translators knew if they rendered *baptizo* in Mark, *to dip*, that their translation would be condemned in every other instance where the verb occurs; therefore, while they ventured to swerve from their usual method of leaving it with an English termination, they *washed* it over with a word that does not express its meaning. To affirm that the translators could find no English term for the original, is to offer for them an apology to serve a point, and appears a mere fiction, as they could translate the verb when the ordinance was absent. The reason was, if history may be relied on, that they translated under an authority by which they were over-ruled. James I, it is well known, piqued himself on his learning, and it appears, from Mr. Lewis' history of the English translations, that he commanded the translators to retain the old ecclesiastical terms, one of which was the unfortunate *baptize*. Did not the King and his bishops anticipate the consequences, in the event of *baptizo* being translated *to dip*? But when this disputed verb was free from the English sceptre, it ap-

pears to have met with more favorable treatment. The Germans translated it *teuff*; the Dutch *doop*; and the Danes and Swedes *dobe*; all which signify to dip.

Section 4.

Dr. Burns refers to Eph. 5, 26, Titus 3, 5, and Heb. 10, 22, "where," he says, "*baptism* is termed *the washing of water*, and the *washing of regeneration*, and where the bodies of christians are said to be *washed with pure water*." Does the Dr. intend to assert that these expressions refer to the *mode* of baptism? If so, I deny it *in toto*. If they refer not to the mode of baptism, what service do they afford to his argument? The texts refer not to the *mode*, but to the effect of baptism on the body, as typical of that purity which was wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit. But the Dr., aware that the act of dipping is not in the texts, wishes to beg from them some other mode. "As to *the washing of regeneration*, the apostle," the Dr. says, "explains it, as signifying *the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which God shed*, or poured out *on us abundantly*, which may be considered his *explicit testimony* against the idea of immersion being intended to be conveyed by the expression." The Dr. has absurdly made the apostle bear *explicit testimony* against the *mode* of immersion, in an *expression* which has not the least allusion to it, and this for no other purpose, than to make him speak in favor of a *mode of baptism* about which he is as silent as death. The Doctor's system is under immense obligation to the *explicit testimony of silence*! If the Dr. will but *prove* that these texts refer to the mode of baptism, I will undertake to prove that they mean only immersion. But by making them answerable for the *mode* of baptism, the Dr. adopts a method of argument rather fatal to his system. Is the *body washed* by sprinkling, or pouring a little on the head or face? The apostle does not say the *face*, or merely a *part* of the body, but *the body* was washed. Would not any unbiassed reader consider immersion more expressive of this washing, than the method adopted by pædo-baptists? But I use not this as an argument, though it may show the fallaciousness of such reasoning as the Dr. adopts. The Doctor's nonsense about a complete application of water requiring the subject to enter the element *in puris naturalibus*, is no credit to his pen. As to his admonition of decency, it may not be less applicable to him-

self than to the baptists. And the baptists attach as much importance to the cleansing of the heart as their brethren, and less to baptism than the Dr. in his book, where he paints it a crime to allow a sick person to die without it.

The pædo-baptists rest no inconsiderable portion of their argument for a diversity of mode in the ordinance of baptism, on those expressions which relate to the influences of the Holy Spirit; and Dr. Burns informs us that they refer to *their mode* of baptism. The Dr. has given us a long string of expressions, from the Old and New Testament, which speak of God as *sprinkling many nations, shedding forth*, and *pouring out* his Spirit, and of the Holy Spirit *falling upon*, and *coming on* his subjects. *I deny in the most positive terms*, and the Dr. has not given the shadow of a proof, that any one of the quotations he has made, refers to the mode of christian baptism. The expressions which he has quoted, even when confined to the subject for which they are used, must be taken in a figurative sense. Surely no man is so spell-bound to error as to contend, that the Holy Spirit was *literally sprinkled, poured*, or *shed*. The man who will insist upon a *literal pouring*, is bound to take the unavoidable consequence of his own argument. For instance, that which is literally poured must be material,—the Holy Spirit, he would say, is literally poured; therefore, the Holy Spirit is *material*. But I cannot imagine that any sane individual, merely to buttress a system, will become so decided a materialist. Then, as the expressions are figurative, and convey no idea of mode respecting a divine influence, the very subject for which they are used, why are they forced into the present question, to prove a diversity of mode in an ordinance to which they have not even an indirect allusion. "The Apostle Peter," says the Dr. "understood this *effusion* of the Spirit to be the promised spiritual baptism." But this baptism was not in the *effusion*, but in the effect produced on the soul. Whatever the Dr. may understand, when he strains a text to favor *his* mode, there is no reason to suppose that Peter *understood* the *effusion* to be the baptism. The Dr. asks if the Almighty "does not uniformly employ the terms *sprinkling, pouring* and *shedding*, in reference to his heavenly communications." Certainly he does, but not in reference to the *mode* of baptism; and to employ them in a cause for which they never were designed, is to abuse them. The Dr. himself should have felt the influence of his caution about insulting the Almighty, before he bestowed it on the Baptists.

The Dr. in pages 64 and 65, lays his account with an-

tiquity, and by reference to Eusebius, wishes his readers to understand, that a mode different from immersion was then in use. But what does his arguing prove? That the ceremony was not valid. The Dr. would like to attach the invalidity of the rite, not to the mode, but to the sickness of the person, which rendered him an involuntary convert. The canon to which the Dr. refers, while it assigns this as one reason, does not exclude the mode as another; and Nicephorus would have given the Dr. *a broad hint*, that sprinkling was not deemed valid. It is somewhat amusing that Dr. Taylor, a learned episcopal Bishop, has adduced evidence from this very epistle of Cornelius, to shew that *sprinkling* was then deemed invalid. "Now this was of so sacred account in their esteem," says the Bishop, "that they did not count it lawful to receive him into the clergy, who had been only sprinkled in his baptism; as we learn from the Epistle of Cornelius to Fabius of Antioch: '*Me exon en ton en kline dia noson perichuthenta hosper kai houtos eis kleron tina genesthai*, it is not lawful that he who was sprinkled in his bed by reason of sickness, should be admitted into holy orders.' Nay, it went further than this; they were not sure that they were rightly christened, yea, or no, who were only sprinkled; as appears in the same epistle of Cornelius in Eusebius, *eige chre legein ton toiouton eilephenai*, which Nicephorus thus renders, 'if at least such a sprinkling may be called baptism'; and this was not only spoken in diminution of Novatus, and in indignation against his person, for it was a formed and a solemn question made by Magnus to St. Cyprian, '*An habendi sint christiani legitimi, eo quod aqua salutari non loti sunt, sed perfusi*,' whether they were to be esteemed right christians who were only sprinkled with water, and not washed or dipped? He answers that the baptism waa good when it was done, '*necesssitate cogente et Deo indulgentiam suam largiente:*' in the case of necessity, God pardoning, and necessity compelling."* This testimony, from a learned pædo-baptist too, is a perfect refutation of the inference drawn by Dr. Burns, from the epistle of Cornelius. Dr. Burns has introduced two other cases, neither of which is worth any thing for his purpose. There is not the slightest evidence that Lawrence sprinkled the soldier, who took him the pitcher of water; nor that Basilides was not immersed in the prison. The Dr. wanders far for his evidence, and even then has to force a testimony which it does not contain.

* Duc. Dub. b. 3 chap 4, rule 15.

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The fair statement of the case appears to be this, that in the second century baptism was erroneously deemed essential to salvation, and, if it was neglected in health, a corruption of the ordinance was administered in affliction; but this was considered invalid by the sacred authorities of the age. But of what real value is this appeal to antiquity? I could, if my limits would allow, introduce evidence from the Greek fathers, to directly contradict the assertions of the Dr. But the cause of the baptists depends not on such evidence. Let the reader turn his attention to the epistles of Paul to the Corinthians and Galatians; and to the 2. 3. chapters of the Revelation by John; then he will be satisfied that the argument from antiquity is to be suspected, as the christian religion was woefully corrupted *even before* the death of the apostles. To prove infant sprinkling from antiquity, is to prove corruption in the christian church. So much for the Doctor's "quite irresistible argument from antiquity."

The Dr. as if short of argument foreign from his subject, calls in the aid of Mr. Edwards; but alas! they both fall into the ditch. Their argument is, that by insisting on immersion, we make the validity of baptism to depend on the *quantity* of water; therefore, as the Lord's supper is expressed by *deipnon*, a meal, or feast, we are bound by our own reasoning to take in the eucharist a complete meal. Let us discipline this quibble with a little common sense. First: *they* say we make the validity of baptism to depend on the quantity of water, but *we* say, that the validity of baptism depends on immersion into water without particular refer ece to quantity. Secondly: they represent the Lord's supper by *deipnon*, a common meal, but *deipnon* is not once used in the New Testament *alone* for that ordinance, and the apostle calls it *Kuriakon deipnon.* Thirdly: the Dr. says, that our Lord and his apostles made it a *full* meal, though it is plain enough they took it *immediately after the passover.* And Fourthly: to make out their case, they both confound the Lord's supper with the passover, while both Luke and Paul make a distinction, by placing the former *after* the latter. Alas! for the Doctor's "argument from analogy, and Mr. Edwards' "*case of criticism!!!* Such is the result of attempting to bolster up an hypothesis with figments that have no connexion with the subject.

In page 58, the Dr. affirms that "*baptize* and *baptism* do not imply immersion," and that immersion is *not their general* or *scriptural* import; yet in page 53 he informs us that pædo-baptists do not disallow immersion. What is it that he means? that pædo-baptists allow a mode that is not the *ge-*

neral or *scriptural* import of *baptize* and *baptism?* He seems unwillingly to admit with lexicographers, notwithstanding his denial to the contrary, that immersion is implied among the different significations of the terms. One might almost imagine, that the Dr. anticipated opposition, therefore, to indurate his feelings, he submitted them to the painful trial of self-contradiction.

The pædo-baptists have frequently attempted to alter the translation of the Greek prepositions, in cases where nothing has required it except their opinions. No one denies that the prepositions *may be* differently rendered; but it is one thing for a word to be capable of a double sense, and another to translate it in such a manner as to make it discord with the sentence where it is in regimen. According to their own shewing, pædo-baptists believe that the *primary* meaning of *baptizo* is to dip; therefore it requires only the removal of prejudice to see, that the prepositions when construed with the verb, and relating to the act of baptism, demand the translation that is generally given. The nature of a sentence, and the circumstance to which it refers, determine the idea conveyed by a preposition, and form a rule for translation. These remarks are illustrated, and the translators justified by the following expressions, where *eis* and *en* are rendered *into* and *in*. Matt. 6. 6. Enter (*eis*) *into* thy closet. 17. 15. He falleth (*eis*) *into* the fire, and oft (*eis*) *into* the water. Luke 24. 51. Carried up (*eis*) *into* heaven. John 5. 7. Put me (*eis*) *into* the pool. Rev. 18. 21. Cast a stone like a great mill-stone (*eis*) *into* the sea. 19. 20. *Into* (*eis*) a lake of fire. Let the translation in the above examples be *to*, and who would not see the absurdity? The usual meaning of *eis* is *into*, and when it is differently used its connection preserves from ambiguity. Matt. 6. 9. Our father who art (*en*) *in* the heavens (*ouranois*). 8. 32. They died (*en*) *in* the waters. John 1. 10. He was (*en*) *in* the world. Does not the sense of these passages determine the import of the preposition? The translation that is given in Acts 8. 38. appears to be required by the very nature of the case. Doctor Burns is aware, that if the translation he allowed, this passage favours the baptists, and therefore reads *eis*, *to*, and *ek* from. Let him prove that *baptizo* means to sprinkle, and then *his* translation will appear a little more plausible. But even then he must be asked, why Philip and the Eunuch went down *to* the water for the purpose of sprinkling, when the *probability* is, that the Eunuch had water sufficient in his carriage. *Baptizo* means to immerse, and the most obvious

aspect of the affair demands the belief, that they went down *into*, and came up *out of* the water. Because we suppose evidence in favor of immersion, from their both going *into* the water, the Doctor argues, that the "conclusion" of such a supposition is that *both* were immersed. But did he not discover that this whim makes equally against himself. If *sprinkling* was the mode, still it is predicated of *both*, according to the Dr., that they went *to* the water, will he have it that *both* were sprinkled? They both went into the water, and Philip baptized the Eunuch; surely, when immersion is admitted, the account is free from uncertainty. The Dr. argues from "Jesus went up into a mountain;" and insists that if *eis* be translated *into*, we are *irresistibly* led to infer that our Saviour was plunged into the mountain. Then, if the Dr. were to read that his friend went *into* a field, he would be "*irresistibly* led to infer" that his friend was *plunged into the field!!!* Would he not, if in his senses, be "irresistibly led to infer," that his friend went within the precinct of the field? The circumstance conveys the exact meaning of the preposition, and preserves the passage from ambiguity. Jesus went within the limits of the mountain, and to translate *eis* into the English preposition *to*, would not convey the meaning of the Evangelist. The same remarks are applicable to Matthew 28. 16. The Dr. refers to John, 20. 3—7, and thinks that "a manifest contradiction would be involved" if *eis* were translated *into*. Certainly it would. While Peter remained on this side the Sepulchre, the preposition *into* would have been absurd. Here the circumstance itself is the interpreter. But why did not the Dr. notice *eis* in the sixth verse, and *eiselthe* in the eighth? Was he afraid that the prepositions here would be too sturdy for his management? Would he translate *eis* in these verses by the English preposition *to*? He plainly saw that the prepositions in these places resisted his translating ingenuity. While Peter remained on the outside of the sepulchre it would be absurd to render *eis*, *into*; and the Dr. saw it would be equally absurd, when the apostle went *into* the sepulchre, to interpret *eis* by the preposition, *to*. The ordinance of baptism required the parties to go within the precincts of the water; therefore, in such cases, the preposition must always be rendered *into*. Dr. Burns knows that respect must be paid to the connection in which a preposition stands, or a ridiculous interpretation is likely to be given. To translate the prepositions, as the pædo-baptists have done, where they are connected with the ordinance of baptism, evinces their want of argument. The worthy Editor

of the Baptist Magazine, has given Dr. BURNS, in reviewing his pamphlet, an amusing specimen of his own method of translating *eis* into the English *to*. Mark 5. 13. "And the unclean spirits went out, and entered (*eis*) *to* the swine; and the herd ran violently down a steep place (*eis*) *to* the sea, and were choked (*eis*) *to* the sea!! "So much for interpretations under the guidance of pre-conceived and favourite opinions."

