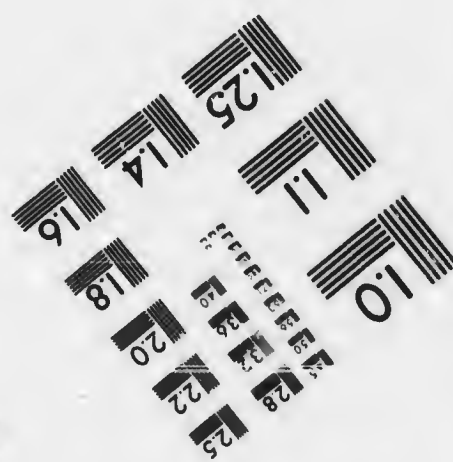
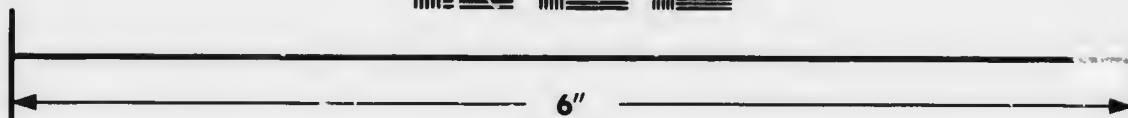
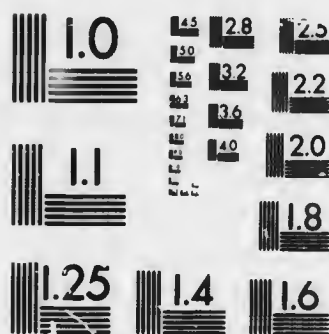


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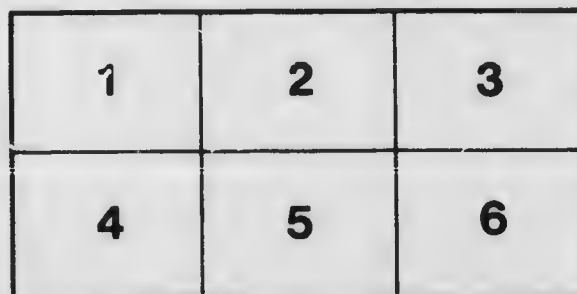
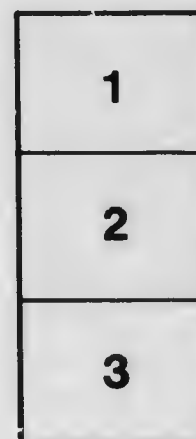
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BELIEVER IMMERSION,
AS OPPOSED TO
UNBELIEVER SPRINKLING.

IN TWO ESSAYS,

FIRST

ON THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT,

SECOND

ON CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED.

THREE LETTERS
TO MR. ROSS OF PICTOU,

CONTAINING STRICTURES ON HIS FIRST LETTER TO MR. ELDER
OF ANNAPOLIS.

By ALEXR. CRAWFORD.

Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way
and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. *Jeremiah.*

And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holi-
ness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring
men, though fools, shall not err therein. *Isaiah.*

The meek he will guide in judgment: the meek he will teach his way. *David.*

If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God,
Christ.

Pray fervently. Deliberate slowly. Determine cautiously. Resolve firmly.
Adhere tenaciously. Execute promptly. Despatch is the life of business. Delays
are dangerous. Procrastination is the thief of time.

CHARLOTTE-TOWN, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

Printed by JAMES D. HASZARD.
1827.

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PREFACE.

THE subject discussed in the following pages, has agitated the religious public in no small degree. This is not to be attributed wholly to Mr. Ross, though I have been informed he was the first who wrote upon the subject in these Provinces. Be the cause what it may, the fact is certain, that a great majority of the settlers in these Provinces, believed the propriety, and followed the practice, of infant baptism. Mr. Ross also informs us that it is still practised by a vast majority of christians. This gives it respectability, and also affords an argument in its favour, upon the principle of the well known maxim: "Its success proves its justice." As it is essential to, so it is practised in every religious establishment in christendom. It has therefore the sanction of the great: an argument of no ordinary weight with many, as is evident from the consideration, that very many continue members of an established church, even after they publish against many of its observances. Having such a vast majority of the most respectable of mankind in its favour, its abettors will, of course, include the bulk of the most learned men in the world. Whence another argument in its favour: for how could so many great and learned men be all in an error? Besides, it has been a long established custom, and many, till lately, did not know that there was, in all christendom, a dissenting voice on the subject. In these parts, therefore, the prejudice of education was strong in its favour. This prejudice formed the minds of the rising generation in its own mould. The mind, thus formed, became itself a mould. The youth were taught to understand the scriptures wholly in the Pedobaptist line; and whatever they read in the scriptures, was readily cast into their mould, and as readily acquired its shape; at least, to such a degree as satisfied the unsuspecting reader, that in that line he had the true meaning. And if, perchance, any passage should seem rather hard and nayielding to take the impression, it could easily be passed over, as the bible, on the whole, is supposed to be a book, fit for the clergy only, fully to understand. Add to all this, the example of the clergy, together with their private instructions, and able public exposition of the scriptures.

As far as religious instruction was at all obtained in the country, the above is a true representation of the state of these Provinces in regard to baptism, when Baptist principles were first adopted by a few of the settlers. These were first started among obscure and illiterate people; and both the principles and those who embraced them, were viewed and treated with the utmost contempt. A remembrance of their forefathers who had sealed their testimony with their blood, was, at that time, sufficient to settle the faith, and remove the scruples of thousands, with regard to a practice so extensively popular as infant baptism. It ought to be remembered however, that no person ever suffered for following the practice of infant baptism; and that it is adherence to the essential principles of the Baptists, that drew upon christians most of

the persecutions they have ever experienced. Almost every Baptist knows the grounds on which infant baptism is supposed to be founded. Very few Pedobaptists know the grounds on which it is rejected by the Baptists, except what distorted views they may obtain from the misrepresentations of other Pedobaptists, and from the scriptures, viewed with a jaundiced eye, through the medium of educational prejudice. An epistolary correspondence between a Baptist and Pedobaptist in Europe, came to this country; the Pedobaptist's letters were read so extensively as to become almost illegible; while the leaves of the Baptist's letters, though a part of the same pamphlet, were still uncut. Here, however, I would cheerfully apply to some, the remark of Mr. Ross to Mr. ELDER, p. 68. "A person may be under the influence of an undue bias without being sensible of it." The Baptists are still viewed by many as a strange, erroneous, enthusiastic people; and many would attend and encourage their meetings, only for the prejudice they have against them as Baptists. Thus, they are condemned at the bar of the public without a hearing. A Pedobaptist, in order to become a Baptist, has to cope with all the obstacles arising from the state of things here represented.

Had Pedobaptist principles been congenial with christianity, one would think, considering the above incontrovertible statement, that Pedobaptists in this country had little need of publishing in defence of them; unless the opposite principles were recommended to the depraved mind, by being peculiarly favourable to the indulgence of ambition, avarice, and lust. Of this, it is impossible to accuse them. It was the Baptists, if any, who had need of publishing to illustrate and confirm their misunderstood, unpatronized, unpopular principles: which were like to be crushed by opposition; but which, like the bush in the wilderness, though burning, could not be consumed. Instead of publishing, however, they waited patiently to let their infant cause gain permanent stability, by the gradual increase of evangelical knowledge: for they were confident, that among converted people, their principles, in order to be approved, needed only to be understood; and to be understood, needed only to be viewed impartially upon gospel principles.

Notwithstanding the Pedobaptists were already possessed of every reasonable advantage but truth, a treatise by way of familiar dialogue, said to be written by Mr. Ross, appeared about sixteen years ago, in confirmation of infant sprinkling. A few years after, a volume for the same purpose, by a Mr. MUNRO of Antigonish, made its appearance. The Baptists, confident that the new Testament impartially viewed, is the best possible treatise on their side, took no notice of these publications; but quietly laboured to promote evangelical knowledge, as the best means of promoting the Baptist interest, which they believe to be identified with the best interests of mankind. Lately, MR. JACKSON, alarmed at—I know not what, unless the increasing progress of gospel knowledge, published his letters to MR. PRIESTLY. These, at length, stirred up the spirit of MR. ELDER to write MR. JACKSON five letters in defence of Baptist principles. MR. JACKSON, unwilling to let the Baptists have either the first or the last word, wrote to MR. ELDER an answer so large, as seemed almost sufficient not only to overthrow MR. ELDER, and with him all the Baptists, so they should never rise more,

but also to satisfy many, without ever reading it, that, in so large a treatise, he had unanswerably vindicated his cause. It appears that, however confident Mr. JACKSON felt of having given Mr. ELDER an irrecoverable overthrow, Mr. Ross did not view it in the same light: instead of giving Mr. JACKSON credit for a victory, he himself aspired after the laurels of the conqueror, and though their opponent betrayed no intention of renewing the combat, he judged that he must, a second time, show his opinion; and add a fifth clerical treatise to those already published in these Provinces, to defend infant sprinkling; or rather, to wage war against the Baptists in the person of Mr. ELDER. I hope it will appear, that the long silence of the Baptists, notwithstanding their many provocations to publish, is to be attributed to their peaceable principles, and not to any dread of the consequences of agitating the controversy. Their opponents, who showed such a propensity to publish in defence of their system, were not likely behind them, in importing and circulating treatises on their side, nor yet in defending their system from the pulpit.

There was a time when clerical authority had full sway over the consciences of men, independent of scriptural proof. On this foundation, infant sprinkling rested secure; and therefore its abettors, without fear of consequences, made many important concessions in favour of the Baptists; especially, respecting the meaning of some scripture passages, on which the late Pedobaptists lay very great stress. Lately, however, Gospel light is increasing; believers are ceasing to call men masters in religion; and their appeal is to the infallible standard. The spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, in its government, subjects, and ordinances, begins to be understood. This is visibly undermining unbeliever sprinkling; and wherever evangelical truth prevails, Baptist principles are suggested to the enlightened mind, as most consistent with the spirituality of the kingdom of heaven. Under these circumstances, the advocates of infant baptism feel alarmed for the consequences, and exert all their force to maintain their stand against the rising tide of gospel light. Herein they are now reduced to the narrow compass of maintaining it from the scriptures; and are, therefore, under the necessity of the most assiduous search after confirming evidence in the sacred volume. The Abrahamic covenant is the fortress to which they retreat, the source from which they expect a supply of evidence. On that ground Mr. Ross has taken his stand; therefore, I judged it proper to enter fully into the explanation of that covenant, to see if we could understand alike, and love as brethren. Whatever error and misrepresentation the different publications on the subject may contain, they will, on the whole, promote the spirit of inquiry, ever so congenial with the interests of truth. Thinking it unnecessary, if not unfair, for Mr. Ross, while his coadjutor had the last word, to join him in the contest with Mr. ELDER, and unfeeling in the Baptists to allow the latter to keep the field alone against such powerful antagonists, I show my sympathy by directing the attention of Mr. Ross to myself, leaving the original combatants to settle their difference themselves.

Had they followed infant baptism as a merely human rite, they might probably enjoy it in quietness for me. But when they obscure and pervert the doctrine of the gospel in order to maintain it—when they

represent unbelieving infants as justified—as spiritual, and subjects of Christ's spiritual kingdom—as in an everlasting covenant relation to God—as holy—as disciples—as church members—as christians, having a right to Christian ordinances—as lambs in Christ's flock—as those for whom he laid down his life, for whom he cares, and whom he has given in charge to the pastors of his flock to feed as they love the Chief Shepherd—as the such of whom the kingdom of heaven is made up—besides other errors relating to the action and the design of christian baptism—when the books which contain such sentiments are extensively circulated in the community, with the warmest recommendation from the clergy, as the best that ever were published on the subject—when they read from the pulpit pieces of these books, adding that the mouths of the Baptists are now shut forever, &c.—it is time to show that it is believing infants—those little ones who believe in Christ, who, as new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that the scriptures mean by the children of the promise, who are heirs of the kingdom of heaven. When a man stands up in the sacred desk, in the character of an ambassador of Christ; and, just when he is solemnizing the minds of his people for the two sacraments, immediately to be administered, hurls down his thundering anathemas on the devoted heads of “the stupid blockheads, the Anabaptists,” for “imitating the disciples in forbidding to bring little children to Christ”—when another triumphantly proclaims from the pulpit: “I have now proved infant baptism beyond the possibility of controversy”—it is time to stem the torrent of such “great swelling words of vanity,” and show them that they are men and not God. When they boastingly report that Mr. ELDER has yielded to Mr. JACKSON as unanswerable, and called in his books, and yet Mr. ROSS prepared an antidote against its baneful influence; and, not content with separate publications, occupy a considerable part of the public papers, to sound an alarm that their principles are in danger, to warn the public of the prevalence of stupid and pernicious errors, and to throw public odium on the butt of their envy—the propagators of such errors, as illiterate people, greenhorns, simpletons, deeply immersed in error and prejudice, led astray by designing knaves, who, through chagrin for the just censures of their brethren, deserted their post, and set themselves, by unscriptural opinions and false reasonings, propagated with no small degree of boldness, to invalidate the truth which is so clear and plain; in short as the blind leading the blind—it would indicate too much religious apathy, and look like surrendering the truth altogether, to keep wholly silent, and not stand forward manfully to contend for the faith and practice of Christ and his apostles.

They refer us, from the pulpit too, for the origin of our sect, to the enthusiasts of Munster, who, they tell us, went through the city with their standard of religion in one hand, and a sword in the other, destroying all who would not subscribe to their standard. The Baptists hold that the consent of the will, under the direction of enlightened reason, is essential to the right performance of every religious duty; and consistent Baptists will have no religious standard but the Bible. Pedobaptists, in baptizing all nations, baptize nine out of ten perhaps, evidently against their will, without any attempts to enlighten the mind; and they generally excommunicate all non-conformists to their human religious standards. Let the reader judge who has the best title to rela-

tionship to those madmen who made disciples by violence, and that to human standards of religion. It is certain many of those enthusiasts were Pedobaptists. But under all this contempt and obloquy, so abundantly poured from the treasures of literature, there is still one consolation, viz. that the moon shines nothing the dimmer for the dogs barking at it. With whatever success I have opposed Pedobaptism, the only artillery I have levelled against it, are the principles of the gospel.

I have insisted but little on those passages which are generally thought most favourable to the Baptists; not because I think them insufficient to establish believer immersion, but because I had nothing new to advance concerning them. If my pamphlet were only a repetition of what had been well said by others, who formerly wrote upon the subject, it would be criminal in me to impose it on the public, already groaning under a load of books. But it often occurred to me that the sentiment of the religious public, respecting the covenants, stood much in need of reform. On this part of the subject, which is the forte of the Pedobaptists, I have, as far as I know, followed no person's track. My view of this part is as new to many Baptists, as to Pedobaptists. The generous reader will make some allowance, if, in striking out a new path, my educational prejudice, which cost me much trouble to shake off, (for I was once a rigid Pedobaptist,) should occasionally lead me into trifling inconsistencies: especially as my circumstances are evidently very unfavourable to study and reflection. Should any person who ever wrote for the public, know the disadvantages under which I have written this my first attempt, he could not withhold his sympathy. I have dwelt chiefly on those passages which are generally supposed to favour the Pedobaptists. The reader cannot but see that I have not at all been satisfied with repelling the enemy from our territory. I have carried war into the very heart of his country. I have pursued close on his heels through every retreat in which he took shelter; nor shrunk from the mouth of his cannon, even before his main battery: and if I have not taken possession of his very fortress, every one must grant that I boldly attempted it.

Mr. JACKSON builds on the two pillars of hereditary christianity and unbeliever justification. Though he should lose all support from the Abrahamic covenant, as transmitting christianity by hereditary right, he might still be supported by that justification without faith, which he maintains comes on all mankind through the death of Christ. But justification by faith is a citizen of great celebrity in the kingdom of Christ; whereas justification without faith is a stranger and an alien, whose temper and habits are so repugnant to the genius of the christian commonwealth, that he never can be naturalized there. Though Mr. ROSS has not professed his faith in unbeliever justification, his system, including unbelieving christians, necessarily implies it, unless the christian commonwealth include unjustified christians. Though his system has only the one pillar of hereditary christianity to rest upon, he seems as confident and unconcerned as his co-partner. Mr. ELDER's system rests on the divine counsel, divine veracity, and divine operation. Let the reader judge which system he will embrace.

As I hold to the immersion of believers, I have no right to be offended at being called a dipper, or at the system I embrace being called be-

liever immersion, any more than a person born in Scotland, has, at being called a Scotchman. As Mr. Ross holds to the sprinkling of unbelievers, he has no right to be offended at being called a sprinkler, or at the system he embraces being called unbeliever sprinkling, any more than a person born in Ireland, has, at being called an Irishman. To avoid any cause of offence, I have used the terms sprinkle, sprinkling, &c. only where baptize, baptism, &c. would seriously injure my meaning.—As holy and reverend are, in the scriptures, applied, as titles, to Almighty God, and never to mortal man, I feel no liberty to depart, in this instance, from scripture precedent. And I must radically alter my views of Christ's kingdom, before I can use any title whatever, as a clerical title.—Though I have not covered much paper with pompous professions, or ostentatious displays of christian friendship and candour, perhaps it may be found upon trial, that I do not want eyes to see, judgment to appreciate, taste to relish, or a disposition to encourage, true, evangelical piety wherever it appears.

The Baptists have been frequently charged with the crime of laying too much stress upon the ordinance of baptism. But of all those who practice the ordinance at all, the Baptists are the only people, who, by their very distinguishing principles, are necessarily preserved from laying undue stress upon it; as they maintain that a person, in order to be prepared for baptism, must be already brought to trust wholly and solely in Jesus Christ. He who lays undue stress upon baptism; profess what he may, cannot, on that very account, be a Baptist. But many Pedobaptists maintain that baptism cleanses from original sin, and is a passport to heaven; some that it regenerates, and makes the baptized a member of Christ's church; and even those of them who disclaim ascribing to the ordinance any saving efficacy, are, notwithstanding, exceedingly tenacious of the baptism of infants, as if conferring upon them some mysterious indescribable benefit, which will avail them much in the sight of God. Let the benefit derived to infants from being baptized be distinctly specified, and not left so vague that people may make of it whatever their fancy dictates. If there be no benefit, then, the Baptist principles must be very harmless, depriving the infants of nothing valuable; and therefore ought not to be attacked so keenly as if hurtful to souls. Here, let practice and not mere profession, ascertain what stress is laid upon baptism. It is easy to see, then, that it is the Pedobaptists, and not the Baptists, who are most in danger of laying undue stress upon the ordinance. I may be blamed for classing together all sorts of Pedobaptists: but it appears that whatever differences they have among themselves, they lay them aside as of minor importance, and proceed in a united phalanx, to make an attack upon the Baptists. Let the case of Messrs. Jackson and Ross suffice as an example.

In writing the following sheets, I felt my mind peculiarly unfettered, from the consistency of the view I have taken, with the most important doctrines of the gospel. The moral depravity of our nature—the nature and necessity of regeneration, in order to fit us for spiritual exercises and spiritual enjoyments—the necessity of divine agency in regeneration—the eternity and immutability of the divine counsel—the freeness and sovereignty of divine grace—justification by faith alone—the real holiness of the christian character—the divine origin and spiritual nature of the christian religion—and the superior clearness, spi-

rituality and glory of the gospel over the law--these, and kindred doctrines, seemed, in my mind, to be identified with the very subject I was writing upon. They so naturally fell in, and so readily lent me their aid, that, sometimes, I almost forgot but one or other of them was the very point I wished to establish. Whereas, had I taken the other side, it appears to me that these doctrines would constantly withstand me to my face. I felt as if I were laying the axe to the root of the corruptions of christianity, and that, by taking the opposite side, I would be strengthening them.

Christian baptism in its very form, implies a firm belief of the existence of the sacred Three; and of the scripture representation of their character, and various offices in the economy of salvation. No person can come forward for baptism, without that belief, or the most profane and horrid prevarication. It is the first, by far the most comprehensive in its meaning, and therefore, the most important in its nature and consequences, of all christian ordinances. In estimating the comparative importance of the different subjects of christianity, it is a good rule, to give the highest place to those that are most noticed, or possess the most prominent place, in the scriptures. In this respect, baptism, among christian ordinances, claims the pre-eminence. The apostle argued the superiority of Christ's sacrifice over those offered under the law, from the former being but once offered, whereas the latter were frequently repeated. Apply this rule to christian ordinances, and baptism will sustain an honourable superiority. What is done only once during a person's life, ought to be done well. In the apostolic commission, the other ordinances are all classed together, and comprehended under the all things Christ commanded; but baptism is singled out by name, and constitutes, by itself, the second part of the commission. Difference of opinion respecting it, prevents a union in church fellowship, among a greater number of true christians, than any other difference among christians, existing in the present day. The controversy respecting it, involves a greater compass of the principal doctrines of revealed religion, than perhaps any one controversy that ever was started respecting divine ordinances. When, therefore, I present the reader with the subject of christian baptism, soliciting his enlightened inquiry and candid decision respecting it, I feel conscious that I present him with a subject highly deserving his most serious and minute attention.

I have said nothing with a view to displease or irritate, and it is painful for me to be singular in any case; but esteeming every particle of divine truth infinitely more precious than a world, and remembering my responsibility to God and the public, I have expressed what I believe to be the truth, without ceremony or reserve. I make no pretensions to literature myself; nor am I to be imposed on by pretensions to it, or an abuse of it, in others. Elegance of style and excellence of composition, do not at all come within the compass of my aim; which is to discover truth, and exhibit it to the reader, so that he may comprehend it, and feel its influence. I am not also without hope, that some abler pen may yet illustrate the subject, in nearly the same point of view, but in a manner more suited to the improved taste of our refined age. I expect that in less than two centuries more Antichrist, with all the errors he introduced, and unbeliever sprinkling among the rest, will be finally

swept away, without leaving a trace behind. While I attempted to elicit truth so as to promote real godliness rather than captious speculation, I am fully conscious that without a divine influence, no human attempt will prove beneficial to mankind. Under this impression, I have constantly prayed to the Father of lights, to preserve me from error and direct me to truth, and to accompany with his special blessing, my humble attempts to promote his cause; without which I can expect no good to attend it, to which I, therefore, do humble commend it.

Tryon River, April, 1826.

ESSAY II.

ON THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

WHEN man by transgression fell from a state of favour with God, and became obnoxious to eternal vengeance, the ever gracious God was pleased to reveal a plan of mercy for the recovery of miserable man. The first intimation of this merciful design recorded in scripture, is contained in the curse pronounced on the serpent, signifying that the word of God incarnate, should, through death, destroy him that had the power of death, and delivering sinners of mankind from death, restore them to the divine favour. The same promise was afterwards symbolically represented to the eye by the instituted sacrifices. The Almighty designed to convince man of his weakness and folly, and hatred to the true God. For this, and otherwise purposes, the non-fulfilment of the promise, during four thousand years, afforded man scope for his invention, and a trial of his abilities. Soon after the promise had been given, men so corrupted their way, and, in time, exercised so much violence and other evil, that their Creator, at last, destroyed them by a flood. Noah and his family, the only persons who escaped the destruction, became the progenitors of a new race. Noah's posterity, instead of taking warning from the punishment of the Antediluvians, gave vent to the natural enmity of their hearts against the true God, falling into idolatry and other heinous sins. Thus, the promise of a Redeemer was likely to be lost, and the symbolical sacrifice was in danger of being perverted from its real intention. To prevent these evils, and to afford an opportunity of giving fresh displays of his gracious designs, God called Abram from his country and his kindred, directing him to go and sojourn in the land of Canaan; designing to make of him a great nation, in which the promise and the sacrifice should be preserved pure, from which the Messiah should spring, and which, till then, should be preserved a holy people, separate from all the nations.

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Till the call of Abram, the birth of the Messiah was not restricted to any particular family, but now it was signified to Abram that the Messiah should spring from him. "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Gen. xii. 3. Jehovah promised to bless him with a numerous, a mighty, a prosperous, and an honourable offspring. To exercise his faith and patience, and to leave room for the occurrence of some typical events, the fulfilment of this promise was delayed for a time. After he came to the land of Canaan, the promise of the land, Gen. xii. 7. for an inheritance, was added to the promise concerning the seed. After he had had an instance of God's special care of him, in his successful war against the victorious kings, Gen. xiv. he had the promise that God was his shield or protector, and his great reward, or the supplier of his wants. Gen. xv. 1. Having lamented the want of children, v. 3. he was answered, v. 5. that his seed should be as numerous as the stars of heaven. The promise which, to human appearance, could not possibly be accomplished, he believed, relying on the divine veracity; and it was counted to him for righteousness, v. 6. Hitherto the blessings were simply promised. The inheritance being promised again, v. 7. he asked, v. 8. the important question: "Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" Then Jehovah ratified the promise into a covenant, and it is generally ever after called a covenant. The same covenant was afterwards renewed to him, Gen. xvii. a token reminding them of its ratification was added, and the covenant seed limited to the son which Sarai should bear. Upon offering up his son Isaac, the same covenant promise was again confirmed by an oath, Gen. xxii. 15—18. It was afterwards renewed unto Isaac and Jacob, 1 Chron. xvi. 15—20. I shall consider first, what are the essential parts of a covenant; and second, the Abrahamic covenant in particular.