Whoever turns an unbiassed attention to the etymology of *baptizo*, to the scriptures where it occurs, and to the unequivocal concessions of candid pædo-baptist authors, will feel surprised that the mode of baptism should continue a subject of dispute. It must require *enormous* courage, or a quality of mind not quite so creditable, to affirm that the *verb*, the *bible* and antiquity, favour any other mode than immersion. "I have heard," says Dr. CAMPBELL, "a disputant of this stamp, in defiance of *etymology* and *use*, maintain that the word, rendered in the New Testament baptize, means more properly *to sprinkle*, than to plunge; and *in defiance of all antiquity*, that the former method was the earliest, and for many centuries, the most general practice in baptizing. One who argues in this manner never fails, with persons of knowledge, to betray the cause he would defend; and though, with respect to the vulgar, bold assertions succeed as well as arguments, sometimes better; yet a candid mind will disdain to take the help of a falsehood even in support of the truth."—*Lect. on Pulpit Eloquence, p.* 480.

CHAPTER II.

SECTION I.

ON THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

The mode of baptism is important, as on that depends the essential character of the ordinance itself. As by changing the mode, we reduce the character of baptism; so, by changing the subjects, we produce a similar effect in the constitution of the church. A society which includes infants, and a church of believers, are two distinct things; but by substituting the former for the latter, we sink the distinction, and subject the church to results the most prejudicial. A

dissimilarity of character ought to exist between the church and the world; but by uniting in the constitution of the church, materials whose moral nature we have no means of ascertaining, that dissimilarity is lost, and an amalgamation is effected, which destroys its beauty, and endangers its purity. The apostles of our Saviour, in forming the church, were guided by character, and in this they strictly conformed to their commission. Evidence of faith they considered essential to membership, and administered baptism only where that evidence was believed to exist. The commission of Christ was their rule, and beyond that they had no authority to act. The commission never was changed; and, therefore, remains our guide to the present day.

The commission which formed a law to the apostles, in collecting the visible church of the Redeemer, required to be explicit. As on the execution of this order, depended the character of the church, the least ambiguity would have implied defect in the order itself, and have involved the apostles in uncertainty. But the commission is precise in its terms, and the conduct of the apostles proves that they understood it according to the letter. As the commission is to us, what it formerly was to the apostles, a correct knowledge of its meaning is important. To ascertain that meaning, we will now enter on an examination of its terms. Matthew says (28. 19, 20,) "Go ye therefore, and (*matheteusate panta ta ethne*) *disciple all nations*, (*baptizontes autous*) *baptizing them* in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; (*Didaskontes autous*) *teaching them* to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Mark has the commission (16. 15, 16,). Go into all the world, and (*keruxate to euaggelion*) *preach the gospel* to every creature. (*O pisteusas kai baptistheis*) *he who believeth and is baptized*, shall be saved; but he who believeth not, shall be damned." Luke, though he does not mention baptism, as clearly states the method by which the nations were to be discipled: "That repentance and remission of sins, should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jeruslem." The Evangelists harmonize in the method to be pursued by the apostles in bringing the nations to an obedience of the faith. Matthew shews us, that *the people were to be made disciples*; Mark, that this was to be done *by preaching the gospel*; and Luke specifies the particulars of that general subject, which were to be addressed to the people—*repentance and remission of sins in the name of Jesus.* The commission is not less clear on the next point of order. When their message had taken ef-

fect, the apostles were *then* to administer the ordinance of baptism. Matthew places baptism *after* discipleship, and Mark *after* believing. Those who believed became the disciples of the Saviour, and those only who became his disciples were eligible to baptism. Baptizing *autous*, *them*, which being masculine, refers to *mathetas*, *disciples*, included and understood in *matheteusate*, *make disciples*, and not to *panta ta ethne*, *all the nations*, as the latter is evidently neuter. They were to make disciples by preaching the Gospel to every creature, and to baptize the disciples whom they made. Their duty consisted next in *didaskontes autous*, *teaching them* to observe all things which the Saviour had commanded. The apostles were to make disciples, not by baptism, but by instruction, and to administer the ordinance to those only who believed. The terms of the commission are free from ambiguity, and as explicit as language possibly can make them. A character is specified, and baptism confined to that character; therefore, the apostles, while the commission was their guide, could no more administer baptism to infants, than to infidels, and with no more propriety to either, than to Diana of Ephesus.

That *matheteusate* means to make disciples by instruction, and by securing the belief of the persons in the truth, and that the commission restricts the ordinance of baptism to such, is not only evident from the language itself, but was the opinion of many pædo-baptists, not less eminent for erudition, than for piety of character.

Grotius :—" Seeing there are two kinds of teaching, one by way of introduction to the first principles, the other by way of more perfect instruction; the former seems to be intended by the word *matheteuein*, for that is, as it were, to initiate into discipline, *and is to go before baptism*; the latter is intended by the word *didaskein*, which is here placed after baptism." In loc.

Calvin :—" Because Christ requires teaching before baptizing, *and will have believers only admitted to baptism*, baptism does not seem to be *rightly* administered, except faith precede." In harm. evang. comment. ad. loc.

Dr. Whitby :—" *Matheteuein* here, is to preach the gospel to all nations, and to engage them to believe it, in order to their profession of that faith by baptism : as seems apparent, (1) from the parallel commission Mark 16. 15, Go preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved. (2) From *the scripture notion of a disciple*, that being still *the same as a believer*.—If here it

should be said that I yield too much to the Anti-pædo-baptists, by saying, that to be made disciples here is to be taught to believe in Christ; I desire any one to tell me how the apostles could *matheteuein*, *make a disciple* of a heathen or unbelieving Jew, without being *mathetai*, or teachers of them; whether they were not sent to preach to those who could hear, and to teach them to whom they preached, that Jesus was the Christ, and *only to baptize them when they did believe this.*" Comment in loc.

VENEMA:—"Go, says our Lord to the apostles, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsover I have commanded you. This is an excellent passage, and explains the whole nature of baptism. Before persons were baptized, it was necessary for them to believe the preaching of the apostles, which faith they were to profess in baptism. For the word *matheteuein*, in the style of the New Testament, does not signify barely to admit into a school and instruction, but to admit *after the doctrine is believed*, and *after a previous subjection* to the fundamental laws of the school: *matheteuein tina*, is to teach a person effectually, so that he may learn, obey, and receive the doctrine by faith. It includes, therefore, *akouein kai mathein*, to hear, to understand, and to admit for true, for *manthanein*, to learn, signifies an idea distinct from *akousai* to hear." Disserta. Sac. lib. 2. cap. 14. sec. 6.

POOLE'S CONTINUATORS:—"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations. The Greek is *matheteusate*, make disciples (among) all nations; *but that must be by preaching*, and instructing them in the principles of the christain faith; and Mark expounds it, telling us our Saviour said, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature;' that is, to every reasonable creature capable of hearing and receiving it. I cannot be of their mind, who think that persons may be baptized before they are taught: we want *precedents of any such baptism in scripture*; though indeed we find precedents of persons baptized, who had but a small degree of the knowledge of the gospel; but it should seem that *they were all first taught* that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and *were not baptized till they professed such belief*; and John baptized them in Jordan confessing their sins." Annotat in loc.

BAXTER:—"*Go, disciple me all nations, baptizing them.* As for those that say they are discipled by baptizing, they speak not the sense of that text; nor that which is true or rational, if they mean it as absolutely spoken: else why

should one be baptized more than another? This is not like some historical mention of baptism, but it is the very commission of Christ to his apostles for preaching and baptizing, and purposely expresseth their several works, in their several places and order. Their first task is by teaching to make disciples, who are by Mark called believers—their second work is to baptize them, where to is annexed the promise of their salvation—the third work is to teach them all other things which are afterwards to be learned in the school of Christ. *To contemn this order is to renounce all rules of order;* for where can we expect to find it, if not here? I profess my conscience is fully satisfied from this text, *that it is one sort of faith, even saving,* that *must go before baptism,* and *the profession, whereof the minister must expect.*"* Disputat. Right to Sac. p. 91, 149, 150.

The above pædo-baptist authorities are only a few of many whose testimony might easily be adduced, to confirm the same fact. Their sentiments are perfectly consistent with the commission, and the latter totally excludes infants. The christian commission clearly expresses the mind of the Redeemer, and to invest it with a meaning which it does not contain, is an impudent attempt on his prerogative. He had just risen from the dead, and was about to open a new state of things, it was necessary, therefore, that his orders should be clear and precise. So we find them. Jesus expressed nothing which he did not wish his apostles to perform, and withheld nothing that was necessary for them to know. To say that in giving the first law of his kingdom, the Saviour meant something which he did not express, would not be less impious than to affirm that he expressed something which he did not mean. The apostles understood their master, and have not left on record a single instance of baptizing infants. Their conduct corresponded with the injunction they received, and they had neither courage nor impiety sufficient to go beyond it. If they had baptized infants, it would have been by a warrant quite different from the commission. An order to baptize believers, no more includes infants, than an order to baptize infants, includes believers. A positive institute depends on the terms of the command by which it is enjoined, and to change the terms, either by diminution or addition, will result in something foreign from the institute itself. Abraham circumcised the male infants and servants of his family, not because the rite was enjoined on himself, but because he had an express order to that effect. Abraham dared

* More examples of the same kind, may be found in Booth and Gibbs on Baptism

no sooner to surmise something which his order did not contain, than he dared to neglect something which it expressed. For him to have done either one or the other, would have been an attack on the authority of God. The commission not only specifies a duty, but also the order in which it shall be discharged. Were there no other evidence of baptism being confined to believers, I would entrench myself within the commission, and defy all the powers from beneath, and all the cunning craftiness of men, ever to dispossess me. No person on the earth, but a voluntary disciple of the Saviour, has a right to baptism; and it is the imperative duty of every believer to be baptized. If an injunction could be found in the New Testament, expressing the baptism of infants, to that I would cheerfully submit, but even then I would deny that their baptism was included in the commission which we have.

Dr. Burns,* referring to the commission in Matthew, says: "the passage has frequently been brought forward in support of the assertion, that there is no scripture warrant for the practice of baptizing infants." In this the Dr. is right, and his futile attempt to refute it, confirms the correctness of that assertion. "When a warrant is given," says the Dr. "to extend anything to a collective body of men, it must be understood as including every individual of which that body is composed, provided there be no exceptionary clause." This rule the Dr. considers "as including infants equally with adults" for baptism. But of what is this *collective body* composed? Believers? If so, the warrant for baptism extends to them. But does he mean a *collective body* without discrimination of character? If so, he will have as motley a group as ever national establishment embraced. The apostles where ordered to preach the gospel, by preaching to disciple, and *then* to administer the ordinance of baptism. Their warrant to preach extended to all who were capable of hearing, and their warrant to baptize extended to all on whom their message took an evident effect. Unless they went beyond their order, it was equally impossible for them to baptize infants as profligates. Their warrant itself was an *exceptionary clause* against any whose character did not correspond with its terms. The Dr. however, will have it, that infants are *implied* in the warrant, "for apart from their parents they have no legal existence." What has *legal existence* to do with membership in the church of Christ? Does legal existence imply membership? A national church may confound the two, but

*Page 29.

the new Testament preserves a distinction. "The privilege which is extended to the parent," says the Dr. "is virtually extended to the child." This, in a multitude of instances, is as false in civil law as in religion. The parent, by reason of his station, may have many privileges, to which his child has no claim: and the claim of the child to membership in the church of Christ depends, not on his parent, but on his own character. Does Dr. Burns admit infants with their parents to the table of the Lord? But what means this dirty puddle of civil with spiritnal things?

"The opposers of infant baptism,' says the Dr. "contend, that as children are not specifically mentioned, their exclusion is to be considered as implied." Most assuredly. I would contend, that if infants had not been particularly mentioned to Abraham, their exclusion would have been implied. Does the silence of scripture form a warrant for a positive duty? "The assertors of a tacit restriction," he proceeds, "are bound to prove it." They want no other proof than the law of baptism itself, and that bids defiance to all the chicanery of man. They hold the commission just as it is given; they are pædobaptists who are *bound to prove* that it means something, about which it expresses not a word. The Dr. says: "If their (infants) exclusion had been designed, an exceptionary clause was indispensably requisite." Why? Because "from the days of Abraham to the ascension of Christ, their exclusion was never for one moment suspected." Infants, under the old dispensation, were embraced by a law that extended to the whole nation, without a particular reference to piety of heart. Can such a law be found for membership in the church of Christ? Did the apostles, who formed the church on the commission, admit any but believers? Let any person produce the same reason for baptizing an infant, that a Jew could for circumcising one. It would have been as absurd to suspect the exclusion of infants from a law by which they were expressed, as it is to contend for their being included in the commission that is totally silent about them. The Dr. seems very apt to confound the christian church, with the Jewish nation.

But why this false reasoning about *an exceptionary clause?* A Jew might assign the same reason for baptizing his bed, or a papist for baptizing his bell; and then, to screen himself from the censure of the Dr., allege that there is no *exceptionary clause* in the commission against such a practice. Must we have *exceptionary clauses*, to guard the church against human inventions? Is not a plain law, without an exception-

ary clause, sufficient for the conduct of a christian? Suppose a nobleman, being about to enter on a new establishment, were to order his steward to hire twenty servants of a certain age, and with particular qualifications of character. In examining his household at a future period he finds, that ten of the twenty are younger than he ordered, and void of the qualifications that he specified. He calls his steward, and reproves him for his error; who availing himself of the Doctor's argument, immediately replies: "Your order, my lord, was certainly specific, but knowing that servants much younger, and destitute of the qualifications which you named resided on your former establishment; and there being no *exceptionary clause* in your command against such, I presumed that they would answer the purpose of your lordship." "No exceptionary clause!" exclaims his lordship. "You *presumed*! My former establishment! What was my former establishment to you? Your orders were explicit; and your duty was, not to *presume*, but to obey." "Be clement, I beseech you, my lord;" says the steward, "I assure your lordship, that there is but little reason for complaint. I have explained your order in precisely the same way that Dr. Burns, with the pedo-baptists very generally, explains the commission of the son of God to baptize. He contends, that infants were members of the Jewish church, and, as there is not in the commission of Jesus an *exceptionary clause* against them, he has a right to make them members of the christian church. I have, therefore, taken no greater liberty with the order of your lordship, than is taken with that of the Son of God." "Sir," says his lordship, "I will no longer be insulted; resign your stewardship, and depart from my presence." Who would not approve the conduct of his lordship, and censure the temerity of his steward? And shall conduct that would be condemned in such a case, be pursued towards the Redeemer? Will men speculate because the scriptures are silent? and submit to restraint, only where their innovations are opposed by an *exceptionary clause*? Did ever Roman Catholic wish for a better argument, to justify the whole mass of ceremonies in his church? What exploits might not an innovator perform, who, reasoning from Judaism to christianity, would unite the rituals of the former with the latter, except where he met with an *exceptionary clause*? Surely to take such an advantage of the silence of the bible, will be condemned by every pious and reasonable man. The apostles, though Jews, receiving the commission from a Jew, never ventured to take such an impious advantage of its silence.

To destroy the idea of effectual teaching from the commission, the Dr. asserts, that *matheteusate*, "is simply a command to turn from paganism to christianity." But if even this wretched construction were correct, it would totally exclude infants. Those who were merely turned from paganism to christianity, must have been attached to the former, and capable of preferring the latter. This supposition therefore, is incompatible with infants. But no interpretation of a word can be more utterly unfounded. The apostles were to disciple by preaching; the disciple was to be the subject of a faith which would secure the salvation of his soul. Is a disciple one who merely turns from paganism to christianity? Is he not one who is made wise unto salvation? What kind of disciples did Peter make on the day of Penticost? Was the apostle satisfied with Simon the sorcerer, who simply turned from paganism to christianity? Peter and his coadjutors, who acted under the commission, made disciples, not by simply turning men from paganism to christianity, but by persuading them to believe with the heart unto righteousness. They viewed no person as a disciple of Christ, who did not afford evidence of a *regenerated heart*, and such only they admitted into the church. What a church of disciples, if all are to be members, who merely turn from a profession of paganism to that of christianity! Because we insist upon the order of the commission, that discipleship must precede baptism, the Dr. denominates this *a mere English criticism*. But the arrangement is the same in the original as in the translation, therefore, it is equally a Greek, as an English criticism. If a criticism at all, it is a criticism established by the law of God. The Dr. will have it, that the position of words in the commission is no more to be noticed than in the following passages: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe with thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."* "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." † He contends, that if our argument be good, we make confession with the mouth to precede faith in the heart, and John to dispense the ordinance of baptism, before he preached the baptism of repentance. So then, the Dr. can see no difference betwixt the order of a positive command, and an incidental expression, or the simple narration of a fact. If he will just glance at the verse following that which he has quoted from Romans, he will find that the apostle reduces the

*Rom. 10. 9. †Mark, 1. 4.

same truth to its proper order of expression. And the ministry of John will inform him, if he pay attention, in what order the baptist administered the ordinance. That the arrangement of the commission is binding, is evident, not only from the authority by which it is fixed, but from the uniform conduct of the apostles; *without one exception*, they administered the ordinance of baptism only where they obtained an evidence of faith. If, according to the Dr., "the position of words is often a mere contingency," surely no reasonable man will contend for such a *contingency* in a positive command. The Dr. appears to concede that in some cases the position of words is imperative, but in what, if not in an injunction that is to guide and regulate our conduct? If the Dr. were to order his servant to wash and dress, and then wait on the family at table, and the man were to enter the room and offer his services in an undress, and dirty condition, would the Dr. allow his servant to excuse his disorderly conduct by saying, "Sir, I thought that the position of your words was a *mere contingency*, and that to wash and dress myself *after* waiting at table, would be equally pleasing to the family?" Would not the Dr. resent such treatment from his servant? And can *he* expect a "well done" from the Redeemer, after serving his command in a very similar way?

"This apparent connection between teaching and baptizing," says the Dr. "is to be explained by a reference to circumstances of a local and temporary nature." This I flatly deny. *Apparent connection!* Is there not a real connection? If so, is it not impious to disturb it? The reason for this connection is *not* to be sought in circumstances of a local and temporary nature, but in the sovereign pleasure of the Saviour. The connection between teaching and baptizing was designed to be as permanent as the commission itself, and is as binding on us, as it was on the apostles. There was nothing in the circumstances of those to whom the gospel was first preached, that rendered such an arrangement more necessary, than there is in our own. Instruction is as indispensable for us, as it was for them. It is easy to observe, that upon this arrangement depends the character of the church; for, if persons be admitted prior to believing, or who are incapable of receiving the doctrines of truth, the church, in lieu of forming an object of moral beauty, must inevitably become a scene of disorder and corruption. The direct tendency of infant baptism, in destroying the purity and order of the visible church of the Redeemer, is too palpable to be disproved, and too deplorable not to be lamented. The a-

postles, however, admitted none but believers, and admitted their offspring only on an evidence of faith. They uniformly acted, as they were bound to act, in accordance with the arrangement of their commission.

SECTION 2.

I contend that the commission includes only believers, and that in every instance the apostles baptized only on evidence of faith. As there is no precept for infant baptism, so there is not even the shadow of a precedent. Let us proceed with the apostles, while acting under the commission of their ascended Lord. How did Peter proceed on the day of Pentecost? Acts 2. 38, 39: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Here the Apostle acted in perfect consistency with the order of his commission. He preached, the people were pricked to the heart, he exhorted them to repent, and then baptized. But did he baptize the people indiscrimately, without evidence of faith? Let us hear: "Then *they that gladly received his word* were baptized—They continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And all that *believed* were together continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house—praising God." This was what might have been anticipated, as the natural result of the commission. A great number of infants undoubtedly belonged to these people, but there is not the slightest hint about their baptism, nor about their being admitted to the church. We read of those *who were pricked to the heart—repented—received the word—were baptized—prayed—praised* and *went from house to house*; but in all this visiting, and interchange of services, not the least allusion to infants. It was impossible, while the apostles acted according to the order with which they were intrusted, for them to admit infants to the ordinances which they administered.

Dr. Burns, referring to the 39th verse, says: "This passage suggests two questions. The one is, who we are to understand by the word children? the other is, what are we to understand by the promise referred to?" The promise referred to by Peter, is evidently no other than that which

the Apostle had just quoted from the prophet Joel. "This, however," says the Dr., "it cannot be." But this it can be, and this it indisputably is. "The prophecy of Joel," proceeds the Dr. "refers *solely* to the miraculous gifts of the Spirit." This is an error. In the 17th verse Peter quotes, 'I will pour out of my Spirit upon *all* flesh.' Did this refer *solely* to miraculous gifts? Did the prophet mean that *all* flesh should receive miraculous gifts? In the 21st verse. 'And it shall come to pass, that who ever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'—And Joel continues, 2 chap. 32 verse, "for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call." Do the above parts of the promise refer *solely* to miraculous gifts? Do they not refer to the ordinary and sanctifying operations of the Spirit? Dr. BURNS might have seen, that the promise of the Spirit, in the prophecy of Joel, refers, not only to his miraculous endowments, but also to his saving operations.—Those very operations in which every person converted by the ministry of the apostles participated, and with which every believer is, and shall be blessed. But in spite of evidence, the Dr. will have it, that that the promise referred to by Peter, was that "which God made with Abraham and his infant offspring." To confirm this fancy, he says, "In fact the apostle himself explains the promise to which he refers, when addressing, in the very next chapter, a similar exhortation to the Jews, "Ye are the children of the covenant, which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." Now supposing this were correct, the Doctor would gain nothing for his cause. Paul in Galatians 3. chap. 14 verse, asserts, that we receive the promise of the Spirit *through faith*. Can a promise, the reception of which depends on faith, refer to infants? But the promise is no other than that which Peter had just quoted from Joel. To this the Apostle had just referred, and as it contains blessings applicable to all, he informed them, that it was made to them and to their children, and to those that were afar off, *even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* That the Apostle's attention was still fixed on the promise from Joel is evident by his using almost the same words. Joel says, "the remnant whom the Lord shall call;" Peter says, "even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Now as the apostle had just quoted this promise, and as in reminding his hearers of the promise made to them &c., he preserves the mode of expression adopted by Joel, is it not ab-

surd to imagine, that he meant the promise to Abraham, to which he had not made the slightest allusion? How would his hearers understand him? Would they think that he meant the promise which he had just quoted, or one to which he had not turned their attention? The Dr. cannot get rid of the evidence arising from the striking similarity of expression between Peter and Joel, by calling it *a mere English criticism*, he will find it confirmed by both the Hebrew and the Greek.*

The next particular is the import of the word *children*. The Dr. acknowledges "that *children* sometimes means adult descendants," but denies that this is its meaning here. But to what kind of children could the apostle refer? In the 17th verse he quotes the promise, "I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy." Surely these were not infant sons and daughters. They were believing children. The promise of a divine influence, and the salvation which it effects, was to be received through faith, and therefore, must refer to those children who were capable of believing. The apostle had just referred to sons and daughters, as included in the promise of the spirit, and, therefore, when he refers the promise to to the children of his hearers, there seems to be no reason for supposing that he meant infants, but such children as were capable of faith and prophesying. The capability of the parties to whom the promise related is ascertained by the words, "even as many as the Lord our God shall call." As many of you—of your children—of those who are afar off, *as the Lord our God shall call.* The persons who were to receive the spirit according to this promise, were such as should be called, therefore, such as were capable of hearing and embracing the call. The latter clause limits the promise to as many as God shall call, and this limit refers equally to the children as to the parent, and those afar off. The promise was to such as inquired, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" and to their posterity, and those afar off, when brought to such a state of mind. As the apostle refers only to the promise in Joel, he refers only to the characters mentioned in that promise. That such children were eligible to baptism and church membership is sufficiently evident The church at Colosse had children in it. The apostle addressing them said, "Children, obey your parents in all things,"

* Peter: "*Osous an proskalesetai Kurios o Theos emon.*" Joel: "UBeseridim aser yeue qera."—Heb. "*Kai euaggelizomenoi ous Kurios proskekletai.*" Sep.

and urged as a motive, "for this is well pleasing to the Lord."* When writing to the Ephesians he says, "Children obey your parents in the Lord," and urges as a motive, "for this is right."† These surely were not infants. They were capable of obeying, and acting from the motives stated by the apostle. But so far as the argument is concerned, it is of little importance what is understood by the term *children*, Peter had authority to baptize none but voluntary disciples, or believers, and he baptized only such. It is as impossible to find infant baptism among the transactions of Pentecost, as the doctrine of transubstantiation.

Let us proceed with the apostles. Acts 4. 4. "And many who heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand." Here the church was augmented to 5000, or a clear addition of that number was made to it. But they were such as heard the word and believed. Acts 8. 12. "And when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Philip preached, the people believed, and the believers were baptized. Here we find again the order of the commission. But here is a particular method of expression—*men and women.* Why are infants omitted, if they were baptized? Is it not remarkable that the Holy Spirit should particularize men and women as recipients of baptism, and omit their infants, if the ordinance was administered to them? How is this omission to be accounted for, if they were baptized? Perhaps some free—thinking interpreter in the plenitude of his discoveries will find out, that Philip went to the houses of the Samaritans to sprinkle their babes! In the 13th verse we find that "Simon himself also believed," and *then* we read of his being baptized. In the 36th verse the Eunuch inquired, "What doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said if thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest." This *if thou believest*, implied the condition on which he was to be baptized, and forms a strong intimation that Philip would not have baptized him without a profession of faith. This was perfectly consistent with the order of the commission. Philip preached unto him Jesus, the Eunuch professed his faith, and *then* they both went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. Saul was first a believer and then, Acts 9. 18, "arose, and was baptized."