I. THE NATURE OF A COVENANT.

The Hebrew word translated covenant, is supposed to be derived from a word which signifies, "pure" "purifier" "purification sacrifice," &c. There is therefore a pure intention, and a sacred obligation, to fulfil the promise so confirmed. The phrases, "making a covenant," "entering into a covenant," &c. are literally rendered "cutting a covenant," referring to the practice of cutting in pieces the ratification sacrifice. Some maintain that the sacrifice is properly *the covenant*, and that the term is applied to the transaction so confirmed, only by way of accommodation. The Greek word used for the Hebrew, and rendered "covenant" and "testament" in English, is derived from a word which signifies, "to dispose," "to appoint" "to institute" "to regulate," &c. The Greek word rendered "testator" in Heb. ix. 16. is, by some critics, translated, "the sacrifice appointed of God to pacify," "the pacifier," "the appointed victim," "that which confirmeth," &c. Perhaps "ratification sacrifice" would express the apostle's meaning. It is certain that while it lived, the covenant could have no strength. Heb. ix. 17. The heathens also had "oath-offerings" sacrificed for confirmation at their solemn engagements. A covenant always implies two parties, but it does not always imply that both parties engage in covenant. When a dying man bequeaths his property to his chosen heir, the appointment, disposition, and arrangement of his property, to such a person, for such a purpose

subject to such regulations, is a will, testament, or covenant, i. e. a free voluntary, authoritative, appointed, disposition of affairs : compare **Exod. xxiv. 8.** with **Heb. ix. 20.** yet the heir perhaps, enters into no covenant. Not attending to this, has occasioned several mistakes respecting covenants. Both may make a covenant, **Gen. xxi. 27.** and then, the fulfilling of the promise by the one party, may be viewed as a condition by the other. When Jehovah makes or reveals a covenant to man, neither promise, condition, or covenant, is required of man. All Jehovah's covenants with men, are gracious intimations of his merciful designs of doing good to man. See the covenant of safety with Noah and all flesh, **Gen. ix. 8—17.** the covenant of circumcision with Abraham and his seed, **Gen. xv. 7—21. xvii. 1—22.** the covenant of ceremonies with the literal Israel, **Exod. xxiv. 7, 8.** renewed in the land of Moab. **Deut. xxix. 1, 10—15,** the covenant of priesthood with Levi, **Numb. xxv. 12, 13. Mal. ii. 4—9.** the covenant of royalty with David, **2 Saml. vii. 12—17. xxiii. 5. 1 Chron. xvii. Psal. lxxxix.** and the new covenant with the spiritual Israel. **Jer. xxxi. 30—34. Heb. viii. 6—13.** As far as I remember, these are all the covenants that Jehovah ever made with, or revealed to man. They all seem to be dictated exclusively by Jehovah; and man is bound to believe and obey, by divine authority, not by voluntary engagement.

The principal parts of a covenant are three:—a promise, a ratification sacrifice, and a token. First, a promise of some particular benefit. There may be one benefit, or many. The promise may be fulfilled soon, or remain to be fulfilled a long time after: yet it is acted upon with all confidence, from the time of its ratification. There will be some reason why the promise is made, some specified channel through which the promise shall be fulfilled, some medium of intercourse between the parties, and some plan of conduct naturally arising from the promise. Second, a ratification sacrifice; without which the covenant is of no force—is no more than a simple promise, **Heb. ix. 16—21.** The ratification sacrifice used to be cut through in the middle, then the party engaging passed between the parts, signifying a wish to be so divided, if he should retract from his engagement; **Jer. xxxiv. 18, 19.** In the case of a person's last will and testament, when his soul is separated from his body, he cannot recall his promise. A smoking furnace and a burning lamp, attendants on the divine presence, passed between the parts of the ratification sacrifice; **Gen. xv. 17.** and thus Jehovah, in form, confirmed the covenant to Abraham. Third, a token reminding both parties of the ratification, consequently, the certain fulfilment of the promise; or, the sacred obligation of the engagement. That the token may answer the purpose of a token, it must, when necessary, be discoverable by the senses. Thus Jehovah shall look upon the bow in the cloud, and remember the everlasting covenant. **Gen. ix. 13—17.** Each of these is occasionally called the covenant. The promise, **Gen. xv. 18.** the sacrifice, **Isaiah xlix. 8.** and the token, **Gen. xvii. 13.** Each of these essential parts, must bear some relation or proportion to the other, in nature and in value. If the blessing promised is very valuable and difficult to obtain, the sacrifice must have some proportionable value. If the blessing be temporal, the token will be temporal; if spiritual, the token will be spiritual: in which case, it is discoverable only by the senses of the mind. On this scheme, it is sup-

possible that engagements of quite inferior importance, might be ratified without the death of a victim. The blessing, being more properly, the matter of the covenant, is more frequently called the covenant; and the other parts, when it would be unimportant for us to know them, are not at all recorded. It may also be observed, that, since writing came into common use, as a depository of sentiment, a written instrument contains the engagement in full, and can be called to remembrance, and exhibited to the eye, by producing the writing itself; a token, therefore, has generally fallen into disuse. Also, a seal for confirmation annexed to this writing, answers, as far as confirmation merely is concerned, the same purpose as the ratification sacrifice; and, being found more convenient, gradually supplanted it. At this time a written instrument with the proper seal annexed, when produced to the eye, answers ordinarily among men, all the purposes of the three parts of the ancient covenants. But the very last of Jehovah's covenants, was ratified by the death of Christ. A covenant then, in the scripture sense, is a constitution founded upon a promise or promises, ratified by the death of the ratification sacrifice, and kept in remembrance, till fulfilled, by means of an abiding, discoverable token.

II. THE BLESSINGS OF THE COVENANT.

The Abrahamic covenant deserves our serious consideration, because it is intimately connected with all the spiritual blessings we can enjoy, either in time or in eternity. The promised blessings demand our first attention: and first of all, the promise of the Messiah. "In thee, Gen. xii. 3. and in thy seed, Gen. xxii. 18. shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This promise is called the gospel. Gal. iii. 8. What is to us a matter of testimony, the Messiah having already died and risen again, was to Abraham a matter of promise, and typically set before his eyes. Acts xiii. 32, 33. Thus, Christ is the lamb slain typically from the foundation of the world. Rev. xiii. 8. God confirmed the covenant to Abraham, concerning the Messiah, as the only seed through which men should be blessed: therefore, the blessing promised to Abraham, comes on the Gentiles by faith in Christ, without being introduced into the Jewish nation, or submitting to Jewish ceremonies. Gal. iii. 14, 16, 17. Acts xv. 7--11. It was not by a union with the Jews, as the numerous seed, but by a union with Christ, as the one seed, that all nations are to be blessed. The Messiah is the only person through whom, the blessing promised to Abraham, must be conferred on all nations. Abraham was then constituted the covenant father of the Messiah, the head, and of believers, the body. He was also constituted the covenant father of Isaac, the type of the head, and of the Israelites the type of the body. The typical blessings were transmitted from Abraham through Isaac, to the Israelites: and the spiritual blessings are transmitted from Abraham through Christ, to believers. Abraham had neither typical nor spiritual blessings to bestow, only as he is constituted by God the covenant head. It is therefore, the blessings promised to Abraham's seed, that comes on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ.

The other blessings were chiefly three. First, a seed; second, an inheritance; and third, Jehovah to be their God. Each of these had, first a literal, and second a spiritual meaning, necessary to be dis-

tinguished, and kept distinctly in view, whether we consider the promise of the blessings, or fulfilment of the promise. Not carrying this distinction fairly through all the parts of the covenant, but joining the literal meaning of the one promise, to the spiritual meaning of the other, was the capital error of the Jews; when they thought that, because they were the literal covenant seed, they had a right to the spiritual inheritance, and that God would be spiritually their God. This is what made them so tenacious of the Mosaic law, interpreted in this jumbling manner by the Rabbies, and such enemies to those teachers who insisted on the necessity of a second birth, a spiritual relation to Abraham, and doing the works of Abraham, in order to participate in the spiritual blessings. It is not the Jews only, that stumbled on this stumbling stone. Much, very much confusion has arisen from confounding the literal and the spiritual meaning of these promises. Let us consider the promises, literally and spiritually, in order; only let me premise, that the terms, "literal" and "spiritual," as applied to the two-fold meaning of these promises, are distinguished; because all the promises, being made in language, which, strictly and literally, applied to things temporal only, can be applied to things spiritual, only in a secondary and figurative sense. There is the more need of this remark, because it will be said, that the promise of being a God to them, was in its literal meaning, applicable only in a spiritual sense. But let it be observed, that Jehovah is the God of the whole earth, as the Creator, Preserver, &c. and that in another view, he is a God to all those, and to those only, who worship him in spirit and in truth. His becoming a God to one nation only, and to the whole of that nation, as a nation, even, while it was stiff-necked, rebellious, and prone to idolatry, was a constitution really temporal. Each nation had a God whom it worshipped, whom it supposed to be interested in its prosperity, and to have it peculiarly in charge; whom therefore, it consulted on difficult occasions; and to whom it ascribed the honour of all its victories. It was the glory of Israel that it had the supreme, the universal God himself, to be its peculiar national God. To be a God to a particular nation then, was, in its literal meaning, applicable in this restricted sense only. The promise that Jehovah should be a God to Abraham, and to his seed after him, *in their generations*, was, in its literal meaning, applicable only in a temporal sense; and the literal meaning of that promise, is to be carefully distinguished from its spiritual meaning.

First, The Seed. Abraham had eight sons, and only one was in the covenant. "In Isaac shall thy seed be called," Gen. xxi, 12. "A father of many nations have I made thee," Gen. xvii, 5. It appears evidently here, that he was made a father by a divine constitution, rather than by a power of procreation—that he was a covenant father, rather than a natural. Many nations sprang from him literally: but the promise respecting the seed related to Isaac, and that too, in the line of Jacob. All the children of Jacob, in their generations, were in the promise. They soon increased as the sand upon the sea shore, innumerable. Amidst many and severe trials, they multiplied and grew, till the promise concerning the seed was really fulfilled. The means of multiplying the literal seed, was carnal birth, peace and prosperity. By such means it increased into a nation, and,

as a nation, was defended by the sword, or some other means of bloodshed; either by men ordinarily, or by God, or men miraculously endowed by him, extraordinarily. Are not all the deliverances celebrated in their songs, or commemorated in their festivals, of an earthly nature; and accomplished by some means of temporal death, or means of producing the fear of temporal death? Though neither slaves nor proselytes were ever included in the seed, literally taken, yet by helping, in various ways, the prosperity of the nation, they were accessory to its increase.

But the promise of the seed had also a spiritual meaning. As in Abraham, all nations should be blessed, so he was constituted the father of all those nations that should experience his blessing. Romans iv. 16, 17. Gal. iii. 8, 9, 14. All who are of the faith are his children, who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. These different ways of being born express the contrast between the means of increasing the literal seed, and those of increasing the spiritual. The literal seed, as such, are all born Abraham's covenant offspring after the flesh, and only after the flesh: therefore, as the literal seed, they all are earthly, and only earthly; for earthly birth cannot constitute or impart, either spirituality, or a spiritual relation. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." John iii. 6. The spiritual seed as such, are all born of the Spirit, and only of the Spirit: therefore, as the spiritual seed, they are all spiritual, and only spiritual; for spiritual birth cannot constitute or impart, either carnality, or a carnal relation. "That which is born of the spirit is spirit." The spiritual seed are Abraham's children in no other sense, than as Abraham is constituted the father of believers. It was by faith that Abraham was justified, accepted of God, and obtained the honourable appellation of "The friend of God." His being so eminent a pattern of faith, rendered him peculiarly suitable, for being constituted the father of believers. Also, being the father of the one seed who is the head, it seems proper he should be the father of the numerous spiritual seed, who are the members. Those who believe are blessed with faithful Abraham. He who believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God, of the incorruptible seed of the word, and is become a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Being Christ's, he is a child of Abraham. The relation subsisting between them as father and son, is purely spiritual. The son is introduced into that relation by a new and spiritual birth; carnal birth is of no avail; but for to obtain this relation, one must be born again. It does not run in the line of blood, but of faith—of grace—of sovereign grace. It is not hereditary, but by the divine choice, and divine operation. Believers only, not believers and their seed, are Abraham's children. The faith of one person, has not the power of bestowing upon another person, a believing relation to Abraham. Every believer, and none else, is of the spiritual seed.

Again, Abraham only was constituted the father of believers. As he is, by divine promise, the father of all believers, and, in the spiritual sense, of believers only; so all believers are his children, and in the spiritual sense, his only; they bear this filial relation, by a constitution of the divine promise, to no human being but to Abraham. In this sense, none but he can call them children. By a divine promise, ratified into a covenant, all believers were given to Abraham for children: none are

left out of this promise, so they could be the children of any other believer: none are left out, so they themselves may become fathers. In this sense, none can be fathers in an inferior degree: no room for degrees is left. It is true, the promise was made to Abraham and his seed; but it was in the capacity of children—of believing, spiritually born children to Abraham; not in the capacity of fathers—divinely constituted fathers, as well as Abraham himself, that the promise is made to them. Abraham's place in the covenant, is that of a father not a child; the place of all succeeding believers, is that of children not fathers. Only one father is recognized in the covenant. As Abraham could neither relinquish the capacity of father to become a child; nor occupy the place of both father and child; so, other believers can neither relinquish the capacity of children to become fathers, nor occupy the place of both children and fathers. It is therefore as improper, as unconstitutional, as arrogant and presumptuous, for any believer, as such, to consider himself a covenant father of believers, and suppose that the covenant promise is unto his children, as the children of a believer, as it would be for him to consider himself the father of the Messiah, and that in him, all the nations of the earth are to be blessed. Both promises of the one covenant, run in the same channel, are established on the same foundation, and are equally restricted to the one father Abraham.

The carnal seed and the spiritual, differ in their birth, in their state or character, in their privileges, in their worship, in their polity, in the means of defence and of promoting their interest. The carnal seed are born after the flesh; the spiritual seed, after the Spirit. It is readily granted that many of the carnal seed were born after the Spirit; but they were so born, as the spiritual seed, not as the carnal. To say that any of the carnal seed were born after the Spirit; is just the same thing as to say, that they were of the spiritual seed, as well as of the carnal. The spiritual state of the carnal seed, is a state of guilt, of slavish fear, of enmity against God, of pollution, of helplessness and of misery. They had no proper view of spiritual things, no desire after them, no capacity for enjoying them; but in order to enjoy their own external, typical privileges, they must have no bodily blemishes, nor ceremonial defilements. The spiritual seed are justified, possess the spirit of adoption, are reconciled to God, and washed from their filthiness; they have strength and happiness in Christ. They are the children of the light, they hunger and thirst after righteousness, and they are capable of rejoicing in Christ with joy unspeakable and full of glory: but in their case, ceremonial uncleannesses and bodily blemishes, are not at all regarded. The privileges of the carnal seed, were, peace from their enemies; prosperity in a good land; Jehovah to be their national God; separation from uncircumcised nations; the oracles of God; and access to the temple worship. Those of the spiritual seed, are, peace and fellowship with God, access to him in worship through a mediator; victory over sin; the Holy Spirit to show them the things that are freely given them of God; and to fit them for enjoying privileges and performing duties; separation in religious worship, from those who are uncircumcised in heart and in ears; the scriptures of truth without a veil; and in the end eternal life. The worship of the carnal seed was indeed of divine appointment, and thus, was spiritual compared to heathen worship; but God himself calls it, "carnal ordi-

ances," "beggary elements," "shadows," &c. That of the spiritual seed is spiritual. The true worshippers now worship the father, in spirit and in truth. They have the spirit or meaning of the letter; the truth, reality, or substance of the shadows. The reason of the old testament ordinances being called carnal, is not on account of the matter or element used, nor yet the manner of using it, but because they point immediately, and in their primary signification, to earthly things: they refer to spiritual things, only mediately and in a secondary sense. The new testament ordinances are spiritual, inasmuch as they point directly and immediately, in their primary and only signification, to spiritual things. They have no earthly meaning by which they represent heavenly things. The elements themselves, or the action itself, and not earthly objects pointed out by them, are the emblems of the ultimate objects intended to be made known. The old testament ordinances point to heavenly things, as a fable points to the moral, through the medium of an earthly representation: the new testament ordinances, like plain language, refer immediately to the moral, or ultimate instruction intended to be conveyed. The carnal seed have a temporal polity; are governed by laws civil and religious, suited to their state, as an unregenerate, rebellious people, and sanctioned by the threatening of temporal punishment proportioned to the crime, in case of disobedience. The spiritual seed have a spiritual polity; are governed by laws suitable to their state as regenerated, obedient children; influenced by filial fear, love, and gratitude, and possessed of a nature that delights in the law by which they are governed: but no temporal sanction to enforce obedience. The means of defending the carnal seed were carnal weapons. It is true that as God was their Protector, no means could prove successful without dependence on him; but though this trust obtained success for the means, it was not itself the means. The spiritual seed are defended by the sword of the Spirit, wielded by the Spirit. The means of promoting the interest of the carnal seed, were commerce, agriculture, &c. Their interest as a covenanted nation, was, in the days of Solomon, promoted to the highest pitch they ever experienced. Let any person read the history, and see by what means. Dependence on God is here equally necessary as in the former case. The interest of the spiritual seed is promoted, by reading the scriptures, prayer, meditation, and attention to all the means of grace. Nothing calculated to excite temporal fear or temporal hope, is at all conducive to their interest.

In the nature of things, the relation between father and son is indissoluble. The Jews are still the descendants of Abraham, though not his covenant offspring: for the covenant itself having vanished, the covenant relation is abolished, with all the blessings of that relation: therefore, they do not now possess the inheritance, because it was as a covenant seed, and not as a carnal seed merely, the inheritance was promised. No one ever included in the covenant, could possibly get out of it, but by the abolition of the covenant itself. Believers also are perpetually the spiritual offspring of Abraham; and the inheritance is sure to all this seed. The covenant by which they are related to Abraham, is spiritual and indissoluble: therefore their covenant relation is indissoluble; and they cannot fail of obtaining the promise. This brings us to the second promise in the covenant, viz.

The Inheritance. The principal things to be considered with regard to the inheritance, are its nature, by whom and to whom granted? on what condition was it granted to, and held by the heirs? and whether they could ever lose it?

By referring to the covenant itself, as described in Genesis, it appears to be just the land of Canaan and nothing else; Gen. xii. 5, 6, 7. the land of Canaan wherein the Canaanites dwelt; Gen. xv. 16—21. the land in which Abraham stood, and which he saw by looking northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward, Gen. xiii. 14—18. the land that was situated between the river of Egypt and the Euphrates; and was possessed by those sinful nations, which the Israelites were to destroy out of it, when their iniquities should be full. It was not merely, nor chiefly, temporal support, nor a land wherein to dwell; but that particular land, bounded and described as above; a land flowing with milk and honey; the land of promise. This is the inheritance into which Jehovah brought them, which was divided among them by lot, and wherein they were raised, in the days of Solomon, to the highest pitch of prosperity and glory. This then, in its nature, was an earthly, a typical inheritance.

Jehovah promised, Gen. xiii. 15, and Jehovah fulfilled, Josh. xxi. 43—45. xxiii. 14. xxiv. 17, 18. that he would give the land of Canaan for an inheritance, to the seed of Abraham his friend. None but he could cast out before them, seven nations, each greater and mightier than they.

It was to Abraham and his seed the inheritance was granted: Gen. xiii. 15, it was they who obtained possession. 2 Chron. xx. 7. Psal. cv. 3—12; 42—44. This grant was made and fulfilled, not to Abraham's descendants merely, but to his covenant descendants.

By consulting the original grant as recorded in Genesis, it appears to be a free, sovereign grant, of a certain tract of land therein described, to Abraham and his seed forever, for an everlasting possession, unclogged with any condition whatever. The statement and reasoning of the apostle, in the fourth of Romans, and the third of Galatians, seem to represent it in the same light. "God gave it to Abraham by promise." It would appear that the promise of God, secures to Abraham a seed; and to his seed that land for an inheritance; without suspending it upon any condition to be performed by the heirs. See Deut. ix. 1—29. But here it is to be remembered, that one day is, with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Four hundred years elapsed from the giving of the grant to the giving of the possession. There might then be other intervals during which they did not enjoy actual possession, without falsifying the promise. The grant was still good: it could not be forfeited. The men of war brought out of Egypt to take possession, fell in the wilderness, and never entered the land of their inheritance: so, another generation might fail of enjoying possession, without contradicting the promise. At all times, the grant was good to Abraham and his seed, though a particular generation should be dispossessed. No generation enjoyed possession for their own righteousness, or for that of the preceding generation, their immediate parents; but for their being the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It was in remembrance of his holy covenant, and to fulfil his oath unto Abraham that God gave any of them possession.

Deut. iv. 37. x. 16. vii. 8. Thus also, when evil was threatened, those who pleaded with God for the people, did not plead their righteousness, nor that of their immediate predecessors; but went directly back to the covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; as the grant or promise, which laid a foundation for their faith, and furnished a plea for their intercessions. Exod. xxxii. 13. Deut. ix, 27. Jer. xiv. 20, 21. When mention is made of God's doing, having done, or promising to do good to them, it is said to be in remembrance of his covenant. Exod. vi. 3, 9. Lev. xxvi. 42. Deut. iv. 31. 2 Kings xiii. 23. Psal. cv. 6—13. cvi. 45. cxi. 5. Luke i. 54, 55, 72, 73. Thus, it appears that the covenant was the grant deed of the inheritance; it was in pursuance of the promise in the covenant, that the inheritance was given; the covenant itself contains no condition to be performed by the heirs, unless circumcision be one; therefore, they must have held it by a free, unconditional grant. "For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise." Gal. iii. 18. As God made the covenant with Abraham and his seed, in their generations, it appears that natural descent from Abraham, in the line of Isaac and Jacob, was the foundation of his posterity's right to covenant blessings. For all the descendants of Jacob, and they only, were the carnal covenant seed.

Wherefore then serveth the law? if obedience to it does not afford a title to the inheritance. It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made. The depravity of our nature is manifested, in our propensity to love and serve the creature rather than the Creator. The Israelites, for instance, showed this propensity in a wonderful degree. Notwithstanding the many miraculous interpositions of God in their favour, in Egypt, in the red sea, and in the wilderness; and they had but a little ago, "believed the Lord and his servant Moses;" no sooner was Moses taken from them, than they made a calf to worship it, and paid divine homage to the work of their own hands. To punish this transgression, and to prevent similar transgressions in future, God imposed on them a number of burdensome ceremonies, which, however, were not against the promises of God, but subservient to them; first, as being types of the blessings promised, in their spiritual sense: second, as tending to keep the Israelites separate from idolatry, and idolatrous nations, till Christ should come to whom the promise was made; and who was himself the fulfilment, end, or terminating point, of the law. Man being flesh as well as spirit, it is necessary he should have something sensible to engage his attention in religious worship. The very existence of all external forms of worship, is in condescension to human weakness; designed to strengthen faith by representing to the senses, by sensible objects, the same things that are represented to the understanding by report, whether testimony or promise. As none is fitted, or authorized to determine the proper form of worship, but the great Ruler of mankind; he appointed them many ceremonies, calculated to engage their attention, and render it unnecessary for them to borrow external forms from the heathen; and thus preserve them from idolatry, while he himself was the author and the object of all the ceremonial worship. The law referred to the type or model of the scheme of mercy: this model com-

menced in Abraham. Isaiah li: 1, 2. It was in the scheme of mercy, like a parenthesis in a sentence.

As God gave the inheritance to Abraham by promise, it was enjoyed by faith in the promise, according to the tenor of, and during the time specified in, the promise. Thus, they that fell in the wilderness, could not enter in because of unbelief. Moses and Aaron, though believers in the God of Israel, and in the divine Redeemer; and that to the saving of their souls, fell in the wilderness through unbelief. The apostle observes, that the gospel is preached unto us as well as unto them; but not being mixed with faith in them, it did not profit them, so that they entered into the land of Canaan. The gospel which was preached unto them, was evidently not God's testimony concerning his Son, but the good news to Abraham's seed, of entering into the rest of the earthly Canaan. Even those who have believed God, and whose faith is reckoned to their account for righteousness, sometimes gives too much way to unbelieving despondency, concerning temporal benefits. Thus it happened to Moses and others, who, though heirs by faith to the spiritual inheritance, came short through unbelief of the promise relating to it, of the earthly inheritance. While the Israelites had faith in the divine promise relative to the earthly inheritance, they were invincible; even though they should be strangers to the Redeemer of sinners. Deut. xxxii. 30. Josh xxiii. 9, 10. But when they disbelieved the divine promises, and trusted to horses, and chariots, and allies, they were given up to their enemies, and sometimes, the possession of their land was suspended. We read that they fell at last by unbelief. It is certain they lost the the land of Canaan: but to me it is very doubtful, whether the fall through unbelief, mentioned in the eleventh of the Romans has any special reference to their losing the land of their inheritance. The land of Canaan was itself earthly and temporal, and therefore could not be an everlasting possession, in the most unlimited sense of the phrase. There must then, have been a specified point of time, in the counsels of Jehovah, when the Jews, however faithful and pious, would cease to inherit the land. 2 Peter iii. 10. But the land was given for an everlasting possession. Gen. xvii. 8. Whatever duration, therefore, the term everlasting means, or refers to, in the covenant, the covenant seed of Abraham must necessarily possess the promised inheritance, to the full end and completion of that duration. It is applied to the covenant relation between Jehovah and Abraham, and Abraham's seed in their generations. It is applied to the inheritance, and to the token of the covenant. Gen. xvii. 7, 8, 13. Can any person suppose that it refers to different durations in these three instances? It is the same word, from the same author, relating to the same covenant, within the compass of a few verses, as capable of being understood in a limited or extended sense, in the one instance as in the other, and no notice given of its being used in a different signification in the different passages. As long as Abraham had children, succeeding each other in their generations, so long that seed was capable of being circumcised in the flesh of the foreskin, and of enjoying the land of Canaan for a possession. The term everlasting seems applied to relative duration rather than to absolute, and is to be interpreted according to the nature of the subject to which it is applied. It is applied to the different parts of the inheritance.

cause it is, in its literal sense, typical of the new covenant, which is everlasting in the most unlimited sense; and that what is strictly true of the antitype, is commonly applied to the type; see Jude v. 7. but also, because it was strictly applicable to the full end and completion of the Jewish age or state, to which that covenant, in its literal sense, referred. As the land of Canaan was typical, and belonged to, and was a part of the typical economy, can any point of time be imagined, when it could, with greater propriety, cease to be possessed as a typical inheritance, than that point of time, when the typical economy, as a whole, having received its full accomplishment, vanished away as a shadow, to make room for the substance—the antitype, which cannot be shaken, but remaineth. If so, though we are to ascribe the subsequent afflictions of the Jews to their rejection of the Messiah, yet, though they had not rejected him, they would not hold the land on any other footing, than that on which believing Gentiles would hold their own possessions in heathen countries. Compare Acts v. 34 with Kings xxi. 3. True, it is not for us to speculate what would have been the consequence, had the Jews, as a nation, received and obeyed the King of Zion. But they did not receive him, and the consequence is, what it is. What would have been the consequence to the Israelites, if the Canaanites, instead of filling up the measure of their iniquity, had repented, and become obedient to the truth? Every thing is ordered in the counsels of Jehovah, that every punishment inflicted is clearly on account of deserving iniquity; and every blessing conferred, is evidently “without money, and without price.”