Acts 10, 47, 48, "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Ghost

* Coloss. 3. 20. † Ephes. 6. 1.

as well as we. And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." Here the apostle argues for their baptism from their reception of the spirit, nor would he have administered the ordinance, without an evidence of their conversion. The order of the commission is still preserved. Peter preached, the spirit fell on all who heard the word; the people were thus discipled, and *then* Peter commanded them to be baptized.

Acts 18. 8, "And many of the Corinthians *hearing, believed*, and were baptized." This is plain enough.

Acts 19. 1—7, Here certain disciples who were believers, were baptized unto John's baptism; they were re-baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and received the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost. Paul preached Jesus unto them, "when they heard this, they were baptized." Surely these persons were discipled prior to baptism. Thus far we have proceeded with the apostles, and there is no more evidence for infant baptism, than for the baptism of Tiberius, or Nero. It is utterly impossible, by any mode of torturing the word of God, to extort even a murmur of evidence for infant baptism.

But the households! Surely these will afford some support to the tottering system of pædo-baptism. Dr. Burns thinks, that the households are "by no means equivocal on the subject of infant baptism." Well, this is a little comforting; however, after we have ascertained the meaning of the term *household*, we will just examine these *unequivocal* witnesses. Dr. Burns gives us to understand that *oikos, household*, means a family of children, and that *cikia* "comprehends not merely children, but also servants, slaves, and the whole domestic establishment."* Very good. These terms may embrace all these meanings, or any one of them to the exclusion of the rest; therefore, their meaning will depend on the connection in which they are found. The Dr. supports his opinion by the testimony of Calmet's editor, who affirms of *oikos*, "that it *very often* expresses the presence of infants," and mentions *three hundred* instances to prove it. And what of this? Hundreds of instances might be produced where it has no possible reference to infants. I will present the reader with a few examples where infants are totally excluded from the meaning of *oikos*. Acts 10. 2. "A devout man, and one who feared God with all his *oiko, house*." Now does *oiko* here imply infants? *If* Cornelius had any, did his infants

* Pages 83, 84, 85, 86.

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fear God? Infants are certainly excluded from the term in this place. Acts 18. 8. "And Crispus believed on the Lord with all his *oiko, house*." Had Crispus any infants? If so, they are excluded from *oiko*, unless they could believe on the Lord. Is it not evident that the historian of the Acts uses the term when he has not the least allusion to infants? I. Cor. 16. 15. "The *oikian, house* of Stephenas—they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." Has *oikian* here any reference to infants? Do they addict themselves to the ministry of the saints? John 4. 53. A certain nobleman "himself believed, and his whole *oikia, house*," Can infants believe? If not, they are utterly excluded from *oikia*. Gen. 18. 19. Of Abraham it is said, "he will command his *uiois, children*, (or offspring,) and his *oiko, household* after him." Here *oiko* is used for his domestics, in distinction from his children, therefore, could not possibly imply them. Gen. 7. 1. "And the Lord said unto Noah, come thou and all thy *oikos, house* into the ark." Here *oikos* utterly excludes infants: it was used for the married children of Noah. The reader is undoubtedly satisfied, not only that the historian of the Acts uses the word in question without the least reference to infants, but also, that the *usus loquendi* does not necessarily imply infants. The import of the term depends on the passage with which it is construed.

Now for the *unequivocal* witnesses! Acts 16. 14, 15. Lydia of Thyatira was residing at Philippi; she heard Paul, the Lord opened her heart, and "she was baptized, and her *oikos*, household." Was Lydia married? Was she a widow? Had she an infant? or even any offspring? He who will place an affirmative to any of these propositions, suffers no lack of confidence. There is not the least evidence that she was married, or ever had been, nor that she had infants, or one child in her family. She might be living, for aught any person knows, in a maiden state, or, if married, she might be childless. But I mind not that Lydia had an infant in every room of her house, they could not be baptized. The commission required the apostles to make the people disciples before they baptized them, and they never baptized in any other way. Now let us hear Dr. Burns, he says: "Lydia, we are *expressly informed*, had an *oikos*, that is to say *a family of children*: and, we affirm, that they were baptized *in virtue of her faith*." *Expressly informed!* Where? *Oikos* does not express it, nor any thing in the narrative. It is an utter shame for any man to make such an assertion. Had Lydia any adults in her family? Most likely she had. Were

they baptized *in virtue of her faith?* Will any sane individual assert this? Lydia might have infants, or she might not, neither the one nor the other is in evidence. If she had any, the commission excluded them from baptism. Dr. Burns argues that the household of Lydia were baptized *in virtue of her faith*, because "not a hint is given of *their* faith, or conversion, or even *consent*." And not a hint is given of the baptism of Crispus and his household, but we are certain that they were baptized, for the same reason that we are certain the household of Lydia believed,—because *the commission required it.* The Dr. will have it that the brethren in Lydia's house, mentioned in the 40th verse, were only Timothy and Luke. But how does he know this? The scriptures are silent. However, if the Dr. will argue in the dark, I affirm, that it is most probable, if Luke referred only to himself and Timothy, that he would have said, "and when they had seen *us*, they comforted *us*." But as Luke says, "when they had seen *the brethren*, they comforted them," the impression most likely to be made on any reader, who has not a whim to serve, is, that Luke referred to some persons in distinction from himself and Timothy. There is not the least evidence that Lydia had either an infant, or a husband; if she had either, or both, the former could not be baptized by the commission, and nothing but the fanaticism of error will induce an individual to say, that the latter was baptized *in virtue of her faith.* So much for Lydia as an unequivocal witness for pædo-baptism!

Acts 16. 33, 34. The Jailer "was baptized, he and all his straightway—and rejoiced believing in God *panoiki*, with all his house." The Jailer inquired for salvation, Paul preached, and then the ordinance of baptism was administered. Now I do not want to prove that there were not infants in this house, this does not belong to my argument, and I defy any person to prove that there were. The history does not express them, *panoiki* does not imply them, and the commission excludes them from baptism. That the Jailer had any offspring, or was married, is not in evidence. Pædobaptists must prove that he had infants, and then I would deny that they were baptized. They must then prove that his infants were baptized, and then I would deny that they were baptized according to the commission. They must next find in the New Testament another law for baptism, as the one on record utterly excludes them. Dr. Doddridge is of opinion, that the Jailer's household consisted of himself and his domestics. Of whom this household consisted, I know not; this I

know, that the order of the apostle demanded him to baptize none but believing disciples. Let us now have a little light from Dr. Burns. He says, "The promise of salvation made to the Jailer was, that upon his believing, his *house* should be saved, 'believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, (*pisteuson*) *do thou believe*, and thou shalt be saved,' that is, taken into a covenant of salvation; and thy house." The Dr. explains this a "covenant externally administered." But is the christian covenant external? Does it not consist in God's writing his law on the heart? Does God take into covenant any for whom this is not effected? The word *saved* refers to the Jailer, in the same sense as to his family, was he merely taken into an external administration of the covenant? But who ever read in the New Testament of the christian covenant being *externally administered*? "Thou shalt be saved," means real and personal salvation, and the *faith* enjoined on the Jailer referred to his household, as well as the *salvation* that was promised. The house of the Jailer might be saved, if they believed, not else. To substitute "covenant externally administered," for the word "saved," or "salvation," is an unwarrantable mutilation of the sacred text. The Dr. refers to Zaccheus, of whom Jesus said, "This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham." The salvation was that in which he was personally interested, and was communicated to him, not by virtue of a lineal descent from Abraham, but on account of his believing, and could be administered to his family, not in virtue of *his* faith, but only in virtue of their own. Christ deemed him a son of Abraham, not merely on account of carnal descent, but on account of his faith. Jesus expressed this distinction to those who boasted of their descent from the patriarch. "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." Zaccheus obtained salvation, not through the Abrahamic covenant, but by faith in Christ. The Gospel covenant relates to the heart. It is a covenant of faith. None enter into it but believers. To talk about it being externally administered, is sheer nonsense. As the Dr. affirms that the household of Lydia "were baptized *in virtue of her faith*, so he will have it, that the household of the Jailer were baptized, and "taken into a covenant of salvation, *upon his believing*." What a notion! A person *taken into a covenant of salvation, in virtue of another person's faith!!! Mirabile!* Whence cometh this *exquisite* divinity? Surely such a vagary requires no other refutation than to state it. The Dr. feels a little oppressed by the translation, because *panoiki, with all his house*

is placed after believing in God, and contends, that it ought to follow *kai egalliasato, and he rejoiced.* Now every pædo-baptist translation that I have seen, gives the words in the same order as in the English version. But granting the Dr. the same position of the words in the translation, that they have in the Greek, what will he make of it? "He rejoiced with his whole house, believing in God." But now I cannot see what rule of criticism necessarily cuts off *believing* from the whole house. However, was the joy mutual? Surely no perverter of language will deny this. If the joy was mutual, did it not result from a mutual participation in the cause of that joy? Or will some bold assertor say, that the family rejoiced with the Jailer merely because *he* was a believer? But then it must be made to appear, how a person who is *not* a believer, will rejoice in the state of another because *he* is. We have read of *angels* rejoicing over one sinner who repenteth, but who ever heard of an unchanged, or carnal person, rejoicing in the spiritual things of another? Will the carnal mind rejoice in the things of God? If *their* joy resulted from a participation in grace, then they were believers. But Dr. Burns is not less anxious to exclude the family from rejoicing than from believing, and wishes us to understand, that only the Jailer "rejoiced at the head of his family." The apostle commanded the Romans to "rejoice *with them* that do rejoice;" and the woman who had found the piece of silver she had lost, and also the shepherd who had found his strayed sheep, exclaimed, "Rejoice *with me.*" Was not the joy in these cases supposed to be mutual? Why then, as the Jailer rejoiced *with his family*, are the members of his family to be excluded from the joy? The joy and the cause of it, were evidently reciprocal. But what of the infants? Could infants participate in this joy? Dr. Burns would relieve himself by, "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." What kind of babes and sucklings were these? Children in the temple crying out, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" Dr. Burns, had the Jailer such sucklings as these? Do not be silent. If he had, I will allow them to rejoice with him, if they believed with him. Pædo-Baptist interpreters, however, are of opinion, that Jesus referred to his apostles and disciples, whom he called babes by a figure of speech, but who, notwithstanding their apparent weakness, would establish his praise in the earth, by the ministry of the Gospel. The passage in the Psalms, which the Saviour quoted, is evidently figurative.* Let not Dr. Burns say that the above mode of

* See Psalm 8. 2. Matt. 11. 25.

reasoning is *presumptive.* It is the kind of argument which he is *obliged* to use. My side of the question does not require it. I want not to prove that there were no infants in these families, but he will *presume* that there were. If a person, in the absence of all evidence, will assert that a thing *might be,* all I have to do is to show that it *might not be.* On whichever side such evidence may lie, it is only presumptive, not positive proof. Let the Dr. *if he can,* ground his argument on positive proof; until he does this, he must be contented to see his presumption set off with the presumption of another. But if his system were to be defended, no longer than even presumptive evidence could be produced in its favour, its immediate death would be inevitable. However, I care not that the Jailer had infants, the law to baptize had no referrence to them, nor to any but voluntary and believing disciples.

I Cor. 1. 16. and the 16. 15. "And I baptized also the *oikon,* household of Stephanas—and they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." These persons, who were baptized, addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints. Does *oikon* here imply any but believers? Could infants addict themselves to the ministry of the saints? If so, when it is proved that Stephanas had any, I will admit that they might have been baptized. Surely, there is not obscurity sufficient in this passage, to afford even one surmise for the baptism of infants. Even Dr. Burns, with all his talent and ingenuity, cannot find in the house of Stephanas, the least hospitality for the forlorn system of pædo-baptism. Now I have examined these *unequivocal* witnesses, and I declare, that they have not uttered one word in support of infant baptism. Let any pædo-baptist cross-examine, and even place them on the rack, yet they will confess nothing in his favour. They may groan under his operation, and he may construe the groan into a confession, but if he be honest, he will acknowledge that they are most inflexible baptists.

John's baptism was coincident with that of the Redeemer in two respects. The mode of both was immersion, and both required voluntary submission and discipleship. John required repentance, and the commission requires faith. I have somewhere read a silly cavil, that, because John could not require repentance of the Saviour, his baptism cannot properly be called the baptism of repentance. Whether sophistry or impiety, be the most conspicuous in this notion, I will not stay to examine. Some have contended that John baptized without distinction of character; and an enthusiastical defender of this ungodly conceit, affirms, that "John baptized believ-

ers, and unbelievers, and a generation of vipers, and *we* (christian ministers,) *may do so too !!!*" What a guardian of the church ! He would baptize believers, and *unbelievers*, and *a generation of vipers!!!* This man resolved to fathom the absurdity of his system. I believe it possible for men to resist the truth, until God gives them over to believe a lie, and defend it.

I must now turn the attention of the reader to passages of Scripture, adduced by pædo-baptists in favour of their system, where, however, there is not the least allusion to baptism. Dr. Burns refers to Matt. 19. 13—15. "Jesus said, suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them." Now, is there the least reference to baptism in this text? Jesus laid his hands on these children, but did he baptize them? There must be a great want of evidence for infant baptism, to seek it in this passage. If it be contended that infants are capable of being blessed, and, consequently, of being saved, to this I most readily subscribe. But, that their being blessed is a warrant for their baptism, I deny. Jesus blesses whom he will, but he has ordained that his visible church shall be constituted only of believers, such only the apostles admitted, and to such their epistles were addressed. What persons shall finally be saved, he has not thought proper to reveal, but for the formation of his church he has given a distinct and positive injunction. Infants may be saved through the reconciliation, and be sanctified by the spirit of God, but this can have no reference to a positive duty. To establish an ordinance in the kingdom of Christ, a law, or a clear precedent is necessary, but such an act without either is unwarranted. Were there a warrant for infant baptism, I would cheerfully submit, but I dare not forge one. If any person, appealing to the conduct of Jesus, were to insist, that infants ought to be formally blessed, with laying on of hands, I could easily account for it; but, that a man should argue for baptism from a text which in no way whatever alludes to it, proves that the imagination, without a guide, is a mere vagrant. Dr. Burns has a great deal to say about "of such," and contends for identity. Now I care not what is proved by the expression, it cannot prove infant baptism. If the Dr. will say, that these very children, when sanctified were of the kingdom of heaven, I know not who will deny it; but if he will assert, that they are eligible to baptism and membership in the visible church of Christ, let him produce his warrant, or cease to defend a mere invention of man. The Dr. says, that if the

Saviour meant "only those disposed as children, he might of said the same of a lamb, or a dove, and have ordered those to be brought unto him." This is truly futile. A lamb may be a fit emblem of the innocent, or a dove of the harmless, but neither would have suited the purpose of Jesus in this case. He designed to enjoin a teachable and humble disposition, the emblem, therefore, was drawn from a rational creature. In Mark 10. 15, and Luke 18. 17, we read:—"Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God *as* a little child, he shall not (or, in no wise) enter therein." Matt. 18. 3, 4. The Saviour said, "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself *as* this little child—Except ye be converted and become *as* little children." The design of the Saviour was, in the above expressions, to inculcate a teachable and humble state of mind. Neither a lamb nor a dove would have served that design. As a child implicitly receives instruction from a parent, so a person must receive the knowledge and kingdom of God. Such humble persons the Saviour calls *babes*, *children*, *little ones*, and informs us that they are to be received, not to be offended, because they believe in him. Of such is the kingdom of heaven. If the Dr. will not receive this interpretation, let him seek for another. The text refers no more to the baptism of an infant, than to the baptism of a lamb. "The question was," says the Dr. "whether infants might be brought to Christ to be blessed by him? By all means saith Christ for they are members of the church"—Where does Christ call infants members of *the church?* It is an utter shame to put such language on his lips. The Dr. inquires, "How are we to bring them into the divine presence, and to dedicate them to that Being from whom we received them?" I answer, by prayer, and bringing them up in *the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, as soon as they are capable of instruction; a far more likely method for success, than teaching them to make void the commandment of God, by the tradition of men. "His giving them the thing signified," says the Dr. "may sufficiently justify his ministers in giving them the sign." *Because Jesus blessed them, we are to baptize them!* What logic! Baptism is a positive institute, and nothing will "sufficiently justify his ministers" in giving it, but the authority of Christ. Let ministers first have evidence that the thing signified is given, and then, and not till then, they will be justified in administering the sign. After keeping this passage on the rack through four pages, the Dr. is forced to acknowledge, "that the ordinance of baptism was not at that time instituted—that though our Lord did not order these infants

to be baptized, he did what was in every respect equivalent." That man must be obstinately attached to a system, who will adduce texts of scripture in its support, which he admits do not even refer to it. If the Saviour sanctified these children, he gave them *more* than an equivalent to baptism. A thing to be an equivalent for another must be *equal* in every respect. Is the bestowment of grace *equal* with baptism? Nothing is an *equivalent* to baptism, but a reception of the ordinance in submission to the law by which it is enacted. Our duty in baptism is, not to talk about equivalents, but to obey. Jesus may bestow a blessing which is more than equal to all the temporary institutions of his church, but that will neither enact nor repeal them. But why refute a man, who refutes himself. The text has no more reference to infant baptism, than to the baptism of Dr. Burns.

If the reader can command patience, he must follow me another step into the labyrinth of pædo-baptist reasoning. Dr. Burns refers to Rom. 11. 17—25. The apostle is speaking of the casting away of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles, which he compares to cutting off branches from an olive tree, and grafting others in their place. "But if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them—because of unbelief they were broken off; and thou standest by faith." He who can see infant baptism in the apostle's figure, possesses a peculiarity of sight to which I lay no claim. It is egregiously trifling to reason for baptism from this text. Dr. Burns says this olive tree was "the Abrahamic covenant or church." Now this is gratuitous. The apostle, in this figure, makes not one allusion to the Abrahamic covenant or *church*. The apostle's design was, to shew the necessity of faith, and the consequence of unbelief. He used the cutting off of branches, and ingrafting of others, to convey his idea in a figure; but pædo-baptists absurdly torture the figure to make it speak in favour of baptism. Who were cut off? Unbelievers. Who were grafted? Believers. What has this to do with infants? If the Dr. will have it that the apostle refers to a covenant, still it is a covenant of faith. "The children of the Gentiles," says the Dr. "should also partake with their parents in its various immunities and grants." So they may when they believe. The covenant that God makes with the Gentiles is, "he who believeth shall be saved." Infants have nothing to do with this covenant. They may be saved, but God has revealed no covenant concerning them. To confound the covenant that God made with the Jews, with

the gospel covenant, shews a lamentable inattention to the bible. The former covenant was national, the latter is individual. The Jewish church embraced the nation without a particular reference to character, but the christian church is supposed to be constituted only of true believers, and excludes the wicked and disorderly. The children of Gentiles have free access to the public services of religion, but the ordinances of the church were designed only for believers. When the children of believers enter into covenant with God by faith, then the privileges of that covenant will be theirs. But I cannot see what the above text has to do with baptism, and it is truly ridiculous for any man to drag it into the present controversy. If there were nothing else to expose the system of pædo-baptism to suspicion, the method adopted by its advocates would be sufficient,

Dr. Burns presents us with another exquisite specimen of pædo-baptist casuistry, in attempting to get infant baptism, or membership, or something else, from I. Cor. 7. 14. "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy." Now, so far as my argument is concerned, I care not how this passage is interpreted. A man may torture, rack, assassinate, and dissect it, but after all he will find it contains no evidence for infant baptism. To labour infant baptism out of this text, requires a power superior to that of Hercules. One might imagine that pædo-baptism is a very tyrant, to impose such a tremendous task on its votaries. But what are the holiness and sanctity mentioned in this passage? The unbelieving husband is sanctified as well as the children rendered holy. Are the terms to be taken in a spiritual sense? If so, we will have a pious unbeliever! But what except *real* holiness forms a warrant for the ordinances of the christian church? Pædo-baptists will have it, that the holiness of the children forms a warrant for their membership. But why not the sanctity also of the husband? Why are the former to be admitted, and the latter excluded, when the state of both is essentially the same? A recent defender of pædo-baptism, feeling the absurdity of admitting the children because they are said to be holy, and yet excluding the husband who is said to be sanctified, benevolently admits both to baptism and membership. Even some pædo-baptists will think this rather extravagant, but it is only consistent. One of the two absurdities must be taken, either to admit the unbelieving husband with his children, or else to admit the children to the exclusion of the husband,

while the same reason exists for the admission of the latter, which is assigned for the admission of the former. Dr. Burns, with Dr. Doddridge, takes the latter absurdity, and presents us with this edifying paraphrase: "but now they (the infants) are confessedly holy, and are as readily admitted to baptism in all our churches as if both the parents were christians: so that the case you see is in effect decided by this prevailing practice." *Admitted to baptism—prevailing practice*! When? Where? Not one word, not one hint, is given in the scriptures of this *prevaling practice*. It is utterly unwarrantable to force such language into the apostle's mouth. But why I still ask, is baptism coupled with the holiness of the children, and not with the sanctity of the unbelieving husband? Both the Doctors call the children born under such circumstances, "the seed of God's people," though one of the parents is supposed to be an unbeliever. Who knows but that the pagan husband would train up the children in idolatry? The unbelieving husband is said to be *sanctified by the wife*, not by the spirit of God, and the apostle represents this sanctity as the source of that holiness which is attributed to the children. It is inconsistent to couple the ordinances of the church with the holiness, and not with the sanctity, and perfectly absurd to do either, or both. Neither the sanctity, nor the holiness, implies any thing spiritual, but each refers to the condition of the parties in such a case of marriage. The marriage of a Jew with an idolater was formerly illegal, and separation in such cases was required. (Ex. 34. 16. Ezra 10. 3, 44. Neh. 13. 23, 24, 25.) The Corinthians appear to have thought, that the marriage of a christian with a pagan, was exposed to the same inconvenience. The apostle, however, informed them that where such a case existed, the dissolution of the marriage bond was not necessary. They were to marry in the Lord, yet, if a marriage had taken place contrary to this rule, the will of God was, that such a union should continue, and the unbelieving wife, who would formerly have been put away, was now, by this rule, sanctified to the husband. The offspring of such a marriage, under the old dispensation, not being born according to the law, would have been deemed unclean or illegitimate, and have been abandoned with the wife; but the same rule which now bound the pious husband to his unbelieving wife, viewed his children as holy or legitimate. The sanctity and holiness related only to the marriage, which would formerly have been dissolved, but was now rendered legal. Dr. Burns asks, "who ever questioned the legitimacy of children born of marriage?" Let him just read the texts referred to above, and

he will see. "The offspring of Gentile marriages," says the Dr. "were legitimate, and yet, in the sense of the apostle, they were unclean." What reasoning! Does the apostle refer merely to Gentile marriages? Is it not as plain as two and two are four, that the apostle refers to a marriage which embraced a saint and an unbeliever? Would the Corinthians have known that the offspring of such a marriage were legitimate, unless the apostle had informed them? They were bound to marry in the Lord; they, therefore, suspected the legality of a marriage that was contrary to this rule, but the apostle made a provision for such a case, that sanctified the unbelieving wife to the husband, confirmed the union, and rendered the children legally holy. But this provision no more connected the unbeliever and the children with the church of Christ, than it did the emperor of Rome. I see no obscurity in the passage, but if any person will put a different construction on it, let him; it contains no more evidence for infant baptism or membership, than the first chapter of Genesis. It augurs ill for that system which compels its advocates to misconstrue the word of God.

Section 3.

Pædobaptists, pressed for the want of evidence in the New Testament, to support their hypothesis, wander far and wide into the old. Jesus will not support their system even with his little finger, they, therefore, ask the assistance of Abraham. Well, we will see how they make the venerable patriarch answerable for infant baptism. Dr. Burns asserts* "the identity of the Abrahamic and christian covenants," and then presumes, "that Baptism succeeded circumcision," and, therefore, should be administered to infants. Let us look at both the covenants. Genesis, 17. 5. "Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein

* Page 18.

thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possesssion; and I will be their God." Here we have a full account of the Abrahamic covenant, which, however, was first made with the Patriarch, Genesis, 12th Chap. and renewed Genesis. 15th Chap. This covenant promised to Abraham a numerous posterity, the possession of Canaan, and that God would be their God. Circumcision was a "*token* of the covenant betwixt" God and the Patriarch. Jeremiah, 31st chap. 33, 34, ver. and Paul, Heb. 8th chap. 10, 11, 12 ver. give us an account of the new covenant—"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people" &c. This covenant relates only to spiritual things, is entered into only by faith, and the Holy Spirit is the seal. To contend for identity in two things, which are so evidently different, proves a plain inattention to language. The gospel covenant is a covenant of faith, and gives a new heart to every person whom it admits. If the former covenant be the same as that of the gospel, then the promises of the former are made to every believer. But, surely, no person will affirm that the land of Canaan,—a numerous posterity,—that his name shall be great,—and that he shall be a progenitor of kings, is promised to him who enters into a covenant of salvation with God. But as the gospel covenant does not embrace the promises of the covenant made with Abraham, how can the two covenants possibly be the same? Pædobaptists say, however, that as the Abrahamic covenant is called an everlasting covenant, it must be the same as the Gospel covenant. It was everlasting to the carnal seed of Abraham in the same sense as the covenant of the priesthood was everlasting to Phinehas, and as the covenant of royalty was everlasting to David. It was to last no longer than the dispensation to which it related. Nothing can be more evident than that the temporal part of that covenant is closed. The descendants of Abraham are not now enjoying the land of Canaan, nor are they marked as the favorites of God. The covenant of justification by faith still continues, but this includes only believers, and never related to the carnal, but to the spiritual seed of the patriarch. By no abuse of language whatever, can the two covenants be identified as the same.