Should this reasoning be thought to militate against the future restoration of the Jews to their ancient possession, I ask: Are not all the passages which are understood to prophesy that event, as capable of being understood figuratively, as many other passages which are so understood? For instance, Jer. xxviii: 18. Mal. i: 11. Isa. lii: 1. When Moses prophesied of the Messiah as the Prophet whom God should raise up unto the Jews, the divine command to those to whom he was sent was “unto him shall ye hearken.” Whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.” Deut. xviii. 15, 19. That Jesus was the Prophet meant is put beyond a doubt Luke ix. 35. Acts ii. 23. Thus, the law carried in itself, the seeds of its own abolition: for when that Prophet should come, the law was of no more force, without the sanction of his authority. The Governor of a Province has authority from the King in that Province; but when His Majesty himself appears in the Province, the eyes of all are directed to him, and the Governor becomes a subject. Transfer this to Christ and Moses or the law. Heb. iii: 5, 6. John was sent to prepare the Jews for the reception of their King. Read the third of Matthew and say, Did not John intimate very plainly that a change was about to take place, with regard to the principle on which they should be recognized as children of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise? Did not Christ himself pronounce his benediction on the meek, as the proper heirs to the land of promise? Plainly showing that, under his administration, moral character was of more value for obtaining the inheritance, than carnal relation. He preached the gospel of the kingdom, saying: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel.” The forerunner and the

disciples, preached to the same purpose. What time was fulfilled? The time of the appointed duration of the typical economy, or the administration of Moses; when the system of types and shadows, and the typical inheritance among the rest, was to cease. The kingdom of God, the spiritual economy, the new covenant or dispensation, as distinguished from whatever is earthly, typical, and carnal, is at hand. Repent, have a new and spiritual mind toward God, and believe the glad tidings, the divine testimony concerning Jesus Christ; for without true repentance, and fruits meet for repentance, none can now be Abraham's children, or be heirs of covenant blessings. When the foundation of filial relationship was changed, the foundation of heirship was changed as a necessary consequence. As it was never intended that the new heirs should possess the old inheritance, the inheritance itself must have been changed also. Should any person object and say; that if they obtained it by faith, (Abraham's faith, not their own,) and lost it by unbelief, it contradicts the saying, that God gave it to Abraham by promise: I answer, that "by faith," "by grace," "by promise;" coincide and harmonize; and that each is directly opposed to "by the law;" by the deeds of the law," "by works." Such objectors would do well to consider, Rom. iv. 16. "It is of faith that it might be by grace." Compare Rom. iv. 4, 5, with xi. 6. Those who set aside faith in order to magnify grace, prove that they have very confused ideas of divine revelation, and very anti-scriptural views of faith particularly. There is no other way than by faith, that the divine favours can be conferred, in consistence with the divine character. The Jews were Abraham's covenant children, and, consequently, heirs by carnal birth. But as the covenant, in the sense in which it included a carnal offspring, was only typical, in that sense, it vanished away, when the time was fulfilled; and consequently they were no longer Abraham's covenant seed, nor heirs of the earthly inheritance: for by divine appointment, that state of things in which a carnal offspring are recognized as covenant heirs, has given place to a state of things in which none are recognized as such, without a spiritual birth. Those who believed in the Messiah, became covenant heirs in the spiritual sense: and though the typical sense of the covenant vanished, and their typical relation, with all its privileges, vanished with it; yet they did not fall from a covenant relation, because they were children according to the spiritual meaning of the covenant. Being Christ's, they were covenant children and covenant heirs. Those who rejected Christ, lost all covenant relation and covenant privilege. It appears then that Abraham's covenant children are always covenant heirs, according to the promise of the inheritance: and that they could not lose their right to the inheritance, during the term intended in the covenant.

In connection with this subject, I subjoin an explanatory note on Romans xi: 28, "As touching the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sake." The old covenant restricted its blessings to Israel after the flesh, as the peculiar people of God. Jehovah was the God of Israel, had fixed his residence in the temple, and thither the people of God were to resort, three times in the year, to worship at the festivals. As long as this constitution lasted, the religion and worship of God, could not become general over the

whole earth. Though the covenant by which they were constituted the exclusive people of God, was abolished, yet from the high value they set upon their privileges, the religious aversion they had to other nations, and the contempt with which others regarded them, great difficulties would arise to the universal spread of any religion, which had its origin among the Jews, and was so nearly related to the Jewish, as the antitype is to the type. Therefore God saw meet to leave them in blindness, conclude them in unbelief, and allow them to continue in their natural enmity against the gospel, for the sake of the destitute Gentiles, that Judaism might be universally understood to have been fully abolished, that christianity was not a new form of Judaism, but was quite distinct from it, and that thus Judaism should be no longer a bar in the way of the universal spread of christianity. But though thus cast out for a time, yet respecting the purpose of God in calling them once to be his peculiar, chosen people, God has not forgotten their fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and they are beloved for their fathers' sakes; so that the vail shall yet be taken off their hearts, and they shall generally believe the gospel, and be saved by it. The gospel which they were allowed to reject, that it might spread more generally among the Gentiles, they shall receive back from the Gentiles, and great shall be the joy. Thus the election touching which they are beloved, is not inconsistent with the gospel touching which they are enemies.

But there is also a spiritual inheritance. Canaan was a type of heaven; and the rest from the fatigue of war, a type of the rest that remaineth for the people of God. When put in possession of the inheritance, all our wants will be supplied. No sin, sickness, nor sorrow; no shame, guilt, nor fear; no want of any kind; nothing to create misery or mar happiness, shall ever enter the land of our inheritance. We shall be fully satisfied with what we enjoy, and fully certain of its continuance. This inheritance is wholly spiritual: nothing earthly or carnal enters into its nature, or is in any sense, conducive to its perfection. This is a land of pure delights: a city with foundations, whose builder and maker is God: an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Heirship to such an estate, is worthy of our highest ambition.

All things are of God. Every good and perfect gift is from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. This is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life. And this is the will of the Father, yea, the last will, for he changeth not, that every one who seeth the Son and believeth on him, shall have eternal life. Is it an inheritance? It is he, of his abundant mercy, that hath begotten us to the lively hope of it. Is it a crown? It is the Lord that hath promised a crown of life, and it is the Lord, the righteous Judge, that shall give it at the last day, to all who love his appearing. When the saints are put in possession of it, they shall never tire acknowledging his bounty in bestowing it, and ascribing to him all the glory, saying: "He is worthy," &c.

It is Abraham's seed only who are heirs according to the promise. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, but they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Esau sold his birthright for one mess of pot-

tage. He will never, like Moses, choose to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. But the true heir of promise, perceives a glory, and beauty, and suitableness in the inheritance, which attracts his attention, leads him to esteem and value it, and count himself rich and happy as the possessor of it. He will count all things loss and dung, for the enjoyment of it. He will hate all that would stand in the way of his enjoying it. He will deny himself, take up the cross daily, and submit to Jesus as Lord and King; that he may be his disciple, and so an heir of the crown. As the covenant was made with Abraham concerning himself and his seed, that God would give them this inheritance, none but he and his seed can possess it; or else, the constitution of things established by God is disannulled; Abraham will not then be the father of all that believe; there shall be covenant heirs, and non-covenant heirs. But we are assured that all who believe are the children of Abraham, and blessed with faithful Abraham. Gal. iii. 7, 9.

Again, all that believe shall be saved; all Abraham's seed are heirs according to the promise; none of the sheep shall perish, but shall all have eternal life. Thus the promise is sure to all the seed. If then, you lay claim to the inheritance, produce your testimonials that you are of Abraham's spiritual seed; show the mark of his children, and you shall possess the inheritance without fail. Are you sealed with the Spirit in the heart? i. e. are you the true circumcision which is inward in the spirit? Are you doing the works of Abraham? Are you walking in the steps of his faith? If not, it is unwarrantable presumption to lay claim to the inheritance. As the covenant comprehends an earthly and typical seed, and an earthly and typical inheritance; and also a spiritual and typified seed, and a spiritual and typified inheritance; is any thing more natural and reasonable, than that the promise of the typical inheritance should be to the typical seed, who had a suitable capacity for enjoying it; and the promise of the spiritual inheritance to the spiritual seed, who only have a suitable capacity for enjoying it? Does not the fact show this to have been the case? Did not the earthly covenant seed actually inherit the land, without regard to their being the spiritual seed? And does not the spiritual seed actually inherit the antitype? Canaan, whether they are the earthly seed or not? and is not this according to the promise? The blessing of Abraham cometh on the believing Gentiles through Jesus Christ. Those who believe not, whether Jews or Gentiles, so far from inheriting the blessing, are condemned already, are under the curse. Under the typical economy, spiritual covenant relation was nothing; earthly covenant relation was every thing, for enjoying the blessings of that dispensation. Under the spiritual economy, earthly covenant relation is nothing, spiritual covenant relation is every thing, for enjoying the blessings of this dispensation. Yea, under the new testament, the old testament with all the relations it recognized, and all the blessings it bestowed, are vanished. The bond-woman and her children are cast out of Abraham's family. It is essentially necessary to distinguish between the fable and the moral, between the model and the thing represented, between the shadow and the substance; in other words, between the type and the antitype. Unless this distinction be carefully and uniformly observed

throughout, the letter and spirit, the carnal and spiritual, that which remaineth and that which is done away, will be strangely mixed and confounded, and a heterogeneous system will be introduced. This was the great error of the Jews and Judaizing christians. Christ and his apostles strove hard to correct it. Read the 3d of Matt. the 8th of John, the epistles to the Rom. Gal. and Heb. 2 Cor. 3d chap. and many other passages of scripture; and it is impossible not to see, that great pains are taken to illustrate and enforce the distinction in question, so absolutely necessary for understanding the truth. Now, to suppose that in virtue of a carnal covenant relation, one has a right to the promised spiritual inheritance, is to break through this distinction, and establish a connection between flesh and spirit, which is contrary to the whole tenor of scripture. Therefore all the spiritual seed, and none else, are entitled to, and shall actually possess, the promised, spiritual inheritance.

It has been shown already that the grant of the earthly inheritance, to the carnal covenant seed, was free, absolute, unconditional. This is still more eminently true of the grant of the spiritual inheritance, to the spiritual covenant seed. God gave his Son to redeem them; and with him, shall he not freely give them all things? They are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. They are reconciled to God through the death of his Son. Much more then, being reconciled and justified, they shall be saved from wrath through his life. Whout money and without price, is the motto on all the divine blessings. The very end and intention of Christ's death, is to save his people from sin and suffering, and bring them to glory. There is therefore an immediate, inseparable, and necessary connection, between the death of Christ and the salvation of those for whom he died. He died for us, *that* whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Having felt and manifested such love to them, such interest in their happiness, and embarked in their cause so far, as to redeem them to God, even by his own blood; and having begotten them unto God by the incorruptible seed, which remaineth in them as a principle of grace, he will not leave them to perish, but shall give unto them eternal life. They have not, and he knows it, any thing wherewith to procure the inheritance. They are by nature guilty, polluted, helpless, enemies in their very heart, the willing slaves of Satan, in love with sin; and what good thing could be in them to procure the divine favour? But they are made accepted in the beloved. Jesus loved them and was made sin for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him: and his righteousness is unto all, and upon all that believe, for there is no difference. The inheritance is of faith, that it might be by grace, that the promise of the inheritance might be sure to all the seed; not only to that part of the seed which is of the law, but also to that part which, though not of the law, yet is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all. The scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promised inheritance by faith of Jesus Christ, and on no other footing, might be given to them that believe. By means of his death, they which are called receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. Therefore, we conclude that a law was not given which could have conferred life, and that by the deeds of the law no flesh living can be justified, but that the spiritual blessing of Abra-

ham, through Jesus Christ, comes on all that believe, and on no other
See Rom. iv. 4, 5. xi. 6.

As the inheritance is by faith, will it not be lost by unbelief? All who believe, believe to the saving of the soul. He who believeth not, shall never see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. While the just shall live by faith, if any man draw back, Jehovah shall have no pleasure in him; yea, every drawing back is toward perdition. The gospel is the incorruptible seed, their believing the gospel the only way of receiving the seed, and this seed remaineth in them, a divine principle, which can neither wholly decay, nor lie wholly dormant. When we read that the inheritance is of faith, or that it is by the new birth, we understand the same thing. God promised to make with this seed an everlasting covenant, that he will not turn away from them, to do them good; but he will put his fear in their hearts; that they shall not depart from him. Their sins and their iniquities, he will remember no more. Their believing, their continuing in the faith, and possessing the eternal inheritance, is not left to depend upon the fortuitous will of man. But the Almighty has given them, on the behalf of Christ, to believe on his name: he increases and strengthens their faith, thus they are kept by the power of God, the agent, by the means of this faith, which he himself first gave, and which he daily increases, as the instrument, to salvation; till they receive possession of that incorruptible, undefiled, never-fading inheritance, reserved in heaven for them. God prepared it for them before the foundation of the world; he prepares them for it in time; and, at the end of time, gives them the full possession of it. He who began the good work in them will carry it on, until the day of Jesus Christ. While every plant which God hath not planted, shall be plucked up by the root, they shall be called "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified." He shall water them every moment; lest any hurt them, he will keep them night and day. Yea, he will never leave them nor forsake them. He has engaged to give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand. Thus the spiritual inheritance is sure to all the spiritual seed. Let us see if we are Abraham's spiritual seed. Do we walk in the steps of Abraham's faith? If not, carnal relation is of no avail. Ye must be born again.

The Third blessing in the covenant is, Jehovah to be their God. It has already been noticed that the promises are made in language which, in its literal sense, is applicable to things typical and temporal only. And the promise that Jehovah should be a God to Abraham and his seed after him, was mentioned, shewing, that as it applied to the nation of Israel, it could not be understood in a spiritual sense. The bulk of the nation was carnal, and it is impossible God can have an actual spiritual relation, as God, to a person who is wholly carnal. He did not reveal himself to them in his spiritual character; nor enjoin the spirituality of worship, as he has under the gospel economy. The gospel was preached, it is true; but it was by types and shadows. Christ was the lamb slain from the foundation of the world, but it was in the typical sacrifice. Purification from sin was taught by ceremonial purification from ceremonial pollution. Regeneration, or the renewing of the Holy Spirit, was taught; but it was in the rite of circumcision. The offices of Mediator, Intercessor, &c. were exhibited, but it was by

earthly and typical officers, exercising their offices in a typical manner. The true and heavenly realities, were veiled by the types, till fully brought to light by the gospel: for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. There is no doubt but many were illuminated to understand the truth, and see through the veil, the glorious realities couched under the types. But still, to by far the greater part, the apostolic gospel was veiled by that which is done away; by which, even now, the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them. Christ is the way to the Father; but as the way to the Father, he was not thus made manifest, while the veil yet intervened. He is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath revealed him. It is in Christ, the moral character of God is revealed. He who hath seen the Christ, hath seen the Father. Till Christ is seen and believed, the spirituality of the divine character is hid. Though Jehovah was manifested under that covenant, as very different from the heathen Gods, yet it must be admitted that his moral attributes and his spirituality, were greatly veiled by types. We are accustomed to view the types through their accomplishments, and so they appear to us much plainer than they would under that covenant. So infidels see natural religion through the glass of revelation, and therefore discover more divinity in it, than the brightest philosopher could, when destitute of that light.

Jehovah became the God of the whole nation of Israel, took them for his peculiar people, and set his seal or mark upon them, that they might be distinguished as his. This relation was really temporal and typical. But in virtue of it, they had many privileges. They had the inheritance, the divine protection, the oracles of God, and a system of religious ceremonies, of which God is the author, and which pointed out directly or indirectly better things to come. Their code of laws was calculated to make them just, honest, humane, benevolent, chaste, orderly, contented, disinterested, and peaceable among themselves. To be under such laws was a great privilege. Their religion required that they should believe the existence of a great First Cause, a Supreme Being; and it exhibited, though darkly, some of his moral attributes. It required them to acknowledge the covenant relation subsisting between them and God. It required the fear of God, the love of God, submission to his authority, confidence in him for provision and protection, and a sincere abhorrence of all other Gods, forms of worship, and grounds of confidence for protection. Their history from Abraham forward, was calculated to beget in them the same affections which their religion required. Their whole polity, civil and religious, tended to raise them from a debased state, to ennoble their minds, and to preserve them from idolatry, enthusiasm, and superstition.

But is it possible to attain to all this, in the sense, and to the degree, requisite for securing the divine approbation, and protection, in the sense promised under the typical dispensation, and in which they might be expected, from the typical relation in which God stood to the nation as their national God, without the inward renewing influences of

the Holy Spirit? This is an important question, and ought not to be rashly answered. Let it be observed that what is here stated, refers to the nation at large, in its national capacity; and, in general, the individuals whose history might be considered as instances of God's displeasure against sin, were public characters, whose conduct or authority influenced the nation, or a considerable part of it. There is no reason to suppose that King Saul had ever experienced the renewing influences of the Spirit; yet there was a time when his conduct was such, that he had the divine approbation and protection; as is evident by his success in war, and respectability in government. The history of Asa King of Judah, seems very much to the purpose. See 2 Chron. 14, 15, 16th chapters. "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord his God. He took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and broke down the images, and cut down the groves: and commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah, the high places and the images." After he had heard the words of Azariah the son of Oded, he took courage and proceeded to a still greater reformation. "He gathered together all the people, and they offered a great offering to the Lord, and entered into a covenant, to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul; that whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel, should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman. And they swore unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets. And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them; and gave them rest." Here was a national transaction by the public authority; and it obtained the divine approbation. But have we any reason to think that it proceeded from the enlightening and renewing influence of the Spirit? Was any thing done which an unrenewed man could not do, and might not be expected to do, from mere selfish principles; even while he continued in his unrenewed state? Did not Jehu King of Israel perform similar acts? and I should suppose with as much zeal; as truly with all his heart and soul, as Asa and all Judah. Did he not also obtain the divine approbation, protection and reward? See 2 King x. 30. And the Lord said unto Jehu; Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel. Asa exceeded Jehu, not in hearty zeal and sincerity, as far as he went, but in going farther than Jehu did. He probably went farther from the same principle from which Jehu fell short. Each tried to strengthen the religion established by law, in his kingdom, and which he thought most likely to secure to himself, the allegiance and esteem of his subjects in general, and thus to establish his throne. There is little reason to doubt that Jehu, had he been king of Judah, instead of Israel would have attended, externally, to the religion of David, as he did in Israel to that of Jeroboam. And from the whole conduct of Asa, there is much reason to think, that, notwithstanding his external perfection all his days till the 35th year of his reign, he was too much influenced by worldly political motives. At any rate, all the good that he did is

often done by natural men, as far as their opportunity and influence reaches; and there are many natural men, who do not imitate his bad example to the full extent of their opportunity. See 2 Chron. xvi. 10. Even Ahab himself, who sold himself to do evil in the sight of the Lord, humbled himself and obtained a respite during his life. See 1 Kings xxi. 29.

The moral law itself, as embodied among the laws of that typical nation, partook of the ceremonial: see the introduction to it, Exodus xx. 2. and the transgression of, at least, some of its commands, were to be ceremonially atoned for by the typical sacrifices. See Exod. xxii. 1-6. compared with Lev. vi. 1-7. Hypocrisy was not admitted nor accepted, but provided they were sincere, and externally attended to the law, though blind to the exceeding sinfulness of sin, especially as committed by themselves; though strangers to the person, character, and work of Christ, as the Mediator and Redeemer, and to the enlightening and renewing influence of the Holy Spirit, and wholly under the dominion of the carnal mind, they were typically accepted, and typically rewarded, according to the tenor of the typical meaning of the covenant. See Dr. ERSKINE'S Diss. on the Sinai Covenant. See the privileges of the carnal covenant offspring, enumerated: Romans ix. 4, 5. Yet deliverance from the guilt, dominion, and punishment of sin, was not implied in them, or the necessary consequence of them. God was the God of that nation, married to it by a covenant, even when it was most sunk into idolatry: for the covenant always continued in force, till the fulness of time was come, and it vanished to make room for the new and better covenant. Though Abraham did not himself possess any land, yet God was not ashamed to be called his God; for he provided for him a city, such a one as he desired, even a heavenly; a city with foundations, whose builder and maker is God. As he was Abraham's God in a spiritual sense, he provided for him a spiritual city. It appears then that there is a necessary connection between Jehovah's being a God to people, and his preparing for them a city, and the city must agree in nature, with the relation between him and them: if the relation, is only typical, the city will be earthly; if the relation is spiritual, the city will be heavenly. Seeing then, that only a remnant of Abraham's carnal covenant offspring entered into the heavenly city, the covenant relation between them and God, cannot be spiritual in its nature.

Jehovah is a God to the spiritual offspring in a spiritual sense, and he blesses them with spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. When spiritually born, they become the sons of God, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. He is their God, and they are his people. In virtue of this relation, they shall be all taught of God. So they shall not need to teach every man his brother, and every one his neighbour, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know him from the least to the greatest of them. Then they have eternal life; for this is life eternal to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. If any say that he knows God, and keep not his commandments, he is a liar and the truth is not in him. The want of this divine teaching and divine knowledge, proves the want of the relation. When they are born into this spiritual relation, they are born with a new heart, a heart on which the law of God is written; they are new crea-

tures, the law of God is in their inward parts; yea they delight in it after the inward man. The want of such a heart proves the want of the spiritual relation. It is when persons are Christ's, that they become Abraham's spiritual children, and get into a covenant relation to God. But those who are in Christ, are delivered from condemnation. By his one sacrifice he hath forever perfected them; so they are perfect in him. Who shall lay anything to their charge, seeing Christ died for them and rose again? Accordingly, they who sustain a spiritual covenant relation to God, are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses; as the Holy Spirit witnesseth: "I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sins no more." Being justified by faith they have peace with God. The want of forgiveness proves the want of the spiritual relation; for God will remember the sins of his people no more. He is as a wall of fire around them, and he is the glory in the midst of them. He giveth them grace and glory, and will withhold no good thing from them. He hath provided for them a city, and will one day say unto them: "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world." Happy, thrice happy, are the people whose God is Jehovah.

III. THE RATIFICATION OF THE COVENANT.

The Second part of the Covenant is the Ratification Sacrifice. There is good authority for saying that, while the ratification sacrifice liveth, a covenant is of no force, Heb. ix. 17. That it may become unalterable, it must be confirmed by the death of the confirming victim. Gal. iii. 15. God made promises to Abraham, Gen. xii, 2, 3, 7. xiii. 15, 16, 17. xv. 1, 4, 5. and he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness, Gen. xv. 6. Having repeated the promise of the land, v. 7. Abraham asked, v. 8. Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? Though Abraham had believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness, yet God, who is willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, ratified the promise into a covenant by the ratification sacrifice. Take me, saith Jehovah, an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another; but the birds divided he not. Here, God revealed to him that the inheritance should not be given immediately; and that, in the interval, his seed should be taught the sweetness of rest, by undergoing servitude and affliction; but that after 400 years, they should be delivered with great judgments; and, with great substance, take possession of Canaan, when the iniquity of the Amorites should be full. And when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace and a burning lamp, that passed between those pieces. A smoking furnace and a burning lamp, attendants on, or tokens of the Deity, passed between those pieces. Thus Jehovah confirmed the covenant in form, when he passed between the parts of the animals slain for a ratifying sacrifice. See Jer. xxxiv. 18, 19. Psal. L. 5. What had formerly been a promise, was now ratified into a covenant, and is mostly ever after called a covenant.

The covenant is now confirmed; but as the language in which the blessings were promised, taken in its literal meaning, signified temporal blessings only, and could signify spiritual blessings, only in a figurative sense; so the ratifying sacrifice was plainly an earthly sacrifice, but figuratively pointed to the spiritual sacrifice, by which the spiritual promise should be ratified. "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual." This seems to be a maxim of general application in the economy of salvation. It is applicable in the present case. The natural meaning of the covenant was brought into full exercise before the spiritual meaning. The Sinai covenant was made in pursuance of the literal meaning of the Abrahamic covenant, and agreed with it in its token promises, and confirmation. Christ is the ratification sacrifice of the spiritual covenant. Except as it was figuratively pointed out, in the Abrahamic covenant, and perhaps in the regal covenant, the spiritual covenant was only matter of promise, till it was confirmed by the death of Christ, who, as the ratification sacrifice, is called the covenant. Isa. xlix. 8. It is as the confirmation of the covenant that all the promises are yea and amen, or truth and faithfulness, in him: for they are ratified in his blood. Oh! the mercy and condescension of Jehovah! Who would not believe him! Who would not trust him! Who would not love and obey him!

The chief promise in the covenant was the promise of the Messiah, as the seed in which all the nations were to be blessed. The appointed manner in which he was to bless the nations, was by being made a curse for them, that thus he might redeem them from the curse. He suffered the just for the unjust that he might bring sinners to God. He laid down his life for the sheep. He bore their sins in his own body on the tree. It is by his stripes they are healed. The verb translated "confirmed" Heb. vi. 17. is derived from the noun translated mediator, and that again from the noun rendered middle. Christ, as the ratification sacrifice, was the confirmer, interposer, or mediator, in the middle between God and sinful man. Thus he, by death, became the testator, by which the Divine institution was confirmed into a testament. Many of the ablest critics in the sacred languages maintain, that the real meaning of the Hebrew word translated covenant, is purification sacrifice, and that it is applied to the dispensation founded upon such sacrifice, only as founded upon it, and ratified by it; and that the word translated covenant means properly the sacrifice; and that it means the dispensation, only by accommodation, and in a secondary sense. Be that as it may, it is certain that no transaction can properly and strictly be called a covenant in the scripture sense of the term, without the death of the confirming victim. See Parkhurst's Greek Lexicon on *Diatheke* and *Bebaios*, and his Hebrew Lexicon on *Caret*. Seeing Christ washeth his people from their sins in his own blood, he is properly their purification sacrifice. An institution, dispensation or covenant, and the blessings of such dispensation, must correspond in nature with the purification sacrifice on which it is founded, and the ratification sacrifice by which it is confirmed. Where the sacrifice cut off, is temporal and typical, the institution of which it is a sacrifice, and the promised blessings of such institution, must be temporal and typical also. It is impossible the blood of bulls and of

goats should take away sins, or make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience; nor were they ever intended to be thus efficacious: for if a law had been given which could have given life, verily righteousness would have been by the law. But as there is no remission without shedding of blood, and it is with blood things are purged by the law, it was necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these typical sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For if the blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of an heifer, which was the blood of the typical covenant, Ex. xxiv. 8. Gen. xv. 9, 10, 17, 18. sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, which is the blood of the spiritual covenant, who through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause, because his blood is thus efficacious in purging the conscience, in putting away sin, in perfecting forever them that are sanctified, he is the Mediator of the new testament; that by means of death, which he suffered for the redemption of those who transgressed under the first testament, (for the death of the first testament victims could not redeem them,) they which are called, might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. Thus the apostle proves the disannulling of the commandment, from the weakness and unprofitableness there: as the law, with all its sacrifices and purifications made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope does, by the which we draw nigh to God.

As the sacrifices of the old dispensation were weak, so its promises were not faultless: for finding fault with them, God promised to make a new and better covenant which having Christ for its Mediator, should be established upon better promises. The promises and sacrifices of the new covenant, being different from those of the old, it must itself be a different covenant. Had the promises and sacrifices of both been the same, or of the same kind, the covenants themselves could hardly be proved to be different. But the promises and sacrifices of the Abrahamic covenant, and of the Sinai covenant, are of the same kind; and both are different from those of the new covenant: therefore the Abrahamic covenant and the Sinai covenant are of the same kind with each other, and both are different in kind from the new covenant. The promises and sacrifices of both the Abrahamic and the Sinai covenants, were temporal and typical; therefore the covenants themselves were temporal and typical. Will it be said that no arguments can prove the Abrahamic covenant to be temporal, when God himself calls it an everlasting covenant, Gen. xvii. 7. I answer, that the covenant is everlasting in the same sense in which the land of Canaan, as explained already, is an everlasting possession, Gen. xvii. 8. and in no other sense.

The apostle also proves the difference of the dispensations from the change of priesthood. For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. He says that under the Levitical priesthood the people received the law. It is evident that he makes no distinction between the Levitical priesthood and the Aaronical: for Aaron was a Levite, and it was only he and his family that were properly priests, under the Sinai dispensation. But Aaron

and his sons were not consecrated to the priest's office, Lev. 8th and 9th chapters, till after the giving of the law from Sinai. Ex. 20th chap. How then was the law given under the Levitical priesthood? Levi the head of his tribe, and the progenitor of Aaron the priest, was in the loins of his father Abraham; and in Abraham, paid tithes to Melchisedec, whom, by this act, he acknowledged to be a priest superior to himself. Thus, the priesthood in Abraham's family was the same in kind from the call of Abraham, till it was changed to make room for that of Christ, and is called the Levitical priesthood. The Levitical priests were mortal men, and, as such, had progenitors and offspring, beginning of days and end of life, predecessors and successors in office. They were made priests after the law of a carnal commandment, and without an oath; they were sinful men, who needed to offer first for their own sins, to fit them for officiating as priests to others; and their office as priests was exercised about things temporal and typical only. It was in these respects that it is distinguished from the priesthood of Christ: and was there any difference in these respects between the Aaronical and patriarchal priesthood? but were not both in these respects different from that of Jesus Christ? Whether Melchizedec was only a type of Christ, or was the word of God manifested as a prelude of his becoming incarnate; on either supposition, the particulars just mentioned, in which the order of Melchizedec excelled the order of Aaron, will apply to Jesus Christ, as well as what is directly affirmed of Christ himself. He is the one priest of the new dispensation, the one surety of the better testament. He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. He is without progenitor or offspring, beginning of days or end of life, predecessor or successor in office, but abiding a priest continually, hath an unchangeable priesthood. He is made a priest with an oath, after the power of an endless life. He is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, not needing to offer first for his own sins, nor to offer daily the same sacrifices; for he offered himself a sacrifice of such efficacy as to take away the sin of all who believe. Thus his office as priest, is exercised not about things temporal and typical, but about things real and eternal. Thus has he by his own blood, entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. "Seeing then we have an High Priest, &c." Heb. iv. 14—16.

IV. THE TOKEN OF THE COVENANT.

The Third part of the Covenant is the Token. This is my covenant which ye shall keep between me and you and thy seed after thee. Every man child among you shall be circumcised, &c. Gen. xvii. 10—17. Here it is evident that circumcising the flesh of the foreskin was the instituted token of the covenant, betwixt God and Abraham, and Abraham's family; and that, as the token of the covenant, it was itself called the covenant; yea, an everlasting covenant in their flesh. Eight days old is also the appointed age for being circumcised. Every male in the family, by whatever means he come there, if he is eight days old, must needs be circumcised. Every neglect of circumcision after eight days old, being a contempt of the divine authority, and of the promised blessing, was a renouncing of the covenant relation, a breach of the

covenant; and every such contempt was to be punished by being cut off from Abraham's family, which is now constituted the covenant people of God. Abraham was immediately obedient; he took Ishmael his son, and every male among the men of his house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin; in the self-same day as God had said unto him. In the self-same day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son and all the men of his house. Though Abraham was told before they were circumcised, that Ishmael was not included in the covenant seed, yet as circumcision was the sign or mark of the covenant family, while Ishmael was a male in the family it was requisite he should be circumcised; and so he was. All the other males in the family were circumcised on the same footing.

There are three words which ought to be inquired into, in order to ascertain the meaning of circumcision. The first is word token. The bow was in the cloud that God might look on it and remember his promise, that the earth should no more be destroyed by a flood: when man looks on it, he is encouraged trusting to the divine promise, of the ratification of which he has a token before his eyes. Gen. ix. 12--17. Aaron's rod that budded was brought before the testimony to be kept for a token against the rebels. Numbers xvii. 10. The harlot made the spies swear to her, and give her a true token, that when the army would come to destroy the city, and she would present the token to them, they should show her such kindness as she showed them. A token then must be capable of being produced, at least to those concerned, when requisite, as a proof, evidence or demonstration of the truth of that with which it is connected as a token. Circumcision was a mark fitted to be a proof or evidence. Such is the second word applied to circumcision. This is nearly the same as token. The censors of Korah, &c. were made into broad plates to cover the altar, that they might be for signs or memorials to the children of Israel, that no stranger should come near to offer incense before the Lord. Nothing however can be a sign unless it can be seen or felt.

The third word applied to circumcision is seal. A seal seems to approach nearer the ratification, than the other two words; for it is used, not only as an evidence that a thing is sure, but also to make it sure. Thus the decrees of kings, grant deeds of property, &c. are ratified by seals, and the person in whose favour the decree is made, or the grant given, can sue at law for the benefit decreed or granted to him. But in the Abrahamic covenant, that which ratifies, also purifies: but being once offered it is not discoverable, and therefore can be no evidence or demonstration. A seal on the contrary, at the same time that it confirms leaves an impression, which is a demonstration that the thing has been confirmed: but it has nothing to do with purification. This sufficiently distinguishes the ratification sacrifice from the token. As each king or emperor had a signet with his own engraving on it, the impression left by it, called the seal, distinguished the article on which it was set, as the property of the person whose seal it was. One use of a seal therefore was, to secure property to its right owner: when his seal is impressed on it, none can lawfully meddle with it, but the person whose seal it bears. A letter is now sealed to conceal or preserve the contents from the view, use or information, of all but the person addressed; and a seal is so sacred that it is sacrilege to break

it. Thus the book sealed with seven seals could not be lawfully opened, i. e. without sacrilege, except by a person sufficiently authorised by him who sealed it. Thus also the stone on the mouth of our Lord's sepulchre was sealed, that it might be sacrilege to break it open. So also a lock is to secure, not so much by repelling physical force, as by imposing a legal obligation. The seal on the stone was for the same purpose, and had the same effect, as if an oath had been taken of every one in the nation, not to move the stone or look within. But probably the original intention of sealing letters, was to prove, by their bearing the seal of the writer, its contents to be the genuine sentiment, and voluntary declaration, of the person whose seal or signature it bears. Of course, it always showed who sent the letter. When we believe the divine testimony, they set to their seal that God is true. John iii. 33. They add their signature, in order to confirm or certify the divine record as true.

Circumcision is called a seal of the righteousness of the faith which Abraham had, yet being uncircumcised. Romans iv. 10. There it is also called the sign of circumcision. As a seal then, it was a sign, memorial, mark or token, that was obvious to the senses, whenever it was necessary, that the thing sealed should be proved to the satisfaction of those concerned. Unless it was thus obvious, it could not answer the purpose of a seal. Of what was it a confirming proof? It was a proof of the righteousness of the faith which Abraham had, before he was circumcised. Should Abraham ever feel discouraged about his acceptance with God, or think that something more than faith, or that some other faith than he had, was necessary in order to, or assisted in, justification, the sign of circumcision which he continually bore in his body, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had being yet uncircumcised, would instantly silence all objections, and remove all scruples. Should he ever after being circumcised, begin to glory; thinking that, as a circumcised man, he or his circumcised children, had a preferable claim on divine acceptance, the same seal confirming the same fact, would immediately contradict such a sentiment, and take away all ground of boasting, from one who bore in his own body an impression, sealing the righteousness of the faith which he had before circumcision. I appeal to any candid christian, if this is not the point of view in which the apostle exhibits circumcision in the fourth of the Romans, where he calls it a seal. At least, it appears to me that in this view, the fact referred to was much to his purpose, being calculated to confirm faith, and exclude boasting.

Perhaps some one may ask, but of what use was circumcision as a seal to Abraham's seed? Let it be observed that circumcision was the token of the covenant as a whole, and was equally a token of every blessing included in it. By the covenant, Abraham was constituted the father of believers; and in the capacity of father, was an eminent pattern, or *the pattern* of faith, of believing obedience, and of the blessing of faith, to all his children and followers. So they might learn from the history of Abraham their father, how they should obtain acceptance with God, and the pardon of their sins; as there was no other way of obtaining it; but the way exhibited in the pattern. Jehovah has set his seal, even the seal of circumcision, to this fact, viz. that righteousness is of faith without the deeds of the law; in other

words, that who so joined to who believeth God, his faith shall be imputed to him for righteousness. As Abraham was dead and buried; his circumcision could not be discovered, and so could not answer the purpose of a seal, to those who lived after his death. But circumcision was continued among them as a sign or memorial, sealing the above mentioned fact. Is it not a great blessing to him who is in perplexity about the way of a sinner's acceptance with God, to have the authorised way exhibited to him, and certified by Jehovah himself; more especially, when he finds that it is a way so plain, so simple; so easy, so level to his capacity, yea, every way so suitable to his ruined state as a condemned, guilty criminal, who can do nothing but sin, that righteousness is brought near to him where he is, that it is of faith in order to be by grace, that whosoever will may take of it freely. This was also sealed to one, and exhibited to them in the history of one, whom they counted an honour to acknowledge as their father. Surely then, circumcision as a seal, was not calculated to be an unmeaning ceremony to the Jews.

Circumcision was also the family mark of Abraham's covenant family, by which they were kept distinct from all other nations, till the seed should come. Gal. v. 19. see also Isa. lxx. 8, 9. But Abraham's family was the people of God. Circumcision then was the sign, token, or mark of being the people of God. This is to be understood in the typical sense already described, or else God did not give them a true token: for it is only a remnant of them who had the mark, who were really the people of God. But in this typical sense it was their distinguishing mark, or middle wall of partition, between them and the heathen. For this reason they are called the circumcision: and the heathen on the other side of the partition wall, are called the uncircumcision. Eph. ii. 11. It appears to be in this sense that it was attached to the Sinai covenant as its token. In that covenant, they acknowledged the Lord as their God, and themselves as his obedient people. As the token of the Sinai covenant, circumcision was a memorial of their obligation, to obey the whole will of God revealed to them in that dispensation. Thus the apostle tells the Galatians that if they were circumcised, they were debtors to do the whole law: Gal. v. 3. and that by voluntary submission to the law, as yet in force, as not yet fulfilled and abrogated by Christ, which submission they should yield by introducing the use of the token, Christ would profit them nothing. Though the literal seed were allowed for a time to continue circumcision, in compliance, I should suppose, with the prejudice of education, it being originally of divine authority, and now a long established custom, yet the Gentile believers were never allowed to be circumcised, because it never having been divinely appointed for them, they had nothing to do with it; and for them to introduce it, would be to mix the law and the gospel, the type and the anti-type, two things so incapable of being joined together, that such conduct implied a renunciation of Christ as a Saviour, a falling from grace: i. e. a departure from the gospel method of salvation by grace. Gal. v. 2—4. According to circumcision as the distinguishing mark of the people of God, the carnal covenant offspring were still the peculiar covenant people of God, and the Lord was still their God; and there was no getting near to God but by coming among them.

The idea that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of Jehovah's promise in Christ by the gospel, was so repugnant to the national feeling of the Jews, who considered themselves the peculiar people of God, Acts xi. 2, 3. xxii. 21-23. 1 Thes. ii. 15, 16. that this was what particularly raised their enmity against the gospel and the disciples of Christ. Had Christ indulged their national pride, and acknowledged them as exclusively the covenant people of God, they would no doubt have loved him, and gloried in their connexion with him. Luke iv. 22. but on that plan he could not be faithful to their souls. When he preached the principles of grace so that they understood him, their pride was touched, their enmity was roused, and they would kill him instantly. Luke iv. 29. This was so obvious that the apostle asks the Galatians, v. 11. "If I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution?" To preach circumcision was to preach the covenant of circumcision; i. e. that state of things in which a carnal offspring were acknowledged as a covenant seed, and the divine favour hereditary. But the apostle was not so accommodating, as to acknowledge any person as in covenant relation with God, or in the way of obtaining the divine favour, but such as were born of God: therefore the Jews were exasperated against him, and he suffered persecution.

What profit is their of circumcision? Romans ii. 25. iii. 1. Much every way, chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. If they believed the oracles of God, and kept the law, while the law dispensation continued, they should have all the advantage of the law: but now that the law dispensation is vanished, and its token abolished, it can confer no advantage at all. Christ was a minister of circumcision, Romans xv. 8, 9. in the same sense, and for the same purpose, as he was made under the law. Gal. iv. 4, 5. Perhaps the two phrases mean exactly the same thing. Circumcision was a cutting off all round a part of the foreskin, which left a mark in the flesh, for the purpose of being a token, that promises of certain earthly blessings to Abraham and a chosen part of his earthly offspring, were ratified by God the Promiser, and should certainly be fulfilled to them, as the persons meant in the promise. It was itself a carnal mark, set on a carnal seed, as a token of temporal blessings, the promises of which were ratified by carnal sacrifices. It cannot then be a token of a spiritual institution, nor itself a spiritual ordinance.

It seems a mistake to call it an initiating ordinance. Birth was the initiating ordinance in Abraham's family: they were born in Zion: Psalms. lxxxvii. 5. therefore they were always in a state capable of being cast out, or cut off; but never of being received; for they were members by birth. It was as subjects under the covenant that they could break the covenant; it was as such they had the token of the covenant given them. Even proselytes were not made members by circumcision, as is evident in the case of females. A female that was taken captive, or bought with money, was a member, at least was entitled to certain privileges, as the property of her master. One who like Ruth came of her own accord, was received without circumcision. All the females were initiated without this initiating ordinance. Thus one half, or nearly one half, of the members did not come in through this door. It was a matter so notorious that it was by birth they became

members, as indeed the phrase. "And thy seed after thee in their generations," evidently implies, that the receiving of proselytes themselves is called a birth. John i. 13. Thus, persons became members of the spiritual family a spiritual birth, in contradistinction from all the ways in which persons became members of the typical family: all which ways are called births, and are distinguished into three classes, termed born of blood, born of the will of the flesh, and born of the will of man. It is in allusion to their becoming subjects of the temporal kingdom by birth, that the inward change necessary to their becoming members of the spiritual kingdom, is called a birth. Nicodemus who was already a member by birth, marvelled at this doctrine. The Lord grant that no modern master of Israel may want the experimental knowledge of the spiritual birth, by which only one can become a member of the spiritual kingdom.

It was in virtue of their covenant relation to Abraham, as the covenant offspring of the covenant father, (and perhaps to Isaac and Jacob, as the covenant was renewed to them personally,) that any of the Jews had a right to the token of the covenant, or to any of its blessings. It was not their being the offspring of professed or real believers that gave, or the want of this that hindered, their title to covenant privileges; but it was lineal descent from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that gave, and the want of it that hindered, such title. Gen. xvii. 7, 21. The wickedness of parents did not hinder, nor their own goodness procure their entering into Canaan: but their being the children of the covenant. Deut. iv. 31. i. 3. Proselytes were circumcised, not to make them, nor because they were heirs according to the promise; but in order to support the family distinction: while they lived in the family, they must bear the family mark. As each tribe received its inheritance by lot, and the inheritance was to continue in the tribe, or if lost, to revert to it on the year of Jubilee, every person claiming inheritance must trace his lineal descent back to the head of his tribe, and of course to Abraham. Thus proselytes, however pious, could never become heirs according to the promise, any more than one tribe could inherit the inheritance of another tribe. How then could God be called their God, when he had not provided for them a city? This is one reason why their genealogy was so distinctly recorded. See also Neh. vii. 64, 65. where certain persons were refused their hereditary claim, for want of such genealogical registry, till a priest stood up with Urim and Thummim to decide.

This may be illustrated by a reference to the covenant of royalty with David. God promised and confirmed the promise unto David that he would raise up his seed after him to sit on his throne for ever, and that he would establish his kingdom for ever. God fulfilled, and is fulfilling this promise. Now it is evident that all the kings of Judah sat upon the throne in pursuance of the promise to David, and not on account of their own righteousness, nor of their immediate progenitors. It was on account of the covenant with David, that the whole kingdom was not taken from Solomon, when he committed iniquity: how then could Rehoboam obtain royalty for his father Solomon's sake? No, he obtained it for David's sake, as did all his successors in royalty. The title of royalty was given to David immediately from God, and transmitted from him to Solomon, and not from

Solomon, but from David through Solomon, to Rehoboam, and from David through Solomon and Rehoboam, to Abijam, &c. In a similar manner, a title to the token and covenant blessings, was to Abraham from God immediately, with power to transmit such title to his natural offspring, through Isaac and Jacob. None of the Israelites had the right to bestow it on his offspring: he was only the channel through which it was transmitted from Abraham to his offspring. None of them derived it immediately from his parents, but he derived it from Abraham through his parents. It made no difference how good or how wicked a person he or his parents were, provided they were not guilty of certain crimes which were to be punished by death, the said title was derived to them from Abraham, and from Abraham through them to their children. Thus in every case, except a few when ceremonial uncleannesses and bodily blemishes, (in which case, believers as well as unbelievers might be concerned,) and when some gross transgression, on account of which they were to suffer death, prevented it; this very circumstance, viz. a lineal descent from Abraham, in the line of Isaac and Jacob, gave them a right to circumcision, and to be among the people of God, enjoying all the privileges of the covenant.

But circumcision had also a spiritual meaning: it was typical of a spiritual antitype. As the token of the typical covenant, it was probably typical of the token of the spiritual covenant. This covenant is made with the spiritual Israel, who are all taught of God, and children of Abraham by faith in Christ Jesus, and proving this relation by walking in the steps of Abraham. All the blessings of this covenant are spiritual blessings, confirmed to them in Christ Jesus the spiritual ratification sacrifice. Now the token also must be spiritual. All the other parts of the covenant are of Divine origin: the token must be so too. There is a relative and comparative holiness and spirituality which it may be proper to mention. In the typical sense, the whole nation of Israel was holy compared to other nations, and the land of Judea compared to other countries. The tribe of Levi was more holy than the rest of the nation, and the city of Jerusalem than other parts of Judea. The family of Aaron was more holy than the other Levites, and the temple than any other part of Jerusalem. The high priest was more holy than other priests, and there was in the temple the holy place, and the most holy. Compared with heathen institutions, ordinances, and worship, the ordinances, institutions and worship of the Jews as of Divine appointment, was no doubt spiritual; but compared with those of the new testament, they are carnal ordinances, weak, beggarly elements. The law had a glory, but even that which was made glorious had no glory in respect to the gospel, by reason of the glory that excelleth. Thus what we are to contemplate in one respect as carnal, in another respect is spiritual.

The law contains interspersed through it, several intimations of its own weakness and unprofitableness, and that something more spiritual and efficacious was necessary for the eternal happiness of rational, accountable, and immortal beings. Of this kind, are the following passages relating to circumcision. Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you, above all people, as it is this day. *Circumcise therefore the foreskin of*

your heart, and be no more stiff-necked. Deut. x. 15, 16. Is not this similar to the address of the Baptist to the Pharisees and Sadducees? Mat. iii. 7-11. signifying that a relation to the beloved fathers, was not sufficient without a new heart. Again, the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. Deut. xxx. 6. A new heart will I also give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. Esek. xxxvi. 26. If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. 2 Tim. ii. 25. These passages seem to be of similar import. Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskin of your heart, lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it. Jer. iv. 4. This reminds me of the words of Jesus: "Unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." He who believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God, is become a child of God; and being a son, God sends forth the Spirit of his son into his heart: Gal. iv. 6. he receiveth the promise of the Spirit by faith. Gal. iii. 14. Being born into Abraham's spiritual family, he is entitled to the token, and all the blessings of the spiritual covenant. He is sealed by the Spirit of promise, Eph. i. 13. even to the day of redemption. Eph. iv. 30. God seals him, and gives the earnest of the Spirit in his heart: 2 Cor. i. 22. yea, the earnest of the inheritance. Eph. i. 14. Christ having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, Acts ii. 33. he sends the promise of his Father upon him, Luke, xxiv. 49. and then he is circumcised with the circumcision of Christ, Col. ii. 11. He is now of the people of God, 1 Pet. ii. 9. of the true circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit. Philip iii. 3. For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God, Rom. ii. 28, 29. It is the Spirit of adoption, and his renewing influences on the heart, that is the token of the new covenant, that seals or marks believers as the children of God; as of Abraham's family; and is their earnest of the spiritual inheritance. Thus, if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. If the Spirit has not led him to the truth, so that he hears Christ's voice, and follows him, he does not belong to the number of Christ's sheep.

But it will be said that baptism is typical of the same thing, under the new covenant, as circumcision was under the old. No type belongs to the new covenant: its spirituality as the spirit or meaning of the letter, consists in having no types, nothing typical belonging to it. But is not baptism called the circumcision made without hands? And is baptism made without hands? Let us examine the import of the phrase "made without hands," in the scriptures. Dan. ii. 45. The stone cut out of the mountain without hands, means cut without human agency. Mark xiv. 58. The temple made with hands, means the temple built by human agency; the temple made without hands, without human agency. See also, Acts vii. 48. xix. 26. 2 Cor. v. 1. 1 Heb. ix. 11, 24. in all which "made by hand," means effected by human agency, and "made without hands," the contrary. And why should not circumcision made by hands, Eph. ii. 11. for the same contrast with the circumcision made without hands? Col. ii. 11. And

then it will be what I have represented it, viz. the inward work of the Holy Spirit. Baptism is as truly made with hands as ever circumcision was. Baptism is no more spiritual circumcision, than circumcision is spiritual baptism. The circumcision made without hands then, is the circumcision of the heart, effected without human agency, by the divine Spirit. I have now finished what I intended to advance in this essay on the Abrahamic covenant. I shall now take a brief view of the allegory in the 4th of the Gal. beginning at the 21st verse.