Let us hear Dr. Burns. "Christ," says he, "was the *Mediator* of both covenants. This is clear from the words of the apostle, 'This, I say, that the covenant, that was

confirmed before of God in Christ, the law which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul."* Now, how is it *clear* from these words, that Christ was the mediator of the Abrahamic covenant? There is not the most distant allusion to any thing of the kind. The apostle is speaking of Christ as the seed of Abraham, in whom the covenant was confirmed, and shewing that the law could not disannul that covenant. In the 19th and 20th verses, he speaks of a mediator, but this mediator was Moses, in whose hand the law was ordained by angels. Is it not strange that any serious man should adduce a text to support an opinion, while the least reference to such an opinion is not in the text? But suppose Christ was the mediator of the Abrahamic covenant, what then? Because a person is mediator in two cases, is the one case, on that account, to be identified with the other? Christ is not called the mediator of the Abrahamic covenant, therefore, the identity of the covenants, on that supposition, cannot be proved. The Dr. refers to the expression "everlasting covenant," and says, "From this declaration it is evident that God did not confine this fœderal transaction to Abraham but made its blessed consequences extend to all his seed to the end of time." The covenant evidently had a spirit and a letter, and referred to a carnal and a spiritual seed. The carnal as well as the spiritual seed, inherited the temporal promises, until the destruction of Jerusalem. In this respect the covenant was everlasting, just as the law of circumcision was everlasting. The latter is abolished, and the posterity of Abraham are now totally deprived of the land which was promised for them by the covenant. But it was also promised to the patriarch, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed,"—"And to thy seed," says Paul, "which is Christ." Now none but the spiritual children of Abraham obtain an interest in this promise. But who are they? Hear the apostle, "they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham," "they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." The covenant promised the Messiah, and the apostle makes it plain, that only believers are included in this part of the covenant. To such persons the consequences extend, not only to the end of time, but to all eternity. But what has this to do with infants? If an infant was not circumcised, it was not rendered eligible to enjoy the promised land, nor the external privileges of the

* Gal. 3. 17.

Jewish community. Did circumcision secure to the infant an interest in the spiritual part of the covenant? Fanaticism itself will hardly assert this. Multitudes who were circumcised gave evidence to the contrary. The covenant related to a carnal and spiritual seed, and God made his promise good by fulfilling it in either. But Dr. Burns says,* "it is denied that any of the *blessings* of the Abrahamic covenant were granted to those who were merely the *natural descendants*, or *carnal seed* of Abraham." Were not the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and those who demanded the crucifixion of Christ, the *carnal seed* of Abraham? And, did they not enjoy the very land which was granted by the covenant? He who will put a negative on these questions, will deny the Scriptures. "Many of Abraham's carnal seed," says the Dr. "never inherited the land of Canaan, nor shared in its temporal blessings." True. And multitudes of them were unbelievers, and, therefore, did not share in the spiritual blessings of the covenant. What is proved? That the covenant was not *personally* made with them. It was *personally* made with Abraham, and was to be fulfilled in his posterity, without specifying the age in which, or the individuals in whom that fulfilment should take place. "The *blessings* of both covenants are the same," says the Dr. The covenant with Abraham secured him a numerous posterity, and the promise of Canaan, &c. Are such blessings promised to every believer? If not, how can the blessings of both covenants be the *same?* Every believer obtains spiritual blessings, but the covenant of faith does not secure to him any temporal advantage. The Dr. says "Circumcision is expressly declared by the apostle to have been a seal of the righteousness of faith."† Of whose faith? Does the Apostle expressly declare that circumcision sealed the faith of any other person than Abraham himself? Dr. Burns knows he does not. It was a seal to the faith of Abraham only. It was a seal to no other person's faith on the earth. Did it seal the righteousness of the faith of infants eight days old? Some persons have been wild enough to talk about the *habitual* faith, and the *imputative* faith of infants. If infants did believe, then circumcision might have been a seal of the righteousness of their faith. But the notion of infant faith, is full-grown nonsense in the head of any person who entertains it.

The Dr. refers to Gen. 17th chap. 7th ver. "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee;" and, as the same

* Page 19 Note. † Rom. 4. 11.

promise is made unto believers under the present dispensation, he tries to prove an identity of the two covenants. But his attempt is utterly abhortive. God was, as he intended to be, a God to the *carnal seed* of Abraham. As such he acknowledged himself, where no spiritual alliance appears. When the descendants of Abraham worshipped the calf, they were, notwithstanding, called "his people;" and when banished to Babylon for their crimes, God still said, "I am the Lord their God." Jehovah acknowledged himself the God of Abraham's posterity, when they were living in a state of general idolatry and crime. The promise, therefore, did not necessarily imply any thing spiritual, and related to the people irrespectively of character. But can this be said of any under the gospel dispensation? Is Jehovah the Lord and God of any but the truly pious? *He is not*; therefore, the promise had a sense in the Abrahamic covenant very different from what it has in the gospel covenant. In the latter it does not imply what it did in the former; it cannot prove, then, that both covenants are one and the same. God was a God to Abraham and his believing seed in spiritual sense, but never in that sense to his unbelieving seed. To the natural descendants, irrespectively of character, he was God in a political respect, and conferred upon them temporal advantages. If the identity of the covenants, depends on the same meaning of the promise under both, it cannot possibly be proved, as the promise imported in the former covenant that which it does not in the latter. The Dr. affirms that, "it might even be shewn, that the covenant of grace also contains the promise of temporal blessings. 'Godliness,' says the apostle, "is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that *now is* as well as of that which is to come." Now, does God promise temporal blessings unto any whom he takes into the covenant of grace? He who believeth shall be saved; but does God promise that he shall have health, riches, or even the temporal comforts of life? No person, surely, with the bible and the world before him, will assert such a thing. Godliness has the promise of the life that now is, in the same sense that Jesus promised to his apostles, that whoever forsook all to follow him, should "receive manifold more *in this present time*, and in the world to come, life everlasting."* For *this present time*, or for *the life that now is*, the gospel promises an abundance, not of temporal, but (which are far better) of spiritual blessings. The expression of the apostle, therefore, is abundantly true, without

* Luke 18, 29, 30.

the least reference to worldly advantages. But, if the covenant of grace did promise temporal blessings, it could only be to such who believe, for it admits only such; but the covenant with Abraham conferred temporal blessings on unbelievers. Where even then would be identity? The gospel *does not promise* temporal blessings, the covenant with Abraham *did*; therefore, they are not the same. The Dr. says "the *conditions* of both covenants are the same." The covenant of grace confers its blessings on the condition only of true faith; but the covenant with Abraham conferred its benefits on myriads who had no more true faith than the idols which they frequently adored. Where is identity? When was saving faith required as a condition of interest in the covenant peculiar to Abraham? Faith was when that covenant was given, as it was many ages before, and is at the present period, an indispensable condition of justification before God. The gospel covenant embraces none but those who are justified by faith; but the Abrahamic covenant embraced numbers who had no true faith, therefore, were not justified. To contend for an identity of two things so evidently different, is utterly absurd. The man who has recourse to such means, proves that he lacks truth to support his hypothesis.

Dr. Burns considers "baptism as the successor of circumcision," and presumes "that it ought to be administered to the same description of subjects." I have *proved* that baptism was administered only to believers. But let us see the result of his argument. When a person became a proselyte to Judaism, and wished to eat the passover, he was to have circumcision administered to his male children, whether infants or adults, believers or unbelievers, and also to his male slaves or servants, whether they were willing or not. Is baptism to be indiscriminately administered to all in a man's house because *he* believes? There are not many pædo-baptists so frantic as to suppose such a thing. But if baptism must "be administered to the same description of subjects" as circumcision was, then a christian ought to compel his *servants* to be baptized, though they were infidels in theory and practice. Surely this is sufficient to convince any person, that baptism did not come in the place of circumcision. But the Dr. argues that the former came in room of the latter, from the *sameness of design* in the two ordinances, and from *other points of resemblance.* Circumcision was designed as a seal to Abraham of the righteousness of his faith, and was designed as a token to his posterity of the covenant which God had made with him; but baptism is not the seal of faith, nor has it any

reference to the posterity of a Christian, until they believe. He calls circumcision "the sign of admission into the Jewish church," and "a badge of relation to the God of Israel." But the females were not circumcised, nor the Jews born in the wilderness, until their arrival in Canaan. Were not the former, irrespectively of circumcision, and the latter, prior to their circumcision, both related to the God of Israel, and members of the Jewish church? Were the Shechemites members of the Jewish church, or religiously related to the God of Israel? Certainly not: yet they were circumcised. Circumcision was neither the sign nor the badge to them. The Dr. finds some points of resemblance between baptism and circumcision, and concludes that the former came in room of the latter. Peter finds a point of resemblance between the deluge and baptism; did the latter come in room of the former? Paul finds a still stronger resemblance between Melchisedec and Christ; did Christ come in the room of Melchisedec? Many things in the New Testament resemble others in the Old, but that is no proof one came in room of the other. That baptism came in room of circumcision is a mere figment; for not a hint of it is given in the scriptures. The Dr. inquires "would God allow an ordinance of his own to be entirely lost?" Lost, aye, certainly he would. God has abolished in one age, what he saw proper to ordain in a previous age. Where are the Jewish ceremonies? Are they not lost? Their "utility and importance" depended on the law by which they were established, and the former were destroyed when the law was abrogated. "Or would the Jews," the Dr. asks, "have allowed circumcision to be taken away, without emitting one murmur of discontent." Did not the Jews, when they saw circumcision sinking into disuse, emit many murmurs of discontent? Was it not their discontent, on this very ground, that induced them to attempt the establishment of circumcision in the gospel church? "The apostles and elders came together" at Jerusalem, to settle the question of circumcision.* But they said not one word about baptism coming in its room. If the apostles could have said, "baptism is come in the room of circumcision, therefore, circumcision is not needful; let the converts and their infants be baptized;" would not such an argument have tended to silence the discontent of the Jews? Why, if baptism came in room of circumcision, was it instituted before the latter was abolished? But why should one spend time to contradict a mere conceit?

The Dr. gives us an exquisite criticism on Col. 2. chap. 11.

* Acts 15 chap.

verse:* "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ." He calls *the circumcision of Christ*, "christian circumcision." To this whim, the reply in the Baptist Magazine is quite satisfactory. "According to it we must render *ta erga Christou* (*the works of Christ*, Matt. 11. 2.) 'Christian works,' and *he dunamis tou Christou* (*the power of Christ* 2 Cor. 12. 9.) "Christian power." The apostle evidently means the circumcision of the heart effected by Christ. The Dr. wishes his reader to understand that "the circumcision of Christ," is baptism! But this circumcision is made without hands; is baptism administered without hands? This circumcision is a "putting off the body of the sins of the flesh;" does baptism remove sin from the person? This circumcision is without any external operation, it, therefore, is not baptism. It is the circumcision of Christ in the heart, by which the sin of the person is removed. The Dr. affirms that Peter says "concerning baptism: 'It is not made with hands; it is not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience.'" Now this is a forgery. It is impious thus to add to the word of God. The man who dares do this deserves the severest reprehension. Peter no where says of baptism, "It is not made with hands." Such a text is not in his epistles. It is forged. Did Dr. Burns never read Rev. 22. 18? What a system is pædo-baptism, to require such methods to defend it! Baptism is the answer of a good conscience, will this apply to infants? He next refers to the early christians, and tells us that they considered that baptism came in the place of circumcision. He quotes Justin Martyr as "conclusive on the subject: 'We also who by him have had access to God, have not received this carnal circumcision, but the spiritual circumcision, which Enoch, and those like him, observed, and we have received it by baptism, because we were sinners; and it is allowed to all persons to receive it the same way.'" Origen says the Dr. expressly declares that "Christ gives us circumcision by baptism." Now, unfortunately for the Dr. it does not appear from these passages, that either Justin or Origen supposed that baptism came in the place of circumcision. The passages do not express it, nor can it be inferred from the language. Their opinion was, that by baptism they received, what Enoch received, the renewal, or circumcision of the heart—that in baptism they received *spiritual* circum-

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cision, not that baptism came in room of carnal circumcision. But what then, even if they were of that opinion? The opinion is not in the bible. It is a mere vagary of the human mind. Even if circumcision were placed in the commission, in lieu of baptism, infants would not be included. A command to circumcise believers, would not authorize the circumcision of infants. When infants were to be circumcised, God gave a command, and he would not have failed to do the same, if they were to be baptized. "Having thus attempted," says the Dr., "to prove that circumcision gave place to baptism, the argument thence arising may be thus shortly stated:—Infants were ordered to be circumcised, therefore, baptism should be administered to infants." We have seen his *attempt*, and are now presented with the *logical* conclusion of his argument. But some people will observe an awful chasm between the premises and conclusion. Infants were ordered to be circumcised, THEREFORE, baptism should be administered to infants *without* an order!!! Well, the logic is worthy of the cause. The situation of that pious man, who takes up his pen to defend pædo-baptism, is by no means enviable.