A particular view of the Allegory in the fourth of the Galatians, beginning at the 21st verse.

The Apostle Paul was called to the apostleship and sent unto the Gentile. Among those he preached Christ crucified, as an all-sufficient Saviour, able to save to the uttermost all who come to God through him; as one who had made a perfect atonement for sin; an atonement in which God is well pleased, and by which he is reconciling sinners unto himself, not imputing unto them their trespasses. Those who believe in Christ, are justified freely by his grace; through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, wholly independent of the law. Certain Jews who professed to have believed in Christ, were still zealous for the law of Moses. Finding that Paul made no account of it in the matter of a sinners's justification, but that he preached the same glad tidings to the Gentiles as he did to the Jews, inviting them alike to come to Christ for salvation, assuring both alike of free pardon and acceptance in the beloved; they took offence, disputed the point with the apostle, and insinuated that he was not an apostle, that he had nothing but scraps of divinity which he had picked from the other apostles, which he modified to suit his own taste, and formed into a system of religion different from all others, that as the head of that new religion, he might gratify his ambition and avarice. This is easily discoverable from his consequent vindication of his character, as an apostle of Jesus Christ, and of his doctrine as revealing the only way of salvation. This is partly the reason why we have so much from Paul on the apostolic character, and on the difference between the law and the gospel. He reasoned with them out of the law, maintaining that he said none other things than those which Moses and the prophets did say should come, that Christ should suffer, and that he should arise the first from the dead, and should show light unto the people and to the Gentiles. In the passage before us, he calls their attention to a decision of the law itself, or the old covenant which God had made with Abraham their father according to the flesh.

Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond-maid and the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bond-woman was born after the flesh, but he of the free-woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants, &c. Abraham's family was one; but in that one family, there were two wives in very different situations. Each of them brought forth a son which was in a similar situation with his mother. Abraham's family was typical of the church of God, and also of the scheme of mercy in saving that church, as exhibited in the Abrahamic covenant. This Abrahamic covenant, comprehending two different meanings, issued

at length into two different covenants: the first ratified at Mount Sinai, and the second at Mount Calvary; the one, a covenant of bondage, bringing forth children to bondage; the other, a covenant of liberty, bringing forth children to freedom. Abraham himself as head of the one family, husband of the two different wives, and father of the two different children, represented the Almighty as the God of Israel, who enabled the two different covenants to bring forth children, and acknowledged a parental relation to the two different children. As Abraham had the free woman first, but she was barren, desolate, as if forsaken, or without a husband, so God designed and intimated though darkly, the making of the new covenant before the old was made: but it was not actually made or ratified, the marriage relation was not confirmed, the free woman was apparently without a husband, bringing forth no children, till after the old covenant was made. As Sarah, through distrust and impatience, gave her bondmaid to Abraham to wife, so the law was added because of transgression. As the bondwoman first brought forth children, so the old covenant was first ratified and had children: thus showing a marriage relation; and is known in the prophets by the appellation of "the married wife." Isa. liv. 1. and in this allegory, referring to the prophesy, is denominated: "she that hath an husband." v. 27. "Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children." As mount Sinai is put for the covenant which was ratified there, so Jerusalem which now is, signifies the constitution under which the Jews then were placed; which was in fact no other than the Sinai covenant, or the literal meaning of the Abrahamic covenant. As Hagar represented, the covenant of bondage, her son must represent, not the Ishmaelites who were never under the Sinai covenant, but the Jews, who actually existed as a people under the constitution which Hagar represented. As the free woman represented the Jerusalem which is above, the free constitution, the new covenant, the mother of all believers, her son must represent, not Israel after the flesh, who were excluded from Abraham's family directly after this covenant became a mother, but the Israel of God, who are actually under this spiritual constitution, who knowing the truth, are made free by it. As Hagar was Sarah's maid, and regarded as a wife, chiefly for Sarah's sake, so the law was not set up for its own sake, or as a rival to the gospel, but in subserviency to it. As Ishmael was born after the flesh, i. e. in the ordinary course of nature, without any uncommon supernatural influence, or any special call for the exercise of faith on the part of the parents; so his antitype, the carnal Israel, are born after the flesh, and so are denominated "the children of the flesh." Rom. ix. 8. As Isaac was born by promise, i. e. beyond the ordinary course of nature, by a special supernatural influence, necessarily requiring the exercise of a lively faith in the divine promise on the part of the parents, as nothing short of a singular exercise of divine power could produce the expected event; so his antitype, the spiritual Israel, are born after the spirit, by a special exercise of divine power, altogether beyond the power of natural means; and requiring the lively exercise of faith in the divine promise, on the part of those who sow the spiritual seed, to encourage their persevering endeavours, and so they are denominated "the children of the promise." As Ishmael was the son

of the bond woman, he could not be heir to the promised inheritance; so the Jews being born under the covenant of bondage, could not, by that covenant, be heirs to the spiritual inheritance. Isaac and his antitype being free born, are heirs according to the promise: Ishmael being a servant, could not abide in the house forever, John viii. 35. in virtue of his own right, yet he surely might remain like other servants, had not his own misconduct rendered his exclusion necessary. So the literal Jews, being in bondage under a typical covenant, could not continue in covenant relation to God forever, in virtue of their covenant, Esek. xvi. 61. but they might have continued like believers in Christ from other nations, had not their own misconduct rendered their exclusion necessary. It appears from Ishmael's mocking, just at the period of Isaac's weaning, and from Sarah's peremptorily demanding his exclusion, so *he might not be heir with Isaac*, that Ishmael had formed high expectations of the right of primogeniture; which engendered and nourished pride and insolence; and that, having seen the feast which Abraham made at the weaning of Isaac, his pride was mortified, jealousy and suspicions found place, and gave rise to insolence and contempt of Isaac; which he displayed by mocking, perhaps saying, "What ado about the weaning of a child; as if he had been the first born and the heir?" and possibly by some ridiculous gestures. However he mocked Isaac just then; and the apostle says, "He that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit." The consequence was his exclusion from Abraham's family. The literal Israel formed very high expectations, as the first born son of God; Exodus iv. 22. which engendered and nourished in them, pride and intolerable insolence. When they saw Christ, they were filled with envy and jealousy, Mat. xxvii. 18. and said among themselves, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance." Mat. xxi. 38. They could not bear the idea, that believers, as such, should be heirs, and enjoy spiritual privileges, without coming under the covenant which constituted them the peculiar people of God. Christ exhibits their conduct in that of the elder son in the parable of the prodigal, Luke xv. 25—32. They aspired after exclusive privileges, which occasioned their being excluded from any privileges at all. What saith the scripture? hear what the law saith: "Cast out the bond woman and her son: for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman:" i. e. Cast out the temporal covenant represented by Hagar, which recognizes as children and heirs, those who are born only after the flesh: for the children of the flesh shall not be heirs with the children of the promise, who only are accounted for the seed. On the subject of privileges, the scriptures take no notice, neither do I, of the antiscritptural distinction which has been made, between infants and adults. The only distinction which the scriptures and I acknowledge, in regard to privileges, is that between the children of the flesh, and the children of the promise: those who are born after the flesh, and those who are born after the Spirit. We have been often told that children were once in the covenant by divine appointment, and as often triumphantly asked: "Where were they cast out by divine appointment?" Here we have a satisfactory reply. Here is express divine authority for

casting out the covenant of bondage, and those who are born after the flesh, recognized by it as covenant children.

The only covenant which Jehovah, as the God of Israel now acknowledges, as his covenant, Ezek. xvi. 62. is that new and better covenant, which recognizes none as children, on any other footing than that of spiritual birth; and admits as subjects, none who know not the Lord, and have not the law written in their hearts. They are Jews inwardly, the circumcision of the heart, which worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh; whose praise is not of men but of God. Rom. ii. 29. Philip. iii. 3. They are the Israel of God; Gal. vi. 16. the people of God, and beloved; the children of the living God; Rom. ix. 25, 26. a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and peculiar people; I. Pet. ii. 9. the true worshippers, who worship the father in Spirit and in truth: John iv. 23. They are Abraham's seed or children; children of the promise, heirs according to the promise, and blessed with faithful Abraham. Gal. iii. 7, 9, 29. iv. 28. Rom. ix. 8. See also Eph. ii. 13, 16, 19, 20. iii. 6. Heb. xii. 15—25. They are in reality what the literal Israel were only typically: they are heirs to the spiritual blessings, which the literal Israel inherited only typically. Having come into a covenant relation to God, and become heirs of all the blessings of that relation, just when the literal Israel lost that relation and its privileges; being themselves the antitype of the literal Israel, and their covenant relation and privileges, the antitypes of the covenant relation and privileges of the literal Israel, that part of them who were not Jews are said to be cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and contrary to nature, grafted into a good olive tree. Yes, when some of the branches were broken off, believers of the Gentiles were grafted in among those that remained, and with them partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree. This root and fatness refer to the covenant privileges expressed in the above quotations. The eleventh of the Romans cannot be interpreted consistently with fact on any other principle.—The period from the birth of Ishmael to the birth of Isaac, corresponded to the period from the Sinai covenant to the birth of Christ. The period of Isaac's remaining on the breast, corresponded to the period from the birth of Christ to the famous day of pentecost. The feast at Isaac's weaning corresponded to the gospel feast, and the rejoicing over sinners who turn to God. See Luke xv. chap. Ishmael's mocking corresponded to the persecution of the Jews; and the casting out of Hagar and her son, corresponded to casting out the typical covenant, and the carnal covenant children; when the city of Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus, and her children within her. Luke xix. 41—44. When Christ came, he would have gathered her children in safety, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings; but they would not: therefore their house, their beautiful house, Is. lxiv. 11, was left desolate without an inhabitant. Mat. xxiii. 37, 38. Christ sent his armies and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Mat. xxii. 7. He miserably destroyed those wicked men, and let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, (the spiritual Israel,) which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Thus it appears, that the typical events which happened in Abraham's family, contained allegorically, both the old dispensation and the new, in epitome.

As the temple in Jerusalem represented both the literal body of Christ, and his mystical body, the church; so Isaac and his supernatural birth, represented Christ who was supernaturally born, and the supernaturally born children of Abraham.

An Epitome of the Abrahamic Covenant.

The covenant was made with Abraham, and with him alone: though his seed were through him, or for his sake, enjoying the benefits of it. The covenant was one, and only one: two covenants were not made with Abraham. The covenant had a plain, carnal, literal, typical, temporal meaning; which represents the aspect it bore to the carnal covenant seed; which was true, and accomplished to them, and to them only; and which was abolished, when that seed ceased to exist, as a covenant nation. The covenant at Sinai, which was made with the carnal, literal, typical, temporally covenanted seed, was the evolution, explanation, and so far accomplishment, of the Abrahamic covenant, in its plain, carnal, &c. meaning. The Abrahamic covenant had a veiled, spiritual, figurative, typified or real, eternal, meaning; which represents the aspect it bears to the spiritual covenant seed; which is true, and accomplishing to them, and to them only; and which, as it is eternal, shall be, through eternity, accomplishing. The new covenant, which has been made with the spiritual, figurative, typified or real, eternally covenanted seed, is the evolution, explanation, and so far accomplishment, of the Abrahamic covenant, in its veiled, spiritual, &c. meaning. So, the Sinai covenant is an enlarged edition of the literal meaning, and the new covenant is an enlarged edition of the figurative meaning, of the one covenant with Abraham. The Jewish community, nation, or church, was founded upon Abraham their father, and upon the carnal meaning of the covenant made with him; and regulated by the enlarged edition of that meaning: and the righteous community, nation or church, of which the Jewish was typical, is founded on Abraham their father, and upon the spiritual meaning of the covenant made with him; and regulated by the enlarged edition of that meaning. So the Jewish church, and the righteous church, are as different from each other, as the carnal and spiritual meanings of the Abrahamic covenant, or as the Sinai, and the new covenants.

ESSAY II.

ON CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

BAPTISM is the first ordinance observed by men after believing the gospel. It is more largely treated of in the scriptures than any other ordinance. There are more examples recorded of the observance of it, than of the observance of any other. It must therefore be a very important ordinance, and deserving our most serious attention. Those who neglect it do not follow the scriptures. Being largely treated of in the scriptures, they may be expected to contain full information on every circumstance respecting it; without having recourse to circumcision or any other institution. How unaccountable it must be to go back to the dark and shadowy dispensation which is done away, for instruction concerning an ordinance belonging exclusively to the clear and really substantial dispensation? It is an attempt to cover the face of the apostles with the vail of Moses, 2 Cor. iii. 12, 13. This is the source of almost all the corruptions of christianity, and those who move in that direction have need to consider that they are going directly back to Rome. Without it the man of sin could never have been established. How much are we warned against it in the apostolical epistles? It is also unreasonable to go to one ordinance to seek for information concerning another. Suppose a wholesale dealer receive a letter from a retailer for several articles of merchandize; would it not be unreasonable for him to determine the quantity and quality of cloth, from that part of the letter which treats of hardware? Just so, those who determine the subjects of baptism from that part of the scriptures which treats of circumcision. Let us therefore be instructed respecting the ordinance of baptism, from those parts of scripture which treat of baptism. It is as fully discussed in the scriptures as circumcision.

I. THE MEANING OF THE ORDINANCE.

Every ordinance of Christ is intended, not only for a test of our obedience, but also to impress the truth upon our minds. Each of them must therefore represent to the eye, the truth

or truths with which it is connected. Consider the gospel of which baptism is the first ordinance. I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, &c. "That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, was buried, and rose again, according to the scriptures." I. Cor. xv. 3, 4. As soon as men believed this gospel, they made an open profession of that faith, by having their bodies washed in pure water. Heb. x. 22, 23. Thus, baptism is more immediately connected with believing the gospel than any other ordinance. By believing the gospel sinners are born of God. I. John v. 1. Is not its immediate connexion with the belief of the gospel, by which men are born again, one reason why it got the name of regeneration? The most comprehensive, and therefore the primary meaning of the ordinance of baptism, is, the believer's union with Christ in his burial and resurrection.

The faith of God's elect is of divine operation. By that faith, the believer is united to Christ, and becomes a partaker of all the blessings of Christ's death and resurrection. This union is represented by baptism. Rom. vi. 5, 4. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Col. ii. 12. "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." It has been said that we are also planted in the likeness of his death: and we have been asked, what has planting to do with baptism? I answer, that planting is an apt emblem of burial, John xii. 24 and so is baptism, as above. In Mat. xii. 40. our Saviour shows that being in the heart of a substance, or being surrounded by it, is the proper idea of burial. It is evident he did not mean that their could be no burial but in the earth, for Jonah's being in the belly of the fish, was such a burial as was a fit emblem of his being in the heart of the earth. The seed must be buried under the clod in order to bring forth fruit. So it must be with Christ: he must first die and be buried and rise again from the dead; then he shall bring forth abundant fruit both of Jews and Gentiles; "he shall see the travail of his soul and be satisfied." (See the passage in its connexion, John xii. 20—33. and Poole on the place.) Thus also the Israelites were baptized or buried, when they were surrounded by the sea and the cloud. 1. Cor. x. 2. That being surrounded or inclosed by the element in which one is baptised, is the proper meaning of being baptized, appears from that passage: for their situation in the sea without the cloud, was not baptism, nor yet their situation under the cloud without the sea: but it took both the cloud over them, and the sea on each side to inclose them, to correspond to the full idea of a baptism. They were under the cloud, and passed through the sea, and thus were baptised (not figuratively but literally) unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. Thus it is plain that there is a great similarity between baptism and planting, both corresponding to a burial. It is correct to say, "Buried in baptism," or "buried in planting," or "planted in the likeness of his death." Is not burial the likeness of death? Do we ever inquire whether a person is dead, when we know he has been buried? The apostle used

both to illustrate the doctrine of the rising again from the grave, where they had been buried as dead persons. 1 Cor. xv. 2, 35—38. The very word resurrection forms a proper contrast to burial, as reviving does to death. What meaning is there in their being baptized for dead persons, (i. e. buried in baptism as if they were dead, and raised again from that burial, as if alive again,) if the dead rise not at all? Is not our baptism in the name of Christ, an emblem of our fellowship with him in his burial and resurrection? If the dead rise not at all, the fellowship is incomplete, and therefore the emblem of it improper: why are they then baptised for dead persons? During his life, our Lord was subject to all the feelings of human nature, as an inhabitant of this world; but after he rose from the dead, he appeared in glory above the world and human feelings. Those who have fellowship with him in his burial and resurrection, having in baptism been planted in the likeness of his death, shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Christ died unto sin once, but now he liveth unto God and shall die no more, death hath no more dominion over him. Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

"Being made conformable to his death," Phil. iii. 10. is an evident allusion to "baptism unto death." "If ye then be risen with Christ" Col. iii. 1. is also an evident allusion to baptism, "wherein ye are risen with him." i. e. our rising with him through the faith of the operation of God, is emblematically exhibited in our baptism. There seems a peculiar propriety in this union's being represented by this emblem, as the sufferings of Christ are called baptism; Mat. xx. 22. Luke xii. 50. and his entering into these sufferings, is represented by his coming into deep waters, with the floods overflowing him; Psalm lxix. 2. and his deliverance from these sufferings, by being drawn out of many waters. Psal. xviii. 16.

As the believer's union with Christ in his burial and resurrection, is the primary meaning of the ordinance of baptism, so it also represents the blessings derived to believers in virtue of that union. The remission of sins is one of those blessings and is represented by baptism. Acts ii. 38. 2. The answer of a good conscience naturally follows. This also is represented by baptism. 1 Pet. iii. 21. 3. Washing away the filth of sin is another blessing derived from the same source, and represented by the same ordinance. Acts xxii. 16. 4. We are born in sin and conceived in iniquity. Our very nature is enmity against God; it cannot be made subject to his law; therefore we must be born again. He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. The new birth is represented by baptism. John iii. 5. Tit. iii. 5. 5. Those who have received the promise of the Spirit by faith, are by that Spirit brought into a union with the family of God, so as to be one among them, and surrounded by them. The one baptism Eph. iv. 5. represents and enforces that blessed union of believers as the one body of Christ. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Gal. iii. 26—29. 6. Christ is the resurrection and the life. The believer views the resurrection of Christ as the pledge of his own. His professed union with Christ in his resurrection, implies a believing hope of a glorious resurrection for himself. Thus baptism exhibits the burial and resurrection of the body. 1 Cor. xv. 29.

The baptism of John is called the baptism of repentance, because a credible profession of repentance was a necessary pre-requisite to baptism, Mat. iii. 7—11. and because in the very act of baptism, they confessed their sins, professed to be sorry for them, and abhor them, and repent, that they might obtain the remission of sin, through faith in the Messiah. Mat. iii. 6. Mark i. 4. Luke iii. 3. John directed his hearers to the Lamb of God who should take away the sin of the world, as one who was among them, and who, though coming after him, had been before him, and preferred before him : one who should commence by a severe scrutiny, and thorough purging of professors; who should baptize in the Holy Spirit and fire.—Baptism in the Holy Spirit refers to the miraculous conveyance of the power of working miracles and speaking with tongues, to the disciples on the day of pentecost, and other times. Mat. iii. 11. Acts i. 5. ii. 2—4. x. 44, 45. xi. 15; 16. The apostles had the saving influence of the Holy Spirit, long before they were baptized in the Holy Spirit. These two divine operations therefore have no necessary; immediate connexion with each other, though the latter was mostly bestowed on those who previously had the former : therefore, persons having the latter was a good reason why they should be baptized in water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Acts x. 47. Those who reason thus : “ Since we have the baptism of the Holy Spirit, we think water baptism needless,” reason in direct opposition to the apostle Peter. Acts x. 47, 48. Comp. to xi. 16, 17. Probably some had this baptism who were never saved; for Paul says: 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2. “ Though I could speak with tongues, and have all prophecy, and all faith, &c. if I want charity I am nothing.” It is to be observed in this baptism, Christ himself personally is the baptizer, and the Holy Spirit is the element; but in renewing the heart, the Spirit is the agent, and the divine record, the instrument. The word of God is the sword of the Spirit. Eph. vi. 17.—Great sufferings are called a baptism, Mat. xx. 22. Luke xii. 50. because the sufferer is immersed into trouble as into deep waters. If I wash me with snow water, &c. yet will thou plunge me in the ditch: Job. ix. 31. i. e. if I try to comfort myself against sorrow, thou wilt encompass me with affliction. The word translated plunge in this passage, is rendered in the Septuagint “ bapto,” and this “ bapto” is allowed by some Pedobaptists who contend for sprinkling; to mean properly “ I plunge,” though it is used, Dan. iv. 25, for the word translated “ wet.” But baptize is derived from this same bapto; and it is the opinion of those who are acknowledged on all hands to be the ablest critics in the sacred languages, and the most conversant with ancient customs, civil and religious, among Jews and Gentiles, that bapto and baptizo are synonymous, and that both signify; dip, plunge, immerse. Professor Porson, a celebrated Greek scholar, gave his testimony that if there is any difference he should take baptizo to be the strongest, and that it surely signified a total immersion. He practised sprinkling. In a question of Greek criticism, or Jewish customs the single opinion of Principal Campbell of Aberdeen, a Presbyterian, will outweigh the opinions of a thousand such scribblers as we are in these Provinces; especially when his opinion could not be swayed by his own practice. The Israelites

were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. Being *under* the cloud, and passing *through the sea* as upon *dry land*, they had such a convincing evidence of the divine appointment of Moses to be their leader and deliverer, that they believed, and professed their faith, in the Lord and his servant Moses. Exod: xiv. 31. Here faith and baptism were connected together, when this typical people were delivered from typical Egypt. As it respects both faith and baptism, their infants, as far as we know, were exactly on a par with their flocks and herds.

II. THE MEANING OF THE WORD BAPTIZE.

This word has been adopted from the Greek language into most of the languages of Europe, and accommodated to the dress of each language, without being translated into any. An amazing mystical efficacy soon began to be attached to the externals of christianity, and then to the names by which these externals were known. The very words became sacred and mystical, and have been long distinguished as "ecclesiastical terms." When the scriptures came to be translated into the vulgar tongues, it was thought by many to be next to sacrilege, to translate these ecclesiastical terms into corresponding words in common use. Thus we have deacon for servant, bishop for overseer, presbytery for eldership, &c. These remarks apply to no word in the new testament, with greater propriety than to the term "baptize." Very early the idea prevailed, that baptism was necessary to salvation. People in the near prospect of death, are apt to be tender and feel a degree of compunction. In that state of mind, they are naturally anxious for every thing which may be thought to assist in securing their eternal salvation. No doubt many sought eagerly after baptism on that principle, when they were unable to undergo immersion. Parents were also anxious to secure the salvation of their dying infants. This gave rise to what was called clinical aspersion: i. e. sprinkling bed-fast persons. Persons so baptized sometimes recovered, and then it was sometimes disputed whether such baptism was sufficient. There is a lay baptism in the church of England, something similar. This first introduced sprinkling, which, on account of its convenience, continued gaining ground till the second council of Ravenna, convened A. D. 1311, by Pope Clement V, who had been crowned 1305. This council established sprinkling as equal to immersion, but only *as equal* to it. Sprinkling after that, soon supplanted immersion wherever the authority of that council was acknowledged, but no where else. Every where else through christendom, immersion is still continued. The present American christians, are emigrants from countries which acknowledged the authority of that council. Under these circumstances, it has now become a question: "What is the meaning of the word baptize?" The Baptists uniformly maintain that its radical, primary meaning is dip, or something to the same effect. The Pedobaptists are very various in their opinions on this question. Almost all, if not quite all, the scholars of eminence among them, notwithstanding their contrary practice, confirm the Baptist side of the question. Some maintain that it means sprinkle; some that it means pour; some that it means wash in general, by whatever way; some that it means puri-

fication, by whatever means; some that it means pop, whether pop up, or pop down, or pop in, or pop out; (see Ewing's essay on baptism;) and some that it is indifferent whether sprinkling, pouring, or immersion is used. They go to work to establish their discordant opinions, by referring, in general, to some figurative use of the word, or some word which they suppose to be of the same spiritual meaning, by raising supposed difficulties in the way of immersion in certain cases, by representing immersion as dangerous to health, or an indecent ceremony. How would they learn the meaning of the word burial from the figurative use of it in Jer. xxii. 19. where Jehoiakim, king of Judah, is represented as buried with the burial of an ass: i. e. left on the top of the ground. Had they been at Gilgal, I suppose their delicacy would force them to recross Jordan rather than submit to, or even witness, the ceremony to which Joshuah attended by divine appointment. Josh. v. 2--3. The Baptists on the other hand, ascertain the meaning of the word in the same manner as they would the meaning of any other word, by the ordinary rules of interpretation. They go first to the etymology of the word; next to its use in Greek authors, sacred and profane; then they examine the practice of antiquity, to see how the ancients understood it; lastly, they have recourse to the radical meaning of the ordinance. These are four strong witnesses which cannot be silenced. Many attempts have been made to pervert their evidence; but they still determine inflexibly in favour of the Baptists. Take them apart or together, examine them and cross-examine them, only allow them to speak out plainly, and they will *with one voice*, testify aloud that the primary, radical meaning of baptize, is dip. Is there a scholar of eminence in the world, who would risk his reputation as a scholar, upon advancing a contrary opinion? The Baptists expect that our Lord, in giving his disciples a command which was to be obeyed to the end of time, used words in their proper primary meaning; they have ascertained that meaning as above. If that is not a fair, legitimate course to pursue, I know not what is. One thing I know, that this, or a course nearly similar, is what reasonable people always pursue, when they have not a system *aside from truth to support*. Last of all, the Baptists give a possible solution of some difficulties started by the Pedobaptists, as attending the practice of immersion, which is quite sufficient on their side; whereas nothing but a direct proof of the absolute impossibility of immersion, will serve the cause of the Pedobaptists, to invalidate the uniform testimony of the four witnesses above.

I observe, 1. All Lexicographers unite in fixing the meaning of baptize to "immerse," "dip," "plunge," "overwhelm." 2. To this agree scripture phraseology. Went down into the water. Acts viii. 38. came up out of the water. Mat. iii. 16. Mark i. 10. Acts viii. 39. 3. The place where they were baptized. In water, Mat. iii. 11. in Jordan, Mat. iii. 6, 13. Mark. i. 9. in the river of Jordan, Mark i. 5. where much water was, John iii. 23. I very much doubt that ever sprinklers sought a place where much water was to sprinkle. Is it not a very unwarrantable imposition, on the preposition "en," to make it say "with" water, Mat. iii. 11. and "in" Jordan v. 13. seeing it is in both passages, from the same pen, in the same narrative, in reference to the same ordinance, in exactly the same construction, in

giving the world an account of a new institution, when "in," is the primary meaning of the word, and the narrator does not give the least hint of his using it in a different sense, in the two passages? Did ever sprinklers go down into the water to sprinkle, or come up out of the water after sprinkling? 4. To this agree the practice and testimony of the ancient christians. Sprinkling had no solid footing for many centuries after the apostles. 5. The universal practice of the Greek church, or all christendom that never submitted to the church of Rome. They ought to understand their own language best, and they have ever continued immersion. I may just remark here, for the sake of the reader who may be unacquainted with ecclesiastical history; that after the division of the Roman empire into the eastern empire, and the western empire, and Constantinople the capital of the eastern, was set up as a rival of Rome, the capital of the western empire; there was a long contest between the patriarch of Rome, and that of Constantinople, which of them should be universal bishop. The former was the most successful; for, in the beginning of the seventh century, the emperor Phocas declared Boniface III. bishop of Rome, universal bishop; and the church of Rome, the mother church. Christendom was then divided unto the eastern church, and the western church, under their respective heads, the bishops of Rome, and of Constantinople. As the Latin was the language most prevalent in the western church, and the Greek, the language most prevalent in the eastern church; especially at Rome and Constantinople, the seats of the heads of the two churches; the western got the name of the Latin church, and the eastern that of the Greek church. The unlearned reader will now understand what is meant by the Greek church. 6. The rubrick of the church of England, which enjoins immersion except in cases of peculiar weakness. See public baptism of infants: Common prayer book. 7. The Westminster assembly of divines. They discussed the question, whether sprinkling was sufficient for baptism? and it was decided by *one* vote in the affirmative; 25 for it, and 24 against it. They never thought of disputing the established meaning of the word, or the validity of immersion; but whether the innovation sprinkling, might safely be continued as valid baptism. 8. The second council of Ravenna, A. D. 1311. which established sprinkling as equal to immersion; but *only* as *equal* to it. Sprinkling had much need of that support. 9. The baptisteries or fountains found in many churches, which show plainly that immersion was in use when they were placed in the churches. These are to be viewed as so many monuments of the ancient practice of immersion; and are produced here, as only corroborating evidences of the radical meaning of the word. 10. The primary meaning of the ordinance requires, that the person baptized should be buried in the water, and raised up out of the water. Thus, immersion is established as the meaning of the word baptize, by explicit evidence. Objections founded on circuitous reasonings from figurative expressions, and a superficial knowledge of ancient customs, against such a body of direct evidence, can have but little weight with those who are earnestly in pursuit of truth. Those who are not satisfied with this brief statement of facts, I would refer to Pengilly's Guide to Baptism. Concerning the phraseology of scripture on the subject, I would just remark, that were not the translators, who all practised

sprinkling, fully conscious that they could not do justice to the original, by giving a translation more favourable to sprinkling, they would not have countenanced immersion; for it is evident they countenanced sprinkling wherever they could with any degree of decency. This accounts for their saying, "with water," and "in Jordan;" because they could not say, "with Jordan," without saying, "with the water of Jordan," which, as Dr. CAMPBELL observes, would have made their deviation from the text too glaring. Had they been as expert in casuistical sophistry, as some of our modern sciolists in Greek literature, they would have said, "at Jordan."

III. THE SUBJECTS OF THE ORDINANCE.

Here it is essentially necessary to give a distinct and correct statement of the very point at issue. I remark for this purpose, that besides the original distinction between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, the old testament recognizes a distinction between Jews and Gentiles. The new testament annihilated this distinction as it relates to spiritual privileges and enjoyments, (the only point of view in which we wish to consider it,) both as it respects unbelievers, Rom. iii. 9, 22, 23. and believers. Gal. iii. 28. The only distinction which it acknowledges, is that between believers and unbelievers. Those who are on opposite sides of this line of distinction, are represented to us by various pairs of epithets, each pair including the whole of the human race, whether dead, living, or unborn. Thus we read of the righteous and the wicked, the just and the unjust, the children of light and the children of darkness, believers and infidels, &c. Whatever unscriptural distinction may be made among men, and whatever heterogeneous mixtures may be compounded by those, who, instead of taking forth the precious from the vile, and thus being as the mouth of the Lord, Jer. xv. 19. are violating his law, profaning his holy things, putting no difference between the holy and profane, but daubing them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them; Exek. xxii. 26, 28. this distinction is a reality, is recognized, and it only, throughout the new testament; and shall be recognized, and it only, when the quick and the dead shall be judged in equity, shall be classed exactly according to their respective characters, and shall be irreversibly appointed to their places of eternal destination. Mat. xxv. 3—46. This is the only line of distinction which I would earnestly trace: for nothing deserves the name of religion that does not recognize it. Every thing, under the name of religion, that confounds this line, is irreligious, antisciptural, and highly injurious to christianity. 2 Cor. vi. 14—18. Baptism, as a christian ordinance, is to be kept on the christian side of this line. I maintain therefore, that those only who make a personal, voluntary profession of their faith in Christ, ought to be baptised. Such, and such only, as far as man can discover, are on the believer's side of the line. All other persons, whether Jew or Gentile, male or female, rich or poor, religious or profane, old or young, are represented in the new testament as on the infidel side of the line, and are to be viewed and treated by us as unbelievers, until they make such profession. This lies at the very foundation of all christian churches, and of all christian discipline in the churches. Disannul it, and act up to your principle, and

you have annihilated all christian churches, and abolished all christian discipline. Therefore no person, on any account whatever, or in any circumstance whatever, has a right to christian baptism, until he make a personal profession of his faith in Christ. The very point at issue here is, whether believers only have a right to christian baptism? or, whether any class of unbelievers also, under any circumstances, have a right to it? I maintain the former of these positions, against all who maintain the latter. Let it be observed, that a positive is easier proved than a negative. As I maintain that believers in Christ have a right to christian baptism, it is incumbent upon me to produce my evidence, to go as far as scripture evidence goes, and to stop where scripture evidence stops. It is equally incumbent on those who maintain that unbelievers have a right to christian baptism to produce their evidence, to go as far as scripture evidence goes, and to stop where scripture evidence stops. Also, if they do not maintain the right of all unbelievers indiscriminately, but only of a select part of them, it is incumbent upon them to draw a scriptural, visible line of demarcation, between those who, according to them, have a right, and those who have not. In stating the point at issue thus, I demand no more than I undertake to give. Let no person evade the question, nor alter the point of view in which it is to be examined, until he has proved, that the scriptures describe a certain class of human beings, as neither believers nor unbelievers, and yet proper subjects of christian ordinances. These things premised, let us now examine the evidences. The Lord direct our meditations aright.

1. John the Baptist preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, directing them to believe on the Messiah, who, as the Lamb of God, should take away the sin of the world. Acts xix: 4. John i. 29. Those who made a profession of repentance; and such a profession as satisfied John that the repentance was genuine, was not infidel, but believing repentance, he baptized. Those whom he suspected to have no more than the profession, instead of baptizing he reproved sharply, and exhorted to bring forth fruit meet for repentance, and warned them solemnly, that without such fruit, no consideration would entitle them to a place in Christ's granary, in Christ's vineyard, or among the children of Abraham. Mat. iii. 5—12. There is no reason to suppose, that Christ or his disciples baptized any whom John refused to baptize.

2. The commission of our risen Lord to the twelve : tles, is : "Disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit : teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," &c. "Preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned." "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and the remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things." Mat. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark xvi. 15, 16. Luke xxiv. 45—48. Here it is evident that the commission contained three parts. The first, and by far, the most important part, is expressed by all the three evangelists. Luke mentions it only; and he does it by representing the apostles as constituted, authoritative

and qualified witnesses of the sufferings and resurrection of Christ, and the benefits resulting from this to those among all nations, who should embrace him as their Saviour. Mark mentions the two first, and he does it by representing Christ as commanding them to preach the gospel to every creature, throughout the whole world, assuring them that whoever believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. According to this, there is no unbelieving salvation, no hereditary salvation, implied in, or consistent with, the commission : for he who believeth not, to all intents and purposes, must be damned. It appears also that when persons, upon hearing the gospel preached by the apostles, came confessing their faith, and requesting to be baptized, the apostles were to baptize them. Matthew only expresses the three parts of the commission. The other two agree with Matthew as far as they go. The purport of the first part was, to preach the gospel, for the remission of sins, for salvation, for discipleship. The purport of the second part was, to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, those who, by believing the gospel, had the remission of sins, the salvation of their souls, and had become disciples. The third part was, to teach the believing, baptized disciples, the nature, benefit, and obligation, of all the commandments of Jesus Christ, whom all his disciples rejoice to follow and obey as their Lord and master. Here it is proper to remark the difference between the two sorts of teaching. The persons taught in the one case, are unbelievers; in the other, believers. The subject matter of teaching in the one case, is the gospel of the kingdom; in the other, the laws of the kingdom. The ultimate end of the one was faith; of the other, obedience. Those who were effectually taught in the one case, were made disciples; those who were effectually taught in the other, prove their discipleship by a believing obedience. I remark also, that though baptism was really included in the all things which Christ commanded, yet as it was, in every case, to be observed immediately after believing the gospel; and represented directly the union into which believers had entered with Christ, in his burial and resurrection; it was more comprehensive in its representation than any other ordinance of Christ; and was, for these reasons, singled out from among them, and made by itself a distinct part of the commission.

3. The practice of the apostles in executing the commission, will fully explain to us the will of their master. If we have misunderstood the commission, their execution of it is the best possible commentary to explain it, and correct our mistake. On the glorious day of pentecost, Peter preached the gospel: *those who gladly received his word*, and thus evinced their discipleship, were baptized, and taught to observe all the commandments of Jesus. Acts ii. 36, 38, 41, 42. This exactly accords with the commission as I have represented it. Peter first preached the gospel for the remission of sins, that by believing it, they might be saved, and become disciples. Those who embraced it joyfully were baptized as disciples; and were, as saved persons, taught the observance of all things which Christ commanded; and in order to give them an opportunity of obeying them, were added to the church. Here is not only no intimation that any unbeliever of any description was baptized, but those who were baptized are expressly

described as those who received the gospel, manifesting that joy and peace in believing, which the belief of the gospel never fails to produce. To say that any but believers were baptized at that time, is not only to advance an unwarrantable position, but also flatly to contradict the description by the sacred writer of those who were baptized.—Philip went down to Samaria and preached Christ; and *when they believed* Philip, preaching, &c. they were baptized, both men and women. Acts viii. 5, 12. Here we have the time when men and women were baptized, expressly specified: viz. *when they believed*. Unless we are too proud, or too opinionative, to submit to be guided by apostolical example, the persons whom we will baptize, are those, and those only, who gladly receive the gospel, and the time when, is *when they believe*. Had infants been included here; why should they not be expressed, when the sacred writer was so particular, as to mention men and women? Was it of greater importance to mention them in the following passages? Deut. x. 6. xxxi. 12. 1 Sam. xxii. 13. Jer. xl. 7. Mat. xiv. 21. xv. 38. Acts xxi. 5. Is it certain that infants are ever included when men and women are mentioned, and children not? Whenever infants are included, is not the form of expression such as naturally includes them? If not, what is the use of language? may we not learn any thing without its being expressed? But does not the form of expression, “when they believed—both men and women” naturally and necessarily, exclude them?—Simon himself also *believed and was baptized*. Acts viii. 13.—Saul was surely a believer. Acts ix. 3—13.—Cornelius and his friends received the Holy Spirit. He and all his house feared God. Acts x. 2, 44—47. “Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized *who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?*” This seems to imply, that if they had not received the promise of the Spirit by faith, one would have proper authority to say nay to their baptism. Acts ii. 17, 33, 38, 39. Gal. iii. 14. Peter preached the gospel to them without any distinction, and when he was satisfied that his hearers *were taught of God*, he baptized them, and remained certain days to teach them the things concerning the kingdom of God. So far then, the practice of the apostles confirms the view we have given of the commission.—Paul spake the word of the Lord to the jailer, and to all that were in his house: they *believed* it and rejoiced, and were baptized straightway. Acts xvi. 30—35. Can any person, after reading the passage, doubt whether the all to whom the word of the Lord was spoken, the all who along with the jailer rejoiced believing in God, and the all who along with him were baptized straightway, did refer to the same persons?—How exactly is the process stated in the case of the Corinthians? Many of the Corinthians *hearing, believed and were baptized*. Acts xviii. 8.—Crispus believed in the Lord with all his house, Acts xviii. 8. and was baptized. 1 Cor. i. 14.—Gaius well-beloved for the truth which he believed, 3 John 1. was also baptized. 1 Cor. i. 14.—The household of Stephanas, being the first fruits of Achaia, (the country wherein the city of Corinth was situated,) were baptized, and they addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints. 1 Cor. i. 16. xvi. 15. The well-beloved Epenetus was the first fruit of Achaia unto Christ, and therefore must have been a member of the household of Stephanas, at the time of his conversion. There is no room left to doubt their faith.—Lydia be-

lied and was baptized, and her household. Acts xvi. 14, 15. Some say that the household of Lydia, though unbelievers, were baptized on the faith of Lydia. But how do they know that they were unbelievers? Does the passage say so? No. Is any thing said of them any where in the scriptures that implies their unbelief? No: only it is not expressly said, they did believe. If the Pedobaptists were kept to express scripture statements, they will find it very difficult to maintain infant baptism. Were I to assert that the household of Crispus were never baptized, because it is not said they were, I would be answered, that they believed, that Christ commanded all believers to be baptized, that the uniform practice of the apostles was to baptize the believers, that it is no where said or intimated that they were disobedient to the divine command, and therefore it were unreasonable to doubt of their being baptized. Just so I answer concerning Lydia's household, the only instance in which the baptism of any person is mentioned, without his believing also, or some circumstance that implies faith, being mentioned. Christ commanded to preach the gospel to people, and to make them disciples, before they were to be baptized; the uniform practice of the apostles corresponded exactly to the commission in this view of it; it is no where in scripture said or intimated that they did not believe; therefore when it is said they were baptized, it were unreasonable to doubt of their having believed. Perhaps it will be said that this is only inference. And, pray, where have I rejected inference? If the premises are good, and the inference fairly drawn, my conscience and practice submits to it as readily as to any direct, positive command. If a direct, positive command stand opposed to the inference, I conclude that the premises are bad, or the inference not fairly drawn, or the two cases are so dissimilar that there is no reasoning from the one to the other. However it may be with the writings of fallible men, I am fully satisfied that the word of God affords no ground for any inference on the subject of religion, but what was intended for our instruction, and what we are bound to receive as the word of God. It is a foul and slanderous calumny, to charge the Baptists with denying the obligation of proper inferences. No man can write a page of reasoning without inference. The inference I draw in the case of Lydia, tends to reconcile her case with Christ's commission to the apostles, with the uniform practice of the apostles, and with the spirit and genius of christianity. The inferences drawn in support of infant baptism, tend to set the particular cases examined in opposition to all the three.—Philip preached Christ to the eunuch. And as they went on their way, they came to a certain water, and the eunuch said, See here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? Philip saith unto him, If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayst. And he said, I believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God. And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him: and when they were come up out of the water, &c. Acts viii. 26—39. Here is a very plain case. Let all who wish to take the word of God for their rule, go and do likewise. Here, the condition on which one may be baptized is pointedly specified by the Spirit of God: viz. *If thou believest with all thine heart.* Who then has the daring presumption to disannul this condition, by requiring any more, or by accepting any less? Thus, all the examples of apostolic baptism

recorded in the scripture, agree with Christ's commission, with John's baptism, and with the genius of the divine administration, as introduced by John to the notice of the Jews, in confirming my position; viz. That believers in Christ, and they only, have a right to christian baptism. These examples are many: they occurred in several different countries, where customs and habits were very different, and in various circumstances. In some cases, the historian records the fact with its attendant circumstances, with an evident, studied minuteness of detail: and clearly, the more minute the detail, the more evidently decisive against unbeliever sprinkling. The only pretension it can have to countenance from the apostles, is, from mere silence, or want of minute detail. I go as far as my evidence goes; where it stops, I stop. Here then I take my position, and stand at my ease on the top of an eminence, and smile at the puny efforts of those beneath, in attempting to storm and dislodge me. Arguments founded on want of evidence, to prove a positive, are like cannons without balls: they can do no damage. I can produce collateral evidence to confirm my position.

1. The radical meaning of the ordinance with all its branches, restricts it to believers. Who but believers have a spiritual union with Christ in his burial and resurrection, and are partakers of all the benefits of such an union? Who but they have the remission of sins through faith in his blood? Who else have the answer of a good conscience by faith in his resurrection? Who else have washed away sin, calling on the name of the Lord? Who is born again, but he who believeth that Jesus is the Christ? Who are members of Christ's body, but those who by faith are united to the living head? Who have the hope that their vile bodies shall be made like unto his glorious body, but those who believe his death and resurrection, and are waiting his second coming? Who can profess faith, but those who have it.

2. Christ's kingdom is not of this world. In its laws, government, ordinances, and subjects, it is a spiritual kingdom. Unless one is born again, he can neither discern the nature and principles of this reign, nor be a subject of the kingdom. John iii. 3, 5. Baptism, as an ordinance of the kingdom, is not to be administered to any till he is born again. To introduce unbelievers into it, and administer its ordinances to unbelievers, would soon make it a kingdom of this world.

3. Paul could say of all the baptized in Galatia, that they had put on Christ. Gal. iii. 27. He therefore who baptizes any person, unless he is fully convinced by the evidence of the case, that person has put on Christ, has a plan of baptizing essentially different from the apostle Paul. Those who have not put on Christ, have no right to christian baptism.

4. Covenant relation to Abraham or circumcision, was necessary to give a right to any covenant privilege, under the typical dispensation. So, a spiritual relation to Abraham, or the circumcision of the heart, is necessary to give a right to any covenant privilege, under the spiritual dispensation. It is by faith in Christ Jesus, that one becomes a child of Abraham. Gal. iii. 29. The circumcision of Christ, not made with hands, Col. ii. 11. but is inward, of the heart and in the spirit, and makes a Jew inwardly, is the work of the spirit by faith.

Without a spiritual relation to Abraham, and the circumcision of Christ, no person has a right to christian baptism.

5. The different parts of the new covenant, necessarily exclude all but believers, from being interested in its blessings, and partakers of its privileges. I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. They shall not teach every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know me from the least to the greatest of them. I will forgive their iniquity, I will remember their sins no more. Jer. xxxi. 33. 34. Heb. viii. 8—13. Shall persons be conceived as interested in this covenant, who have not a new heart with the divine law written upon it; who need to be taught to know the Lord, because they knew him not; and who are yet in their sins? Not without making it a covenant diametrically opposite to what God has made it. As baptism is an ordinance attached exclusively to this covenant, none but those who are interested in the covenant, ought to be baptized. By comparing the fruit which people bear, with the different parts of the covenant, it will appear who are interested in it, at least as far as is sufficient to direct our conduct. Gal. v. 22, 23.

6. Unbelievers are destitute of those principles required by the divine law, for the right performance of any duty. 1. Faith. Heb. xi. 6. Rom. xiv. 23. 2. Love. Mat. xxii. 36—40. John xiv. 21, 23, 24. Rom. xiii. 10. 1 John v. 2, 3. 3. A new heart. Rom. viii. 7, 8. Eph. ii. 10. Heb. ix. 14. While in unbelief, men cannot serve God acceptably; therefore God, instead of requiring the unbelieving performance of duties, commands all men every where, to repent and believe the gospel immediately, that they may perform the duties acceptably. Therefore it is evident the unbelieving performance of baptism is not duty but sin: and therefore God does not enjoin it. Instead of standing in any stead to the person baptized in unbelief, either while in unbelief, or after believing the gospel, it, like all other sins, needs to be repented of. God does not countenance unbelief so much as to allow that one may continue in unbelief, even while one is baptizing.

7. The scripture is silent respecting the baptizing of any but believers. Though a positive cannot be proved by silence, a negative may. Paul proves that the tribe of Judah had nothing to do with priesthood, from the silence of Moses as to their right to priesthood. Just so, we prove that unbelievers have nothing to do with baptism, because the scripture is silent about their baptism. If unbeliever baptism were a law of Christ, he would not have past it over in silence.

The reader has now got my view of the meaning, the action, and the subjects of baptism. Here I would request him to stop and reflect. Have I not referred him to those passages which in all reason might be expected to contain proper information on the subject of christian baptism? Have I not considered all the passages which refer directly to christian baptism? Have I done violence to any of them, or attempted to evade their separate or combined evidence? Have I advanced any idea as implied in a passage, which the reader is not satisfied, upon examining the passage in its connexion, it does naturally suggest. Did I not proceed in every step, like one who had no system to support, but that of truth; who was fully conscious he had the truth; and fully determined to adhere to it? Should any

person say that I have too much confidence, I answer thus. Were I to return to my relations in my native land, the remembrance of the persons, the places, and the transactions which took place during my former residence there, would all rush into my mind, and render hesitation, in reference to its being my native place, impossible; either in my own case, or that of my relatives. There would be no room for acting a studied part. But should an impostor go and personate me there, he would have to study, equivocate, and contradict himself; notwithstanding all the disguise and modest reserve he was master of. In passing through the passages here reviewed, I feel the same confidence, which I think it would be criminal in me to conceal. Evidences, natural, not equivocal or far-fetched evidences, arise thick on every hand, and from every passage; much more from their combined testimony. At least such the case appears to my mind. I leave the reader to judge, whether my proceeding bears any of the marks of imposture; or whether I have not given a fair, undisguised representation of scripture testimony. Is it possible that all the passages which treat of an ordinance, especially where there are so many, should, without straining them, give a false view of the ordinance of which they treat? If so, is it not highly absurd to go to the Jewish circumcision, for information respecting christian baptism? I must now advert to some objections made to my position, that believers only have a right to christian baptism.

IV. OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

Obj. 1. "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Mat. xix. 14. From this it is argued, that little children are to be brought to Christ; and that, as they are subjects of the kingdom, they have a right to the ordinances of the kingdom. Observe 1. This applies equally to the children of the wicked, and the children of the righteous; as both are equally little children. 2. Does baptism bring them any nearer to Christ? What real difference, as it respects distance from Christ, is between the baptized and the unbaptized? Is baptism the way to Christ? If so, it certainly availeth much. Should we not in that case baptize all, whether they are willing or not? but these children were brought to Christ, not in baptism, nor through baptism, nor for baptism; therefore, bringing little children to Christ has no connexion with baptism. Do they remain with Christ after being thus brought to him? Do their souls enjoy any communion with him in consequence of being thus brought to him? May they not be as efficaciously brought to Christ by prayer, correction, instruction, and example? 3. Is the kingdom of heaven, i. e. the whole family in heaven and earth, made up of infants? What then becomes of adults? 4. Does it apply to infants in general, or to those only who die in infancy? If to children in general, how come they universally to desert from the kingdom of heaven, and enlist under the banner of Satan, as soon as they are capable of manifesting their disposition? If to those only who die in infancy, how can we know who are subjects of the kingdom, and who not, that we may baptize those who have a right to it, and no other? 5. Will not the critic

and the divine see the propriety of applying the "such" to the mind, as well, at least, as to the body? See Mat. xviii. 1—6, 10. 1 Cor. xiv. 20. 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2. How am I to receive one such little child in Christ's name, that so I may receive Christ? How am I to become as a little child in age and size, that I may enter into the kingdom of God? Mark x. 15. Wherein am I in danger of offending one of these little ones? How can I become as a new born babe, as it respects the body? Those brought to Christ were literally infants; but those of whom the kingdom of heaven is made up are compared to them—such as they, in the disposition of the mind, not in the size of the body. That in Mat. xviii. 2. was really an infant; yet adults are like it—such as it—similar to it, when converted: they become unassuming, unambitious, humble, teachable, believing their parents and depending on them, without suspicion or distrust: therefore the comparison is quite proper. Will it be said, that if infants possess that frame of mind necessary for subjects of the kingdom, they must necessarily be subjects? I answer, it is their immense distance from, and their total ignorance of, those objects which, when in view, call forth into exercise the latent seeds of those unhallowed tempers, which infants do not display, and which adults must renounce, that they may resemble infants—this, and not any purity of the heart, is the reason of their not showing, in its full exercise, in all its branches, that apostacy from God, which is manifest in all adults till renewing grace prevent it. Thus, when an adult receives the kingdom of God from his heavenly Father, he receives it, not as an infant receives it, but as it receives any benefit from its own father; with that simple confidence, and grateful satisfaction, which are the never-failing attendants on conscious unworthiness, when bountifully supplied by the care and kindness of another. Christ explicitly shows, that it is the little ones who believe on him, who shall sit with their father Abraham in the kingdom of God. Mat. xviii. 6.