Let us now take a view of the Doctor's argument from the "Primitive Church." * He starts with an axiom—"Streams are *always* purest the nearer they are to the source from which they flow;" from this he reasons, that "the purest ages of the church *must be* those which are nearest the time of its establishment." The stream, however, may contract impurity immediately on leaving its source, and deposite that impurity in the channel along which it flows, and so become purer at a distance.—Many churches in the present day, there is reason to believe, are in a purer state than some which existed even in the days of the Apostles. The Dr. must certainly be apprized of the fact, that some of the greatest corruptions which ever blemished christianity, originated in the first, second, or third century. Let those who are called the fathers, have all the credit which is due to their testimony, but if infant sprinkling be not in the Bible, to prove it in their writings, is to prove them in error. I know that, in the opinion of some, to question the wisdom of the ancients, is sacrilege of no ordinary kind; and I know, also, that if they are to be our guides, in the absence of the Bible, we must beware of the ditch. No extensive acquaintance with church history is needful, to convince any person, that the age in which they lived, was re-

* Page 40.

markable for error and extravagant opinion. The Dr. alludes to the proselyte—baptism of the Jews. This was a Rabbinical corruption, for which the Jews had no scriptural authority, and is without evidence of its existence in the days of Christ. But as the Dr. attaches such importance to the testimony of the fathers, we will just glance at the nature of his evidence from that source. He commences with Clemens Romanus, in whose expression, however, there is not the least allusion to baptism. He next cites Hermas, who is as silent as death on the same subject. Justin Martyr is the next, who, however, gives not a hint about baptism; but the Dr. by giving an incorrect translation, makes him say something about infants. Justin says that several aged persons, then among the christians, were made disciples *ek paidon*, *from childhood.* That *ek paidon*, should be translated *from childhood*, and not *in infancy*, will appear evident from Luke 2. chap. 42, 43 ver. where Jesus at twelve years of age called *ho pias*, *the child*; and also from Acts 20 chap. 12 ver. where Eutychus is called *ton paida*, *the young man.* The baptists have discipled, and have admitted numbers to their communion by baptism *in childhood.* Irenæus is the next cited by the Dr., and he says concerning Christ, "That he came to save all persons by himself; all who by him are *renascuntur in Deum*, born or regenerated to God: infants and little ones, &c." That *renascuntur in Deum*, should be understood, according to the Dr's. opinion, *baptized*, as if Christ baptized any unto God, is a most unwarranted conjecture: Irenæus must have known, that Christ baptized none unto God, for he did not baptize any during his ministry. Had the Dr. proceeded a little farther in his quotation, he would have found, that Irenæus represents Jesus as passing through every age to *sanctify* infants, little ones, youths and seniors; but makes no reference whatever to infant baptism. The genuineness of the passage referred to by Dr. Burns has been disputed by both Protestants and Papists, and Venema, a pædo-baptist, was satisfied that it ought not to be relied on as evidence in favour of infant baptism. Indeed, prior to the days of Turtullian, it does not appear that one of the fathers alludes in the most distant way to the baptism of infants.

Turtullian, who flourished at the commencement of the third century, opposed infant baptism, and insisted upon baptism being administered to those only who had *learned their religion.* Dr. Burns says, that Turtullian "virtually attests" the existence of infant baptism; certainly he does, and by his sturdy opposition, proves that he deemed it an innovation.

The authorities referred to on this subject, who lived in the third and following centuries, discover the erroneous opinions of men. From the time of Turtullian, episcopal pride matured into popery, and errors the most noxious were generally propagated. The *man of sin* made his appearance, and began to usurp a dominion which soon enslaved the nations of the earth, and established disorder, error and corruption in the church. That infant baptism should arise with other innovations in the church, is no matter of surprise, and the fact that its early advocates appealed to neither precept nor precedent in the scriptures, shews that it was founded only on the authority of man. Origien appeals to the *usage of the church*; he calls infant baptism a tradition, which he shamelessly palms upon the apostles. Cyprian and Ambrose attributed salvation to baptism, and also to the sign of the cross,* and the former gives an appalling account of the state of the clergy in his day. "There was no pure religion in the priests," says Cyprian. "no sincere faith in the ministers, no mercy in their works, and no discipline in their manners. The hearts of the simple were deceived by crafty frauds, and the brethren were circumvented by cunning wiles. That it was common to contract matrimonial alliances with unbelievers, and to prostitute the members of Christ to the Gentiles; and not only to swear rashly, but even falsely," &c. &c.† Cyprian gives much more to the same effect. That the Church, in so corrupt a state, should have fostered the most noxious errors, is perfectly natural to suppose. Yet this is what Dr. Burns calls "*that purest age*," whose testimony, he says, "may justly be regarded as a *scripture* testimony." ! ! Chrysostom, Augustin and Austin closed in with the errors of their day, and, supposing that baptism was essential to safety of the person, approved of it being administered to infants. But, notwithstanding the proud domination of the priesthood, and the woeful corruption of the age, some were still found who would be duped by neither. The council of Trent, in order to suppress opposition found it necessary to hurl a damnatory sentence against those who should affirm, that baptized infants were uot *fideles*, believers. Towards the close of the fourth century, such was the superstition of the age, that the third council of Carthage found it needful to forbid the administration of baptism and the Lord's supper *to the dead!*‡ The evidence which is sought from the primitive

* See Booth Pædo-bap. Exam. vol. I. p. 431.

† See Gibbs' Defence of Bap. p. 221.

‡ See Paedo-bap. Exam. vol. II. p. 168.

church, to support infant baptism, is quite worthy of the cause for which it is adduced. Dr. Burns wishes the Baptists to inform him if infant baptism was a human invention, "when or by whom it was introduced." As well might he challenge them to state, *when, or by whom*, other innovations were introduced. It is not in the bible, and let those seek its origin who are obliged to support it. It is, undoubtedly, an offspring of the man of sin, and was nursed with others of its family, in the bosom of a corrupt age. Why do not Pædobaptists administer the Lord's Supper to infants? This was practised by those who formerly adopted infant baptism. Why separate two inventions which were united by *the wisdom of the Fathers*. "Our sole intention was," says Doctor Burns, "to use their (the Fathers') attestations, as the only media by which the practice of infant baptism can be traced back to the Apostolic age." But in this he has utterly failed; for not one authority can he cite, prior to the time of Turtullian, that even alludes to infant baptism. *Candid* Pædobaptists allow, that beyond the days of Turtullian, no trace of infant baptism can be discovered. And what then, if even it could be traced to the age of the apostles? It is not in the bible, and must, therefore, even then be classed with other errors that obtained prior to their death. The appeal to antiquity, in support of infant baptism, is just specious enough to impose upon the ignorant, who commonly attach the idea of truth to that which is antique. I conclude my remarks on this part of the subject by observing, *that infant baptism is not in the Scriptures, therefore to prove its antiquity is only proving an ancient innovation*; and, *that the argument from antiquity cannot be carried beyond the time of Turtullian, therefore, the argument itself is essentially defective.*

Section 3.

Dr. Burns, in the 4th chap. of his book, enters on an "examination of the reasoning which has been employed against infant baptism," and I will now examine his reasoning in turn. One argument against his theory, the Dr. observes, is, that infants "*cannot understand the nature of the ordinance.*" This argument the Dr. might possibly refute, if the commission to baptize, did not confine the ordinance to such only as are capable of understanding its nature. But the candidate for membership in the christian church, was first to be

discipled by preaching, to become a believer, and then the ordinance was to be administered. Notwithstanding, if an order in the scriptures could be found for infant baptism, this argument would be quite unjustifiable. It was by a positive command, that infants formerly were circumcised, though they could not understand the nature of the rite. Let the same reason for infant sprinkling be produced, and then the controversy will be closed. It is one mark of superiority in the present dispensation, that it requires the profession of no person, without first appealing to his understanding and his heart; but under the former economy, the slave was compelled, irrespectively of choice, and the infant, as irrespectively of knowledge, to submit to the painful rite of circumcision. The Dr. says, "that privileges may be granted unknown to the person on whom they are conferred." But baptism is a *positive* and *personal duty*, and ought not, unless we have an order from God, to be imposed on any person without his knowledge and consent. Again, the Dr. informs us, that the parent who has his infants baptized, "introduces them within the pale of the church—and, above all, he gives them the sign of their interest in the covenant of grace, and of their consequent title to its inestimable privileges." But infant baptism is an unscriptural ceremony, therefore, cannot make the subject a member of a scriptural church. Baptism, *the sign of interest in the covenant of grace!* and *and a title to its inestimable privileges!* To refute such utterly anti-scriptural assertions, nothing more is needful than to call for their proof. Are all sprinkled in infancy, interested in the *covenant of grace*? Alas! not a few gave sorry evidence of such interest. Dr. Burns, if consistent with his creed, believes in personal election; how does he ascertain, that those whom he sprinkles in infancy are in the covenant of grace? Does he never absurdly give the baptismal sign of interest in that covenant to some whom God never seals with his spirit, and who are rejected for their unbelief? To avoid this frightful horn of a dilemma, will he say, that the person, when an infant, may be in the covenant of grace, but afterwards may be rejected from it. This, however, would be a flat denial of his own creed. Dr. Burns unites with Dr. Erskine, in the opinion, that as infants, by civil law have rights made over to them without their consent, so they ought to be baptized without their consent. But is civil law a rule for administering the ordinances in the church of Christ? A thing may be rendered *legal* by the authority of man, which would be disgraceful in a *christian* church. The bible and not the statute book

of a nation, is the only source of law in the kingdom of Christ. Such a wretched mixture of civil with spiritual things, discovers a want of scriptural argument. "If it be foolish to perform a rite on those who cannot understand what is done to them," the Dr. asks, "can it be less foolish because God has enjoined it?" To this I reply: Were a man, in the present day to inflict circumcision on the male infants of his family, I would think it the most perfect foolishness. But Abraham did this very thing—was it foolishness in him? No. Why? Because God enjoined it. A thing may be perfectly unmeaning in itself, and to invest it with a religious character might be impious, but the same thing, when placed under the authority of God, becomes a duty, and acquires a character which it would be impious to impeach. If infant baptism had the authority of God, it would be the duty of every pious man to support it, but as it is totally void of that authority, it must be viewed as unmeaning in itself, and ought to be treated as a thing prejudical in its effects. The christian religion, I maintain, requires every person to understand its ordinances before they are conferred; to impose them, therefore, on an infant that cannot understand them, is anti-christian. Dr. Burns has not, and he cannot disprove this.

The Dr. attempts to refute another objection against his system, which he puts in the following form: "that infants are not fit subjects of baptism, because *they cannot give their personal consent to the obligations under which they are laid by that ordinance.*" The gospel *requires* the consent of the person prior to baptism; the object of preaching is to secure it, and believing necessarily implies it. I will yield this argument, if only one instance can be produced from the bible in which baptism was administered without the consent of the candidate; but until that is done, I will, in defiance of sophistry, maintain my position. The Dr. informs us, that "during infancy, the child is wholly the charge of his parent, and on the parent, the baptismal obligations are immediately laid;" and also, "that obligations of a certain kind are laid on the *infant* cannot be denied." I just ask, what part of the bible intimates that the baptismal obligations are laid on the *parent* of the baptized person? The *obligation* that arises from the ordinance of baptism, rests only on the individual himself. The Dr. harps again on "the parallel between circumcision and baptism;" but this fancied parallel is utterly destroyed by the fact, that for the former there was the authority of God, but for infant baptism no such authority can be found. All whom the apostles baptized gave "their personal consent

to the obligations under which they were laid by that ordinance," the theory which requires an opposite method of procedure, is anti-christian. God is perfectly just in placing an individual without his consent under religious obligation, but for man to do this, without the authority of God, is an impious usurpation of power.

The next argument against his system which the Dr. endeavours to refute is, "that infants are not fit subjects of baptism, *because dispositions are required in the recipients of that ordinance, which infants cannot possess.*" The Dr. says, "the dispositions referred to are those of *faith* and *repentance*," but affirms that the force of this objection depends on the proof, "that the existence of these dispositions, is *indispensably necessary in every case*," previous to baptism. This, then, I have already *proved* by the commission, and from the conduct of the apostles, and the Dr. will as soon succeed in attempting to divert a planet from its course, as in making an effort to refute my proof. Faith is indispensable, *in every case*, to an interest in the gospel, and to membership in the *christian* church, there is not one allusion to infant baptism in the Bible, and it is a mere human tradition. The Dr. with "a judicious writer," argues *again* from the former covenant, but I have proved that the covenants are not the same : none can enter into the covenant of the gospel only by faith, but myriads, who were unbelievers, enjoyed the advantages peculiar to the covenant of Abraham. The commission requires faith prior to baptism, and we insist upon the order, the Dr. therefore. quotes the words of the apostle—"if any would not work neither should he eat," and gives us a delicious syllogism—"Infants cannot *work*, therefore, infants must not *eat*." "Could any thing be more ridiculous in itself," says the Dr. "than such an interpretation." Nothing certainly; unless his ridiculous use of the passage. The man who can see no difference between the order of a law which enjoins a positive institute, and the expression of the apostle, is lamentably deficient in discernment. Referring to the order of the commission, the Dr. says, "following the example of the baptist, we would reason in this manner. 'Infants cannot believe, therefore, they must be damned. Infants cannot repent, therefore, they must perish." Yes, this reasoning would be inevitable, if there were no other way of saving infants only by the commission. But it is as absurd to connect the salvation of infants with the commission, as it is with a covenant of faith, infants are saved by neither. The gospel, which is the grand subject of the commission, is good news, and saves on

the condition of faith which works by love. Infants have nothing to do with it. It is no news to them, nor can they believe in its truths. Infants have nothing to do with either the law or the gospel, they will not be condemned for their violation of the one, nor be saved by a reception of the other. There may exist a covenant between God and his Son, embracing the salvation of infants, but nothing of the kind is revealed. Infants came into the world with an impure nature, they may, however, be sanctified by the Spirit of God, and be received into heaven. God saves none by the gospel commission only through faith. God has not told us how he saves infants, therefore, pædo-baptists must speculate in the dark. God has revealed how believers may be saved, and how his church is to be constituted, but nothing is said about infants in either of these particulars. "If infants are capable of the thing signified, why," the Dr. asks, "are they incapable of the sign?" I ask, in what part of the Bible baptism is represented as *a sign*? Infants are certainly capable of being baptized, and, also, of being crossed on the forehead, and of partaking of the Lord's supper, &c. Why are not these things to be done? Because there is no scriptural authority.

The Dr. endeavours * to refute "the objection, *that infant baptism is destitute of scripture warrant.*" Most of his arguments under this head I have already refuted. However, let us hear him again. Prior to experience says the Dr. "The quantity and quality of the evidence which God may see fit to grant on any subject are extremely problematical." Now I ask any person of common sense, whether, if God required a positive duty to be performed, he would *see fit* to leave the evidence for its performance *extremely problematical*? Would not a positive injunction be necessary? and would not that injunction be given by God in a distinct form? The evidence for infant baptism is *problematical* enough, but the evidence for *christian* baptism is plain. The numerous duties of the Mosaical economy were enjoined by laws peculiar for their plainness and precision. For infant baptism no such evidence can be produced. "The nature of moral truth is such," says the Dr. "that nothing more than moral evidence can be given for its support." What has *moral* truth, and *moral* evidence to do with baptism? Is baptism a *moral* truth? Is it not a positive institution? Give us *positive* evidence for infant baptism. But there is no more evi-

* Page 80.

dence for it, than for the baptism of a bell. Dr. Burns, with Dr. Williams, informs us, "That precepts and precedents are to be interpreted, not by the bare letter or mere expression of scripture, but these in connection with prior divine statues and dispensations." A papist needs not wish for a better argument. However, it is utterly false. Without any reference to *prior* statues and dispensations, an example must be clear, or a precept unambiguous, to warrant a positive institution. Let pædo-baptists produce such evidence if they can.

Dr. Burns will have it, that infant baptism stands upon equal evidence with many religious duties, and, that the reasoning adopted to support it, is the same as that which is used to prove the change of the sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week; the right of females to the Lord's supper; the divine appointment of public worship; and *adult* in opposition to *infant* baptism. Now supposing this were true, infant baptism would not be relieved. If there be no better evidence to support the above particulars, than there is for infant baptism, both must fall together. A deficiency of evidence in one case, will not supply a deficiency in another case. But the argument is false. The Sabbath was appointed by God, and the particular day, for the christian dispensation, is ascertained by the example of the apostles, and is called the Lord's day. The Lord's Supper was designed for the Church, women were baptized and became members of the church, and every member has a right to the sacrament. For public worship we have the authority of God—to preach the gospel to every creature, supported by apostolical precedent. For believer baptism we have an explicit command, while for infant baptism there is no scriptural authority whatever. Let infant baptism be based on evidence equal to that upon which the above particulars are founded, and it will neither be so much suspected by its friends, nor so firmly opposed by its foes. Analogical argument, about which the Dr. writes so much, can never produce a warrant for a positive institute. Evidence must correspond in its nature with the position for which it is evidence. Baptism is a positive ordinance of religion, and must be grounded on positive evidence. Such evidence *we have* for believer baptism, but such evidence *we have not* for infant baptism. It is analogical reasoning that has misnamed the Lord's table an *altar*, His supper a *sacrifice*, and His minister a *priest* &c. Popery itself needs not a safer mode of argument.

That infant baptism is a human invention, I decidedly believe, and that it has given immense inconvenience to the

church of the Redeemer, is too evident to be refuted. An error introduced into religion, will inevitably prove prejudicial to its interests, and shroud the purity of its character. Alterations in the ordinances of God, have commonly succeeded under the specious pretext of trifles, but no sooner have they been allowed, than the beauty of religion has been blighted, and the church has had reason to lament. Had the followers of Christ confined themselves to the simplicity of the Christian religion, we never would have heard of a Pope with infallibility, nor of a church with seven sacraments, nor of petitions to the saints, nor of prayers for the dead, nor of *Arch*-Bishops, nor of *Lord*-Bishops, nor of consecrated ground, nor of *chrisms*, *crossings*, *creamings*, *exorcisms*, *exsufflations*, *sponsors*, *spittings*, *saltings*, *&c. &c.* When the caprice of man attempts to improve the religion of God, even the pious are not screened from the domination of error. The alterations that baptism has undergone, and the appendages that have been connected with the ordinance, must have frequently bewildered the sincere. Sometimes sprinkling has been substituted for immersion, and the candidate has been signed on the forehead with the cross. Some have dipped the *head* of the person in the water, and others have poured the water from a glass on the face. At one time crossing and sprinkling have gone together, and at another they have been separated. Augustin, it appears, at so early an age of the church, was signed with the cross many years before he was baptized. How trivial soever some persons may imagine error in religion to be, it is impossible for error to exist unaccompanied with injury. There is every reason to believe, that the system which these pages oppose, injures the minds of not a few. Many, *I know*, are convinced that the Baptists have the truth on their side, but, from some motive or other, they suppress the dictates of truth. Conscience demands of them to imitate the Saviour, while the mind suffers a perpetual crucifixion, between a sense of duty and an endeavour to resist it. Towards a Pædobaptist, who conscientiously believes infant sprinkling to be an ordinance of God, I can cherish the warmest attachment; but I would just remind the person who acts as I have described, that he who knoweth his master's will, and doeth it not, is exposed to many stripes.

As an innovation in religion forms a source of injury to the church, it cannot be otherwise than offensive to God. To alter that which has been established by the authority of God, is an attempt on his legislatorial prerogative. The commission of the Saviour, illustrated by the example of his apostles,

stamps the ordinance of baptism with an irreversible exactness, both as to the subjects and the mode of administration. That the Saviour gave his apostles an *ambiguous* command, by which they were to be guided in gathering members for his church, is absurd to suppose, and impious to assert. How problematical soever the evidence may be, for some particular *sentiments* of religion, we have every reason to expect, that the evidence for a positive duty would be obvious and plain. And no injunction can be plainer than that by which God enjoins the ordinance of baptism. God has left every reader of the New Testament without excuse. The degree of the offence against God, in wilfully neglecting the ordinance of baptism, is in proportion to the plainness with which it is revealed. While an omission of duty, or a direct violation of his law, is offensive to God, it must be injurious to the person who is guilty of such conduct. Error darkens the understanding, and impropriety of conduct indurates the conscience. It is impossible to oppose God with impunity. Were this more seriously revolved in the mind, numbers who are convinced of their duty, would immediately submit to the ordinance of baptism, and we should no longer read the unwarrantable methods adopted to oppose it. Pædo-baptists would not then dare to appeal to our pride, against the law of Christ, by stigmatizing baptism with the charge of indecency. They would feel that such a charge involves the character of Jesus, arises from no very honourable motive, and reproaches the wisdom of God. But many excuse their neglect of the ordinance, by supposing it to be quite unimportant. It is not essential to their salvation, therefore, as they can secure eternal happiness without it, they determine to withhold their submission. The love of Christ is not sufficient to constrain them, nor his authority to compel them. But, though baptism is not essential to salvation, is it not essential, and particularly with such persons, to a correct and honest profession of religion? Shall we deem a duty which God has enjoined, trivial, because our salvation does not depend on the performance? God has given sufficient evidence, that to trifle with his commands is a hazardous experiment on his mercy. The incense under the old dispensation, was to be consumed by fire from the altar, Nadab and Abihu, however, ventured to take the fire from some other place, but they suffered the penalty of death for their conduct. Saul was commanded to destroy the Amalekites, "man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass;" but Saul spared the life of Agag, and some of the finest of the cattle *for sacrifice*;

for this, though he pleaded a religious motive, he was severely punished, and lost the kingdom of Israel. "To obey," said Samuel, "is better than sacrifice." If persons, who are convinced of their duty in baptism, refuse to comply with the mandate of God, do they expect to pass with impunity? Do they enjoy the answer of a good conscience? or do they not rather suffer its pungent reproofs? Do they not grieve the good spirit of God? and destroy their tranquillity of mind? Will not such conduct abridge the degree of their glory in Heaven? "Them that honour me," saith God, "I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."

Dr. Burns in the first chapter of his book, has displayed a mode of argument quite worthy of his cause, but as destitute of candour as of truth. One might imagine that he was impressed with the weakness of his cause, and determined, by placing this chapter in the front of his book, to prejudice the mind of his readers in its favour, by maligning the reputation of the baptists. In dragging forth the errors of Turtullian, and in relating a dismal tale about the insurgents of Munster, he endeavors to envelop the opinions of the baptists with reproach. But the Baptists are no more liable to reproach, in the judgement of reasonable persons, from the errors of Turtullian, nor from the enormities of Munster, than the pædo-baptists are on account of the extravagancies of their predecessors. And, as a judicious writer has observed, respecting the excitements in Germany, "from the vast number of persons concerned in those insurrections, of whom it is reported that a hundred thousand fell by the sword, it may with certainty be concluded that a great majority of them were pædo-baptists." If the Dr. will trace our santiments to the Mennonites, theirs' can easily be traced to the Waldensian confessors, and of such company the Baptists have no reason to be ashamed. These were the men, who not only opposed the hierarchy of Rome, but were anxious to render the reformation pure and complete, and if, in attempting to exterminate infant baptism with other errors of the church, their infuriated foes haled them to prison and to death, the cause of truth was worthy of their blood. But, be it known, that the baptists can trace their sentiments to an origin, to which pædo-baptism has no claim,—the authority of the Son of God. "The agreement of christians on this point" (infant baptism,) says Dr. Burns, "is really astonishing." Astonishing enough, as infant baptism is so totally destitute of scriptural support. But, I just ask, did not the

professors of christianity, for many ages, generally agree in upholding the interest of popery? "It is worthy of remark," says the Dr. "that, notwithstanding the rapid and extensive propagation of the baptist principles, there does not exist on the face of the globe a national church, holding the tenets of those who are hostile to infant baptism." Marvellous! It would be better if infant baptism were the only human invention which *national* churches embrace. The advocates of *national* churches too highly appreciate the service of infant baptism in their cause to be willing at present, to abandon it. However, in proportion as the interests of pure religion are promoted, *national* churches and infant baptism will totally lose the declining influence which they yet hold over the human mind. "Is it probable," the Dr. inquires, "or is it for a moment to be believed, that a sect so inconsiderable as that of the *ana-baptists, a sect*, which, compared with the rest of christendom, is but *as a drop in the ocean*, and *which can scarcely name among its adherents one individual of profound scripural erudition*, is the only privileged body of christians?" To what will the reader attribute this sentence? To pride? to a want of information? to illiberality? to what? I challenge the Dr. to prove, that the baptists are *ana*-baptists; and inform him, that *candid* pædo-baptists, (of whom, however he is not one) will not reproach them with the name. The people so contemptible in this gentleman's esteem, are known to be more numerous than any other denomination in America; but what if they were the minority? would that prove them in error? As to the erudition of the baptists, it would be difficult to prove that they are a whit behind any other religious denomination. The Dr. gives us * another luscious piece of calumny when alluding to immersion; he says the baptists "regard it as one of the essentials in every case of revival and conversion, and that for its sake they are contented to see the unity of the church destroyed, the flames of controversy kindled, and brotherly love well nigh extinguished." "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," is a part of theology which this gentleman appears to have expunged from his creed. It is a bad cause which requires falsehood to support it. The baptists view immersion as essential to baptism, but never place it on a level with conversion. They are far more anxious to promote brotherly affection, than to light up the embers of controversy. The Dr. charges the baptists † with "practising a system of delusion on plain and unlettered christians," and ‡ with "particularly the bigotry

*Page 55. †Page 5. ‡Page 88.

which they display in excluding from their communion and christian fellowship all who do not agree with them as to the mode of an external ceremony." The first of these charges requires no other refutation than its falsity; but I would ask this *liberal* divine, whether, in the *plenitude* of his *charity*, he would admit to the table of the Lord an unbaptized person? Some pædo-baptists, I know, do this. It is perfectly ridiculous to hear the Dr., after discharging such tremendous eructations of slander against the baptists, talk of not having made "use of harsh and uncharitable language—that if any opponent should think proper to attack him with the keenness of invective, he cannot, in justice, he termed the aggressor; for, he has been careful to keep his pages free from those *multa cum bile*, which have too often disgraced the writings of modern thorough-paced controversialists." His professions of liberality are loud, but amidst the harsh thunders of his *multa cum bile*, they can no more be heard, than a gentle mutter amidst the rage and tumult of a sea-storm. Whatever the Dr. might think of the baptists, there are considerations much lower than those resulting from religion, which demanded of him a more charitable mode of treatment. However, the baptists are pretty well inured to abuse, which they attribute to human frailty, and a want of argument on the side of their opposers.

Let pædo-baptists, if they can, produce from the Bible either precept or example for infant sprinkling, and, if they cannot, let them cease to defend it, and no longer preach up a mere human invention for an ordinance of God. "In withdrawing from the field of combat, we would, in the spirit of christian benevolence, give our antagonists this parting advice: If you would exhibit to the world an example of intellectual diffidence, be careful never to prejudge a cause, on which revelation alone is competent to give a final decision." *

* Dr. Burns, page 88.

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