Obj. 2. "The promise is unto you and to your children." Acts ii. 39. From this it is argued, that as the promise is to the children, as well as to the parents, the former, as well as the latter, ought to be baptized. This I am as ready to grant as Pedobaptists are to urge it. The promise was unto them and to their children alike; and so was baptism. That is just what I wish; for that is just what the passage suggests. But how was the promise to them both? Upon their repenting and being called of the Lord our God. v. 38, 39. How was the promise actually fulfilled, and baptism actually given? Upon their receiving his word gladly, v. 41. Therefore this passage fully warrants us to apply both the promise and baptism, to both parent and children, upon exactly the same footing, viz. their repenting, their being called of God, and their having received the word of the gospel gladly; and upon no other footing whatever. 2. It cannot refer to the promise made unto Abraham, because he only is divinely constituted the father of believers; he only has the promise of believing children, or of children at all; he only stands in the relation of father to believers. The sense in which the apostles were fathers to those who believed through their means, has no connexion with the present discussion. Nothing is said about Abraham, nor any evident

reference to him in all the context. Can any thing therefore be more arbitrary, than to maintain the promise there, has any reference to him? A historian giving the history of France, will have frequent occasion to speak of the king. Would it not be a very arbitrary law of interpretation, by which a reader would apply the title king to any king, every time the historian does not expressly say the king of France? Do we not naturally understand him to mean the king of the country he is describing, unless he give us notice to the contrary? Every peasant, nay every school-boy, is aware of this; and it is uniformly recognized, except where one is in quest of props to support a baseless fabric, and happens to have learning enough to lead him astray. The apostle had quoted the prophecy of Joel, promising the Holy Spirit to all flesh; and, as a part of all flesh, their sons and their daughters (were not these their children?) were to receive the promise. In the 33d verse, it is said: Christ, having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear. In the 38th and 39th verses it is said; Repent, &c. and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit: for the promise is unto you and to your children and to those that are afar off: i. e. unto all flesh; even as many of you, as many of your children, and as many of those that are afar off, as the Lord our God shall call. He does not in all the discourse speak of any other promise. By what rule of interpretation then, can we understand it of any other promise? Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Rom. viii. 9. But they who receive the Spirit, receive him, not by the works of the law, but by the hearing of faith. Gal. iii. 2. They receive the promise of the Spirit by faith. Gal. iii. 14. Being sons, God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their heart, crying, Abba Father. Gal. iv. 6. There is no place in the new testament, where the Spirit is promised to unbelievers: for it is they who believe on Christ, that receive the Spirit. John vii. 39. 3. The term children generally means offspring or descendants, without any regard to size or age; and, very often, however far remote the father was from the children. Thus we read of the children of Israel, the children of Edom, the children of Ammon, &c. Now it is incumbent on those who adduce this passage in support of infant baptism, to ascertain and manifest at what age the descendants cease to be children, or at what age they are excluded from the promise, and cease to be fit subjects of baptism; seeing they do not baptize all the offspring of a professed believer, old and young, but the infants only. Also, is it limited to his immediate offspring? or does it extend to his seed in their generations? The promises to Abraham certainly did; and perhaps every covenant promise in the old testament. To how many generations is the promise in force, so that the children may be proper subjects of baptism? To the third, or fourth, or thousandth generation?

Obj. 3. "Else were your children unclean; but now are they holy." 1 Cor. vii. 14. From this it has been argued, that the children are holy in virtue of the faith of the parents; that their holiness stood opposed to unclean, and was the foundation of church privileges; and therefore they ought to be baptized. Why not entitled to other church privileges as well as to baptism? I observe 1. That holiness

which consisted in ceremonial consecration, or freedom from ceremonial impurity, separate from, and independent of moral purity and devotedness to God, not only existed, but was the principal thing required in the covenant. But under the gospel, no such typical holiness, nor any thing else typical, is at all recognized: the holiness of the truth—of the Spirit, is the only holiness required and acknowledged in a religious sense. The holiness contended for as entitling to church privileges, without the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, is altogether unknown under the spiritual economy; therefore it cannot be meant in that passage. Were a typical holiness at all admitted, under the new testament, there would be no end to the holinesses, which his holiness and his emissaries would impose upon us. 2. The holiness of the children is not in consequence of the faith of the believing party, but in consequence of the sanctification of the unbelieving party. “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.” This holiness has no immediate connexion with faith, either in the parents or in the children. What is neither typical nor connected with faith, cannot be acceptable in religion. 3. If the consequent holiness of the children entitles them to church privileges, how much more will the antecedent sanctification of the unbelieving parent, entitle him to church privileges? The cause must surely be as efficacious as its effect. 4. At what age, or by what means, do the children lose this holiness, be it what it may, and with it, their title to church privileges? for it is evident, from both the writings and the practice of Pedobaptists, that they do not consider adult children entitled to baptism, in virtue of the holiness contended for in this text. 5. It is an arbitrary interpretation to impose upon a text, a meaning which is foreign to the preceding and succeeding contexts, and to the scope of the whole discourse, as well as adverse to the genius of the gospel; especially as the text itself naturally suggests a meaning agreeable to both contexts, to the doctrine of scripture on the subject discussed, and to the scriptures in general: more especially as an event recorded in scripture, renders the clearing the point cleared by this natural meaning, necessary for directing the conduct of believers in a certain tender and difficult case. God, who does all things according to the counsel of his own will, sometimes calls the one partner to his kingdom and glory, while the other is allowed to remain in sin and unbelief. It was one of the commandments of Christ, that believers should marry only in the Lord. They are the circumcision of the heart. The circumcision which is outward in the flesh, were not allowed to marry uncircumcised nations; and when this command was transgressed, they were enjoined to put away the strange wives, and such as were born of them; Ez. x. 3, 17, 19, 44. Neh. xiii. 23, 30. which they also did. Now it was a natural and important question with believers, who before their conversion had been married, and whose partners were still uncircumcised in heart, whether they might live according to the marriage engagement, with their unbelieving partners? This was the question they put to the apostle. To this question therefore we are bound to keep our attention. The apostle answers they might, and ought; and gives as a reason, that the unbelieving partner is sanctified toge-

ther with, or to, or for the use of the believing, as far as the marriage relation was concerned; for had not this been the case, the children would be, not only illegitimate, but also as unfit to be regarded in the filial relation, as the unbelieving partner was in the marriage relation. They could not do to them the duty of parents, nor receive from them the duty of children; any more than they could perform the duty of marriage to, and receive it from, their unbelieving partners; a consequence which it would seem they had not considered. What the duties of marriage, and parental and filial duties are, must be learnt from other parts of scripture; but this passage shows that whatever they are, it is lawful and right for believers, in the case supposed, to perform and receive them, as the case may be. It is absolutely necessary from the text itself, that we understand the antecedent sanctification of the parent, and the consequent holiness of the children, in the same sense, and entitling to privileges of the same nature. The holiness was not at all of a religious kind, and did not entitle to any religious privilege. It is a bad rule of interpretation, to sacrifice the whole body of the bible for the sake of supporting a darling hypothesis, by a few select passages torn from their connexion, and then made to prove what the Holy Spirit never intended.

Obj. 4. It is said that households were baptized; and that is improbable they were all without small children: and as the whole household was baptized when the parents believed, it is a natural, if not a necessary supposition, that infants were baptized with their believing parents. And the very mention of households in connexion with religion, implies the continuance of the same religious connexion between parents and children, as existed under the law. Cannot a religious Baptist mention a household that has believed, has been baptized, and has joined the church, without contradicting his religious principles? I observe 1. That the religious connexion between parents and children under the law, is as much misunderstood as any other subject. Carnal relation to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was the foundation of their claim to covenant privileges under the law; and all the religious connexion subsisting between parents and children, as a claim for privileges, even then, was that the parents were the medium through which this relation to Abraham was transmitted to the children. In every other respect, I readily grant the continuance of the same religious connexion, that existed under the law. But the covenant under which we are placed, recognizes no carnal covenant relation to Abraham, 2 Cor. v. 16. or to any other person; and we Gentiles possess none if it did. 2. The term household is not restricted to children, nor necessarily implies children at all; nay, is used to signify the domestics of a family, as contradistinguished from the children. Gen. xviii. 19. "He will command his children and his household after him." Job i. 2, 3. "There were born unto him seven sons and seven daughters. And his substance also was seven thousand sheep—and a very great household." It is not used in one single passage, to signify the children as distinguished from the servants; though it may include the children as well as the servants, unless they are particularized out of the household. But though it could be proved that it was restricted to children only, it would not serve the Pedobaptist cause; unless it were proved, that it was res-

stricted to such children as, according to the Pedobaptist plan, are fit subjects of baptism. If they baptize children because households were baptized, it is incumbent on them to prove that the term household, includes none but such as they baptize, or to baptize all that are included in it. It has already been fully proved, that the whole of every household that was baptized were professed believers, with the exception of Lydia's household: and there is a strong presumption that the brethren, whom Paul saw and comforted in her house, either were her household, or that her household made part of the brethren. There is no certainty that any more professed the faith at that time in Philippi, but the jailer and his household, and Lydia and her household. If so, Lydia's household *must have been* the brethren who received comfort; in which case they must have been believers. But the baptism of households will not serve the Pedobaptist cause, unless it be proved, not that they might contain, but that they actually did contain infants, and that such infants actually were baptized. 4. Where some in the household believed, and some believed not, the distinction is carefully marked in the scriptures. See Rom. xvi. 10, 11. "Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord." i. e. that part of his household which are in the Lord. See also Philip. iv. 22. When no such distinction is marked, we are fully warranted to conclude that no such distinction existed. Pedobaptism derives no shadow of support from the baptism of households. At what age do children cease to be of their father's household, so they may not be baptized?

Obj. 5. It is said that the scripture contains many promises to the children of the righteous; and that unless we baptize their children, we disannul the promises. Ps. ciii. 17, 18. xlv. 3, 4. lix. 20, 21. lxi. 9. lxxv. 23. I observe 1. The language of these promises is applicable to them as descendants, not as infants only. 2. It is applicable to them as posterity, in *their generations*, and not as immediate offspring only. 3. If parents are faithful to the trust committed to them in the education of their children, there is reason to expect the Lord will bless his own word, and the devout example of his own people, and answer their fervent prayers, for the conversion and happiness of their children. As there is a greater probability that the hearer of the gospel shall be blessed, than those who do not enjoy such a privilege, Rom. x. 17. 1 Tim. iv. 16. so also, there is a greater probability that those who have a pious education shall be blessed, than those who have not. If having the oracles of God, and not circumcision, was the chief advantage of the Jew, so a pious education and not baptism, is the chief advantage of the children of believers. This far then it is granted that there are promises to the children of the righteous. The diligence and prudent economy, which true religion teaches, is calculated to render the children of the righteous, comfortable and independent in temporal things: besides, when the righteous aim at promoting the glory of God, his blessing may be expected on their endeavours. But what can be thought of the following argument? There is reason to expect that, in general, the children of the righteous will be more comfortable and pious and happy, than the children of the wicked; therefore, the infants of the righteous ought to be baptized. That they shall be justified without faith, or happy without holiness,

more than other children, cannot be admitted. John iii. 36. Heb. xii. 14.
 4. The righteous, and Zion, and the blessed of the Lord, and such like terms and phrases, especially in the prophecies, mean God's covenant people, or the church of God: and are not believers, and they only, the children of the church? The promises are all yea, and Amen, in Christ to them. All things are theirs. Whoever goes to direct the spiritual promises to sinful men, through any other channel than that of faith, is contending with his Maker, and cannot prosper. There is here nothing to oppose the baptism of believers only.

Obj. 6. It is said the covenant with Abraham is the covenant of grace; that infants belonged to it; that circumcision the seal of it, was administered to them; that believers and their children are in the covenant of grace; that baptism is come in the room of circumcision; and therefore the infants of believers ought to be baptized. I observe 1. As the phrase, "the covenant of grace," is not in the scriptures, I neither know nor care what it is: but I have no hesitation in granting that God was under no obligation to make the covenant with Abraham, and consequently the making of it was an act of grace: nor was he under any obligation to bestow the blessings promised, and therefore its blessings were properly of grace. 2. I also readily grant that infants were included in it; but not as infants merely, nor as the infants of professed believers, nor yet as the infant seed of Abraham merely, nor as infants at all; but as the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—as Abraham's carnal covenant offspring. There can be no doubt of infants being circumcised. 3. If the Almighty made a covenant, it seems inconsistent with the divine faithfulness and immutability, that the same persons should be in it to day, and out of it to-morrow; more especially, if it is on a gracious, and of course absolute, unconditional footing. All who are interested in it, must, according to the divine faithfulness, inevitably enjoy its blessings. Rom. iv. 16. 4. God never made any covenant that included believers and their seed exclusively. The covenant with Noah included believers and their seed; but along with them, it included also Jews and heathens, and even the beasts of the field. The covenant with Abraham in its literal sense, included only one of his eight sons. The covenant at Sinai included the whole of Israel after the flesh, believers and unbelievers. The covenant with Levi, restricted in the most important part of the priest's office, to the family of Aaron, was continued hereditary in that tribe and family, without regard to faith or unbelief, to the conclusion of the age or state for which it was established. The covenant with David could not, in the nature of it, include any more than one of his seed, or any more than one of his seed's seed; and in that line it was hereditary, without regard to faith or unbelief. The new covenant, corresponding to the spiritual meaning of the Abrahamic covenant, includes all believers, and none but believers, who are taught of God, and have a new heart. Not a word about their seed; not one of them included in this covenant, which is the gospel dispensation, till they are born of the Spirit, John iii. 5. or called of God. Acts ii. 39. Rom. xi. 24, 25, 26. viii. 28, 29, 30. Unless a man be born again—he converted, and become as a little child, or new born babe—and as a little child receive the kingdom of God, he cannot enter therein, nor be interested in its blessings. If any person know

any other covenant which the Almighty condescended to make, I have nothing to say, as my bible reveals no other; and I find that in those, believers and their seed are not exclusively included.

A covenant which secured spiritual blessings to those included in it, cannot include the seed of believers as such. 1. In that case, it would not correspond to the type, which secured typical blessings to those included in it, not as the seed of believers, nor in virtue of their filial relation to their immediate parents, but as Abraham's covenant descendants. A personal, spiritual relation to Abraham, is the ground on which one is included in the covenant, and an heir of its blessings. 2. In that case, persons might be entitled to the inheritance, but, for want of capacity to enjoy it, never get possession. But the new covenant secures to all the children of the covenant, from the least to the greatest, divine teaching, Is. liv. 13. the remission of sins, and a new heart on which the divine law is written, as essential concomitants of a spiritual covenant relation to God, Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. in order to fit them for the enjoyment of spiritual blessings. Thus their enjoyment is made as sure as their title. 3. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. The children of believers, as well as others, must be sanctified by the truth—have their hearts purified by faith: they, as well as the seed of evil doers, must be born of the Spirit; for that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and will continue to be flesh, till born of the Spirit.

4. If the divine promises are hereditary, election is excluded. Election makes a discrimination in families, Rom. ix. 7–13. and secures the promised blessing to the children of the promise; but the Pedobaptist scheme takes the family as a whole, and leaves the salvation of all the seed doubtful; or rather, leaves their damnation certain, unless by faith they become interested in a discriminating covenant. It builds on the faith of the parent, without regard to faith in the children, or the purpose of God manifested by that faith. 1 Thes. i. 4, 5. According to election, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy: Rom. ix. 16. but according to the Pedobaptist plan, it is not of him that willeth, &c. but of the parent's faith. The two ideas, that the promise of covenant blessings are to the children of believers as such, and that the same promise is of grace—of sovereign grace—of election, are as opposite to each other, as light and darkness. Let Arminians hold infant baptism if they choose: it is something congenial to their system; but to the Calvinistic plan, it is utterly repugnant. The Calvinist Pedobaptist is between two fires, when he is fighting with the Arminian on the one hand, and with the Baptist on the other. Every blow he aims at the Baptist, strikes at the Calvinist; and every blow he aims at the Arminian, strikes at Pedobaptism. The Calvinist and the Baptist cannot be separated without the utmost violence; and yet, strange to tell, while there are Arminian Baptists, there are also Calvinist Pedobaptists.

5. The new covenant provides for the perseverance of its subjects, in the way of faith and holiness, till they arrive in glory. 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. Jer. xxxii. 38–42. John x. 28, 29. Philip i. 7. But according to the Pedobaptist plan, we must believe the Arminian maxim: A saint to-day, and a devil to-morrow: i. e. in this case, a saint while

he can show no wickedness, but a devil, as soon as he is able show that he is of his father the devil, by doing his works. John viii. 44. It is no objection here, that some Baptists also depart from the truth they professed; because it is on a personal *profession* of faith and repentance, and *corresponding fruit*, they were baptized: and as men are not discerners of hearts, there is always a possibility of supposing the profession true and sincere, when faith is feigned; and of supposing the fruit genuine, when it is spurious. The rule, "By their fruits ye shall know them," still holds good, though certain persons failed of applying it properly to their neighbours. Though they should fail in a thousand instances, still when one professes faith and repentance, and appears, so far as man can see, to bring forth corresponding fruit, we are, not only authorized, Acts viii. 37. but enjoined Mat. xxviii. 19. to baptize him. But the Pedobaptists proceed on the supposition of an absolute divine promise of spiritual blessings, of being actually, already, by divine constitution, within the bond of the covenant. As the infants which are supposed to be included in the promise, are all of a kind, and it is not on account of any visible difference between them and others of their kind, but on account of supposing the divine promise to be to all of the kind, a mistake in applying it to an individual, necessarily implies a mistake in applying it to any. Could it be proved that one believer of the gospel was lost, no believer, as such, can ever be saved. If it can be proved that one of the covenant subjects fell short, no covenant subject, as such can obtain. In this case, a mistake in one instance, is a mistake in all. Here then, there is no evading the point. Either the covenant does not provide for the perseverance of its subjects; or those who make shipwreck of faith, were never interested in its promises; for the promise of God cannot fail. If those promises which are ratified by the blood of Christ fail; if, after promising in covenant, that he will remember their sins no more, their sins are nevertheless remembered, and they eternally damned for their sins, where is our security?—from what can our strong consolation, as heirs of a promise which has failed, be drawn? Heb. vi. 16—20. How strange, that men will rather cloud the immutability of the divine promise, which is the source of their everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, than give up a practice that is palpably useless in itself, and that cannot be maintained but on principles so dishonourable to the divine character, and so repugnant to the whole tenor of divine revelation!

6. Nothing is to be done in religion by proxy. Christ, the mediator, is at the right hand of God, as the head, representative, forerunner, and intercessor of his people; and every heir of promise must be a living member of Christ's body, and come personally to God through Jesus Christ. This divine surety is the only representative the christian religion admits. Some will have a multitude of saints to represent them before God; some will have spiritual guides to represent them in religious courts on earth; many consider themselves as all represented in Christ's pretended vicar; and a great many think that the parent represents the child, in some mysterious sense, so that the parent's faith stands for the child to bring it into the covenant, and entitle it to baptism. If once religious representation is introduced, there is no telling where it may stop. Will it be said that Noah's faith

entitled his sons to a place in the ark? I answer, it did not. The sons of Noah, with their mother and their wives, were prevailed upon, either by the fear of the threatened punishment, or by their father's persuasion, and voluntarily entered the ark for safety. Had any of Noah's neighbours believed the preacher of righteousness, and repented of their crimes, would they not have been admitted into the ark? That ark which contained in safety unclean beasts, would not have been shut against unclean men, had they taken warning and sought admittance. Where punishment is deserved, and the righteous Judge is about to inflict it, "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job should intercede, they will save neither son nor daughter by their righteousness: they shall but deliver their own souls." Ezek. xiv. 12—21. If this holds in the case of temporal punishment, how much more in the case of eternal? If this view is thought inconsistent with the conduct of Jehovah to Abraham's covenant seed, and to David's royal seed, I answer, that to these two men he made covenant promises concerning their seed; and therefore he remembered his holy covenant, and did not inflict the punishment as he does in ordinary cases. But because he made covenant promises to these two men, and fulfilled them, is that any reason that others to whom no such promises were made, should expect to have fulfilled to them, promises which were never made to them? Why may not the faith of the parent avail for the salvation, as well as for the baptism, of the child? Faith is as much connected with salvation as it is with baptism. Why may not the baptism, as well as the faith of the parent, suffice for the child? Let proxy, whether by sponsors or by parents, be laid aside; for it is not from heaven but from men. Every one shall bear his own burden. Gal. vi. 5. Every one must give account of himself to God. Rom. xiv. 12.

7. Baptism has no particular connection with circumcision. 1. They are different actions. Circumcision is a cutting off the extreme point of the generating member. Baptism is the immersion of the body in water. 2. They represent different things. Baptism represents the believer's fellowship with Christ in his burial and resurrection, and all the blessings derived to him from that fellowship. Circumcision calls to remembrance the ratification of a covenant, established upon temporal promises; was a family mark to form a partition wall between that family and the rest of mankind; was a type of brokenness of heart; and a seal, certifying the fact that the faith which Abraham had before circumcision, was justifying faith, and a pattern for all his children to follow. 3. They are intended for a different description of persons. Baptism is intended for believers only, and for all believers, from all nations, whether males or females. Circumcision was intended for the males only, of one family only, without the least respect to faith or character. 4. They are to be observed at different times. Baptism is to be observed immediately upon believing and not before, without any other regard to age, than to have a capacity for believing in the heart, and confessing with the mouth, the simple gospel. Circumcision is to be observed at eight days old; the neglect of which is a breach of the covenant, punishable by exclusion, if not by death. 5. They were attached to different dispensations of the divine favour. Baptism belongs to that spiritual

dispensation, which is established upon the abolition of all types and shadows, which exhibits the divine counsel without a veil, and which is intended to continue to the end of the world. Circumcision belonged to that typical dispensation, which had its commencement in the call, or in the covenant of Abraham, and was gradually expanded into that system of carnal ordinances imposed on them till the time of reformation; but which, as types and shadows, and beggarly elements, were to vanish when accomplished, and circumcision itself among the rest. 6. Circumcision left a mark or impression, that fitted it for a token and a seal: but baptism, leaving no mark, can be neither token nor seal. Instead of being itself a seal, it is only by memory, or by the testimony of others, that one knows he has been at all baptized. It is the summit of nonsense to talk of a seal where there is no impression. 7. Abraham circumcised himself. The wife of Moses circumcised her two sons. Hence it appears that circumcision, as a family mark, was properly performed by the head, if not by any member of the family. It can hardly be made to appear that baptism ever was, or properly could be performed, by any but such as preach the gospel. 8. Circumcision binds to the observance of the whole law. Gal. v. 3. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Being baptized into Jesus Christ implies deliverance from the law. Rom. vi. 3, 4. vii. 4, 6. Know ye not that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life, and not in the oldness of the letter, i. e. not according to the law to which circumcision binds. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law, by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. Compare also Mark xvi. 16. He that believeth the gospel concerning Christ, and is baptized in the name of Christ, shall be saved by Christ, with Gal. v. 2. If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. If, after comparing these several passages and ideas, any person will yet maintain, that baptism is in the place of circumcision; i. e. that it is for the same purpose, and subject to the same laws, so that we may justly reason from the one to the other, I can only say, after an abler disputant: "Old Adam is too strong for young Melancton."

8. A right to circumcision was founded on carnal covenant relation. Though the servants and uncovenanted children of Abraham received circumcision, it was as a family mark, while they were in the family, and not to signify that they were in the covenant of which it was the appointed token. It is a mistake to suppose that Ishmael and the sons of Keturah excluded themselves from the covenant by apostacy; for it is evident that the covenant was from the beginning restricted to Isaac. Gen. xvii. 13—22. xxi. 12. In Isaac shall thy seed be called. Therefore, however pious and faithful the other sons and their seed, might be, they had nothing to do, either with the covenant, or with its token. Some of them continued circumcision, just as they took possession sometimes of part of the inheritance: they had an equal right to both. Carnal relation merely, did not entitle to cir-

cumcision, else, all Abraham's descendants had an equal right to it. Neither did spiritual covenant relation, entitle to it, else Lot, and others had as good a right to it as any Israelite : else, Titus had as good a right to it as Timothy. Carnal covenant relation, and that only, entitled to circumcision. Abraham did not convey this title to his descendants, as a believing parent, but as a covenant father. Proscrytes were circumcised, not in virtue of any personal title, but because the nation among whom they sojourned, were not allowed to admit to certain privileges, any uncircumcised person. While they lived in the nation, they must submit to the laws of the nation, or be counted unclean, and suffer the want of many profitable privileges. Not attending to these things, has occasioned many mistakes. Some maintain that descent from Abraham alone is sufficient for circumcision. Others can easily confute that position, and then think they can easily establish the opposite ; that—it consists of so many heterogeneous inconsistent parts, I know not how to express it, at least, without a tedious circumlocution—that the covenant was made with Abraham as a believer; that he is not the exclusive father in the covenant; but that all believers come into the covenant, not as Abraham's seed, but as fathers; stepping, as it were, into the place of the father of believers in the most important sense of that phrase, viz. that the promise is unto them and to their seed, as it was to Abraham and to his seed. Both positions are equally erroneous, though not equally pernicious; the last being as much calculated to speak peace, and lull the conscience asleep, at a distance from Christ, as any sentiment that can easily be advanced. A hereditary interest in spiritual blessings !!! What a gross idea ! A right to baptism is founded on a spiritual relation to Abraham. He has no spiritual, uncovenanted children. All his spiritual children are such in virtue of the covenant. Abraham is never called the father of believers and their seed ; but only the father of believers. Believers and their seed are never called children of Abraham. If it is they who are of the faith, that are the children of Abraham, Gal. iii. 7. the seed of believers may withdraw their claim, till they believe. It is as believers, and not as the seed of believers, they can successfully claim that relation. He who is trying to make that which is born of the flesh, spirit, is trying to make Jesus Christ a liar. John iii. 6.

9. The infant seed of believers, therefore, have no more claim to baptism, than any other unbeliever. Are they born of the flesh, or of the Spirit ? If of the flesh, they are only flesh as well as others. Are they born of blood, or of God ? If of blood, they are not sons of God. John i. 12, 13. and have no more claim to the privileges of sons than others. If they are born of the flesh, and not of the Spirit of promise, they will persecute them who are born after the Spirit, Gal. iv. 29. and therefore are dangerous among them: they ought to be cast out. v. 30. If after the Spirit, those who persecute them are of the flesh, and ought to be avoided. Mat. x. 28. Are they children of the flesh, or children of the promise ? If of the promise, they are counted for the seed, are heirs according to the promise, and the promise is sure to all that seed. Rom. iv. 16. They are then the children of God ; and if children, then heirs—of God, and joint heirs with Christ. Rom. viii. 17. This is a high claim for the believer to

claim for his children. But high as it is, if the promise that Jehovah will be a God to them and to their seed, in its spiritual sense, be to them as it was to Abraham, it is criminal unbelief, it is calling God a liar, to hesitate in advancing the claim. Abraham would not hesitate to advance it in behalf of his spiritual children; and to the carnal children the spiritual promise never was made. If the seed of believers are included in the promise, believers have as good a warrant to plead it in favour of their children, as in their own favour, or as Abraham has in favour of his children. Why should they plead the premises with confidence, and not draw with equal confidence the unavoidable conclusion? Whether does the hesitancy arise from a doubt of the promise being to the seed, or of God's fulfilling his promise? The one or the other it must be: for if he is their God, he has prepared for them a city. Heb. xi. 16. If they are the children of the flesh, they are not the children of God; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. Rom. ix. 8. One said that the shepherd ought to mark the lambs, as well as feed them. If the shepherd put A's mark on B's lambs, especially when A tells him the lambs are not his, by what name shall his conduct be described? If the mark of God's children, were put on the children of the devil, especially when God has expressly disclaimed all relation to them, is it not robbery? If they are the children of God, when infants, how old must they be, before they become of their father the devil? If this should sound rather harsh, let it be remembered, that Christ applied it to the descendants of as eminent a believer, as our age can produce. It is therefore no more harsh than correct.

10. Man and wife are more nearly related than parent and child. For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore, they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. Mat. xix. 5, 6. Noah and his sons had their wives saved with them in the ark. Lot got his wife with him out of Sodom. Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, could deliver neither son nor daughter, possibly they might deliver their wives. Ezek. xiv. 20. For what knowest thou, O man, that thou wilt not save thy wife? 1 Cor. vii. 16. When outlandish wives were put away, their children were put away as a necessary consequence. Ezra. x. 3. It is in virtue of the sanctification of the unbelieving partner, that their children are holy; and for want of such sanctification in the unbelieving partner, the children are unclean. 1 Cor. vii. 14. From all these passages it is manifest, that whatever connexion may exist between father and son, it must yield to that between husband and wife; for a man shall leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife, &c. Could the Pedobaptists find, in the scripture, such a declaration as this, respecting father and child, how would they triumph! We should be apt to hear it at the beginning, at the end, and at the middle of every baptism. Will it be replied that these words refer to marriage, not to baptism? So does 1 Cor. vii. 14. and it refers to baptism as much as the 17th of Gen. Were the Pedobaptists confined to those passages which refer to baptism, they would make but a lame defence. If the relation between Abraham and his carnal covenant offspring, represents that between him and his spiritual offspring, marri-

age represents, if possible, a still higher union; that between Christ and his people. When the husband comes to be baptized, and brings his wife with him, why do the Pedobaptists, by baptizing him and refusing her, put asunder what God hath joined together?

11. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth. It seems essential to true and spiritual worship, that the worshiper perform the worship cheerfully and voluntarily. If God be a cheerful giver of his earthly substance, how much more, of his devotional service, where the heart is principally required? Can any involuntary service, in spiritual worship, be pleasing to him, who requireth all our obedience as a proof of our affection to him? If baptism is a spiritual ordinance, and infants are unconscious, involuntary in the observance of it, how can such service be acceptable to God?—Can any one tell they will ever be in a better frame?

12. If infants are included in the covenant, and, as subjects of the covenant, are baptized, why are not they members of the church which is united in the bond of that covenant which includes them? Abraham's carnal covenant offspring were members of that church which was united in the bond of that covenant which included them. If they are members, why are they not treated as members? Can any reason be given, why baptized members, without any fault on their part, should be prohibited the Lord's supper? Does the new testament warrant us to believe that, in the primitive churches, there were two orders of members; one order who communicated at the Lord's table, and another, who refused, or were forbidden, to do so? Do the qualifications required for the Lord's supper, imply any superiority in faith and piety, over what is implied in the qualifications required for baptism? Do not the objections against infant communion, apply with all their force against infant baptism? Will not the objections against both admit of similar answers? When arguing in favour of infant baptism, or answering objections against it, only substitute for it, infant communion, and will any incongruity follow? The Lord's supper is intended for the disciples of Christ, and so is baptism. See *Exod. xii. 4, 15, 19*. And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it, according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating, shall make your count for the lamb. For whosoever eateth that which is leavened, during seven days, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel; whether he be a stranger, or one born in the land. The feast of the passover, and the feast of unleavened bread, was the same. From this account it is evident, that as soon as infants could eat, they eat the passover, for they could get no bread but unleavened, during seven days; and as soon as they could consume any meat, they were counted in the number of the eaters of the pascal lamb. It is also to be considered, that the children, as well as the parents, were interested in the benefit procured and commemorated by the passover. It is perfectly unreasonable then to doubt of their eating the passover, as soon as they could eat a meal. If therefore baptism came in the room of circumcision, and the Lord's supper in the room of the passover, every passage which supports infant baptism on the footing of infant circumci-

nion, equally supports infant communion on the footing of infants eating the passover.—Church History also puts them much on a level. See Dr. WALL's History of Infant Baptism, p. 517. Very near one half of the christians in the world still continue that practice. The Greek church, the Maronites, the Armenians, the Cophti, the Ahasins, the Muscovites, as is related by Brerewood, Alvarez, Ricaut, Heylin, &c. Care is to be taken, says the Ordo Romanus, Tit. de Bapti concerning *Infants*, that they should not, without the utmost necessity, receive any food or suck, after they are baptized, *before they communicate in the sacrament of our Lord's body*. This rule is delivered in a book which Dr. CAVE supposes to be a work of the eighth century, but which others think was not written before the eleventh. Pope Paschal II. who lived at the beginning of the twelfth century, says (Epist. xxxii. apud Binnii Concil. Tom. vii. p. 530.) We know the bread was given of our Lord by itself, and the wine by itself. And we require that custom to be always so observed in the holy church, *except in the case of Infants*, and such as are very weak, and cannot swallow the bread, *for whom 'tis sufficient to communicate in the blood*. See Edin. Evan. Mag. vol. 2d. p. 84. A. D. 1804. It appears then that infant communion, as well as infant baptism, is of considerable antiquity and extent among professing christians. On the whole, then, I conclude, that infant baptism implies infant church-membership, and infant church-membership implies infant communion; and that such as practise the one without the other, are wholly inconsistent with themselves. In short, infant baptism has no foundation but in mistaken views of the Abrahamic covenant, of the state of Israel after the flesh, and of a few passages in the New Testament, none of them connected with baptism, which are tortured on the rack to make them accord with these mistaken views. The same views of the kingdom of Israel, on which infant baptism is founded, has already proved a sufficient foundation on which to erect the anti-christian hierarchy, and it still supports it. But the tide of scripture light sweeps away foundation, superstructure and all. The more scripture light increases, the more infant baptism is renounced; and the more difficulty its abettors find in supporting it. The process of reasoning in the sixth objection, is totally subversive of gospel principles; and therefore can never establish infant baptism.

V. THE PRACTICAL USES OF BAPTISM.

The practical uses of baptism deserve our next attention. 1. It is calculated to impress the truth on the mind. The baptized person is conscious, that he is, by nature, a transgressor of the divine law; that, as such, he is obnoxious to divine vengeance; that he is polluted, an enemy to God in his heart by wicked works; that God loved the world to such a degree that he gave his Son to die for the guilty; that Christ voluntarily undertook to redeem sinners by bearing their sins in his own body on the tree; that he actually did die, the just for the unjust, to bring sinners unto God; that God is through him reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing unto them their trespasses; that for Christ's sake his sins are pardoned; that he is justified by faith, and has peace with God; that he is crucified with Christ, and so is dead to the law, to the world, and to sin by the body of Christ;

that this was manifested in his being buried with Christ, signifying that he was dead with him; and that as Christ rose from the dead by the glory of the Father, so he should rise from the death of sin to a life of holiness, in hopes of having his vile body raised from the bed of corruption, and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, and enjoy him for ever and ever. All these ideas are implied in Christ dying for our sins, being buried, and rising again for our justification; and our believing union with him therein. This union, with all its benefits, and all it implies, is practically set before us in our baptism. Whenever therefore we call to mind, that we were buried with Christ by baptism unto death, the truth is in a lively manner brought to our mind. Here we behold the privileges to which we are called, as sons of God and joint heirs with Christ; the state we are in as justified and sanctified, surrounded with danger, and daily needing to mortify our members which are on the earth; and the prospects opening before us, of having done with sin and sorrow, of having our bodies fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, and of being forever with him, enjoying and seeing him as he is.

2. By a distinct view and a lively impression of such truths, our hope is animated. Can any thing strengthen and enliven hope, and encourage it to a patient enduring of trials mortifying of the flesh with its affections and lusts, running the gospel race, and fighting the good fight of faith, like a believing view, and a conscious feeling of our privileges, state, and prospects, as one with Christ, the possessor of heaven and earth, and, through Christ, one with the Father?

3. It enforces devotedness to God, and deadness to sin and the world. By our believing union with Christ crucified, we are crucified to the world, and the world unto us. Christ crucified brings such glorious prospects to view, as eclipses the supposed, the delusive excellence of worldly objects. How can we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? We died to sin in the person of our surety; and how can we love or practise what cost us our life? We are dead to sin, and therefore cannot be alive in sin. We are no longer citizens under the government of sin, therefore sin shall not have dominion over us. Having died to the world, we are no longer citizens of it; we are only strangers and pilgrims travelling through it, to the heavenly country of which we are true born citizens; therefore we do not feel interested in its interest; its beauties and delights engage not our affections; its glories attract not our admiration; nor does its business engross our attention. Christ purchased us by his blood; therefore we are not our own; not are we to live to ourselves, but to him whose we are, who died for us and rose again: we are not anxious about providing for ourselves; for he to whom we owe our life, engaged to supply us with every needful good. Beholding such beauty, excellency and glory in God, as our God and Father; having tasted of the sweetness and pleasure of communion with him, possessing the hope of enjoying him forever, we are captivated with his divine excellency; and seeing in him every desirable object, esteeming him the source of all happiness, we cheerfully forego every other pleasure, and all our affections centre in him, the object of our supreme delight.

4. Considering the great blessings derived to believers from their union with Christ crucified, the miserable state of mankind without such union, and that it is only through that union these blessings are obtained, the necessity of such union is clearly manifested. There is no other name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved. It is only by faith we can derive such blessings from Christ; for he who believeth not shall be damned. If the uniform and inviolable effect of union with Christ, is holiness of heart and life; and if, without such union, we have no part in Christ; Baptism, wherein is exhibited this blessed union, with its blessed effects, inculcates the necessity of such union. Sin cannot be successfully mortified, nor the holiness of the truth promoted, but by a fellowship with Christ in his death and resurrection; and wherever this fellowship exists, true holiness is the never failing consequence. A person's being baptized in the name of Christ, as his crucified but risen substitute and representative, is a professed and visible representation of his fellowship with him. The intention and natural effect of the believers being buried with Christ by baptism into death, is, that like as Christ was raised from the dead, even so they also should walk in newness of life. As the believer is planted in the likeness of his death, he shall be also of his resurrection. There is no part of scripture more beautiful, more consoling, and more encouraging to the believer, or leads more directly and effectually to the destruction of the body of sin, than those passages which point out the meaning of the ordinance, and thence deduce motives to holiness and consolation. Is it any wonder that Christians should be careful to keep it from being clouded by the fogs of error and superstition? Let us manifest its practical effects in our life and conversation.

VI. MISTAKES CONCERNING BAPTISM.

According to the view of baptism maintained in this essay, it will appear that several mistakes concerning it prevail in the world. I shall just touch at some of them. 1. That it is abolished. Of this mistake there are two kinds. Some think that it belonged exclusively to the introductory ministry of John the Baptist; and that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the only one worth observing, or that was observed, unless very seldom, by the apostles; and that toward the end of the apostolic age, it was wholly laid aside. Others think that it was an ordinance of proselytism; and that the apostles used it as such, baptizing proselytes and their families; but never baptizing any children born to professing Christians after such profession, either in infancy, or upon believing. This last opinion seems to imply, that there is a vast difference respecting Christian purity, between heathens and unbelieving professors; and that such unbelieving professors, communicate such superior Christian purity to their offspring. We find, however, that when Christ commissioned his apostles to preach the gospel among all nations, for the obedience of faith, he enjoined on them to baptize the believing disciples, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, without any qualification or limitation, as to time, place, or circumstances. This would lead us to think, that baptism is of equal extent and duration, with

true disciple, and with obeying the "all things" to the end of the world. We would also naturally conclude from it, that baptism had, in every sense, the same respect to, and connexion with, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It seems rather odd too, that the Spirit should baptize in his own name. In the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the Scripture saith expressly, that Christ himself is the baptizer: and, as, baptizing in the Holy Spirit, he is distinguished from all his servants. The apostles indeed prayed to Christ that he would baptize in the Holy Spirit; Acts viii. 15. and their prayers were answered. In the case of Cornelius and his friends, it would appear that this baptism was performed without the expectation of the apostle Peter. The Holy Spirit is not the baptizer, but the element. No work performed by the Spirit, is ever called baptism in the scriptures. Baptism is also immediately connected with believing the gospel, and being saved; without any intimation of a future change, as long as there are sinners to be saved by believing the gospel. The apostles taught the disciples to be baptized, and baptized them as soon as they believed; and instead of thinking that the baptism of the Holy Spirit superseded that enjoined by Christ, they urged the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as an argument to enforce the baptism enjoined by Christ. The meaning of the ordinance is equally applicable to believers in every age. It is equally significant now, as at any former period. Baptism is frequently mentioned long after the commencement of Christianity; and mentioned in connexion with the spirituality of the Christian dispensation, not only without any hint of its disconformity with the spiritual dispensation, but so interwoven with it, as to be a part of it. This is so evident, that some have mistaken it for divine operations on the mind. Therefore, while christianity continues, christian baptism continues as a christian ordinance, to be observed by all christians.

2. That it is a saving ordinance. Some think that it is but another name for regeneration, and that it takes away original sin. But baptism, as an ordinance of christianity, is not intended for any sinner, till he is regenerated by the gospel believed in the heart, justified from all his crimes, and accepted in the Beloved—till he is a christian. Persons are said to be born of water, to wash away their sins, and baptism is said to save them, in the same sense as the bread in the Lord's supper is called the Lord's body, and the wine, his blood; and as the rock in the wilderness is said to be spiritual, and to be Christ, because it had a spiritual meaning, and represented Christ. The emblem gets the name of that of which it is emblematical. Baptism signifies that the believer has, by faith, experienced the blessing of regeneration, and all other blessings connected with it. But too often the external representation is observed, without the internal reality. According to the scriptures, the internal reality does not accompany, but precede, the external sign.

3. It seems to be also a mistake, that the primary meaning of the ordinance is purification, or washing away sin. The most comprehensive meaning, which is the cause and source of all the others, is naturally the stock; and the other meanings, the branches growing out of it. It is certain that the meaning enlarged upon in the 6th of Rom. is the most comprehensive, and that from which all blessings flow, as

necessarily included in it. Is it not as united to Jesus by faith, that we have the forgiveness of sins and every blessing?

4. Neither does it mean admission into fellowship, either with Christ or with his church. Sinners are, by the faith of the gospel before baptism, admitted into fellowship with Christ, and with his body the church universal. They are admitted into fellowship with a particular church, by the voluntary act and declaration of that church as a body, receiving them as members, after being baptized unto Christ.

5. It is also a mistake, to suppose that baptism is intended for unbelievers; for the scripture says: He that believeth and is baptized; Repent and be baptized. All the baptized in Galatia had put on Christ. The baptized in Rome were dead to sin, and buried with Christ; but unbelievers are alive in sin, and at variance with Christ. To baptize unbelievers, makes modern baptism essentially different from apostolic baptism.

6. It is a mistake, to suppose sprinkling is baptism. Being enclosed completely by the element is essential to baptism. The word baptize itself, in the original language, is, in the opinion of the learned, sufficiently expressive of what has been called the mode of baptism. No scholar of note in the world, would hazard his reputation by dissenting from the united testimony of the learned on this point. It is only by prejudice, that will disgrace their character among the learned, by maintaining that sprinkling is the meaning of the word baptize, or was the practice of the apostles. Some, "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 generally succeed as well as arguments, sometimes better, yet a candid mind will disdain to take the help of a falsehood, even in support of truth." Dr. Campbell's Lectures on Pulpit Eloquence, p. 480.

VII. EVILS CONSEQUENT ON BAPTISING UNBELIEVERS.

1. It sets aside the Divine command by human tradition. It is exceedingly evident that Christ commanded the apostles to baptize the disciples, and that the apostles carefully observed the injunction of their master. So far we have a command, and an example, and no farther; so far, therefore, and no farther, we are bound to obey the command, and imitate the example; nay, to obey any farther, is to transfer our allegiance from Christ, the king of Zion, to a usurped, human authority. Such human tradition, not commanded by Christ, has been introduced in unbeliever baptism. When any of the baptized unbelievers become subjects of divine teaching, they are taught by this human tradition, that their baptism in unbelief, is acceptable to God, is christian baptism, and is therefore sufficient for them; thus, they are kept in disobedience to the divine command: "Arise, and be baptized." Acts xxii. 16.

2. It sanctions as acceptable obedience, what God expressly dis-

approves, viz: the unbelieving performance of duty. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. Heb. xi. 6. It is by faith we are justified, or become righteous. Rom. iii. 22, 23, 30. iv. 5. v. 1. Without this justification, all Adam's race are unrighteous, ungodly, wicked. "There is no difference." But the very prayer and sacrifice of the wicked are abomination to the Lord. Prov. xv. 8, 9, 26, 29. xxi. 4, 27. xxviii. 9. Therefore, all the religious services of unbelievers are abomination to the Lord. Isa. i. 10—16. Will it be said that the infant seed of believers are not wicked? If not they do not need justification, and such of them as die in infancy, are safe and happy independent of Christ: a position which, I should suppose, no christian will maintain. Will it be said that the parents are believers? I answer; Christ has nowhere commanded parents to baptize their children, or rather, to get their children baptized; but he has commanded the subjects themselves to be baptized; and unless the subject is visibly a believer, his baptism is an unbelieving service; and those who maintain it, are maintaining the unbelieving performance of religious duties as pleasing to God. If unbelieving obedience is acceptable in one instance, why not in another? in which case, faith, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit are unnecessary. The new creating, Eph. ii. 10. and the purging of the conscience, Heb. ix. 14. may be dispensed with, as the unbelieving performance of duty is acceptable.

3. It deceives the baptized respecting his state before God. Every one sees in the scriptures that it is disciples, christians, saints, who were baptized; he sees also that such characters are there represented as intitled to, and possessors of, all christian privileges; that all the divine promises of provision and protection here, and of eternal life hereafter, are made to such characters; and that consequently, there is an intimate connection between being a disciple, being baptized, and being saved. Accordingly, as there is neither precept nor example in the New Testament, for the baptism of any, nor a promise of spiritual blessings to any, but christians, those who hold to, and attempt to support, unbeliever baptism, endeavour to establish a sort of hereditary, unbelieving discipleship, christianity, holiness, churchmembership, and covenant relationship to God, which intitle unbelievers to church privileges, to the promise of spiritual blessings, and consequently, to christian baptism. When a person is baptized upon this principle, and maintains a decent character in society, he conceives himself a mighty good christian; that the sure mercies of David, the promises of the everlasting covenant, are to him; and these blessings being sealed to him, he cannot fail of being saved. Should he indulge in those sinful pleasures, and fashionable vices, so prevalent in the baptized, unbelieving world, but so contrary to the spirit of christianity, he still hopes (and if the promises be true, his hope is well founded,) that as he is a covenant child, within the bond of the everlasting covenant, and the promises sealed to him, God will yet bring him back in his own due time, his title is in the covenant ordered in all things, and sure, and he shall be saved without fail. Is this an imaginary picture? is it not a correct description of the bulk of nominal christians? Can a more effectual method of deception be devised? The qualms of his conscience are calmed, and its convictions are stifled, by the hope that is fairly founded on the doctrine

and practice of unbeliever baptism, that his state is on the whole safe; thus he is lulled into carnal security, his system crying peace, peace, to him, when there is no peace from the Lord.

4. It deprives the ordinance of its practical use. I do not say that baptism, if scripturally observed, can be of no use to the spectator; but I must say that, like every other ordinance, its chief use is to the person observing it. Can any person who reads the bible say that baptism does the unbeliever any good? Is it intended to operate like a charm, or physically? or does it depend for its efficacy on conscience, understanding, and reflection? If either of the two former, neither faith nor intellect is necessary, and every person, old and young, believing and unbelieving, ought to be baptized. If the latter only, then it can be of no spiritual use to any without divine teaching; for the natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Even if the baptized should afterwards believe, what he had done in unbelief, while under the influence of enmity against God, is not likely to afford him much satisfaction or refreshment, in a retrospective view of them: if it was only done to him without his understanding or consent, it is far from mending the matter; for having been without consciousness as well as without faith, he knows nothing of the transaction but by report, and of course cannot feel the impression he would, had he himself, voluntarily and understandingly, observed it. The very design of ordinances is in condescension to our weakness; and the use of them, to make sense assist faith: now, if it is only by report that one knows he has observed an ordinance, the very use and design of an ordinance is annihilated.

5. It confounds the distinction between the churches and the world. God, at an early period of the world, established an enmity between the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent. This enmity soon shewed itself when Cain slew Abel. It was disregarded when the sons of God took wives of the daughters of men; and the consequence was, the prevalence of cruelty, violence, and oppression, and a total apostacy from God; insomuch that, with the exception of eight persons, all the inhabitants of the world were destroyed by the flood. Infinite wisdom did not see proper to give the Holy Spirit so generally or abundantly, till after Christ was glorified; that all might see that the promise of the Spirit, and every spiritual promise, is ratified by the blood of Christ, and that to his death we are indebted for their fulfilment. The constitution and government of the spiritual kingdom, as well as the state and character of its members, depended greatly upon the abundant effusion of the Spirit. Before the call of Abraham, it does not appear that any society was formed for religious worship. Their religious services might properly be called family worship: and, as that which is born of the flesh is flesh, however pious and devout the parent might be, his offspring often might be, perhaps mostly were, (else how could idolatry so universally prevail?) real apostates from God. In that case, the distinction in question could not visibly appear. At last God called Abram from his country, and established a typical distinction between his family, in the chosen line, and all the families of the earth; and gave them circumcision as the family mark, to be a middle wall of partition be-

tween them. Thus they were kept distinct, as God's peculiar people. When they formed alliances with the uncircumcised nations, God called it committing adultery, because it was a breach of the covenant that distinguished them as his. It was one of the gracious promises of the new covenant, that, from the commencement of its operations, there should no more come into the heavenly Jerusalem the uncircumcised (in heart no doubt) and the unclean. Isa. lii. 1. Accordingly when the Messiah should come to ratify the covenant by his death, he was to be like a refiner's fire, &c. to purify the sacerdotal tribe, that they might be fitted to offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. This applies to the whole of that holy nation, who are a kingdom of priests; therefore it becomes an important inquiry: "Who may abide the day of his coming?" &c. Mal. iii. 2, 3. Encouragement was given to Jeremiah chap. xv. 19. that if he took the precious from the vile, he should be as Jehovah's mouth. Let them return unto thee, i. e. come to thy terms, but return not thou unto them. Also Ezekiel is instructed that the priests who put no difference between the holy and profane, nor maintain the difference between the clean and unclean, are violating the divine law, profaning God's holy things, and profaning Jehovah himself among the people. Also, the prophets who should be accessory in confounding the distinction in question, so that no man should repent of his iniquity, Jer. viii. 6. were daubing the people with untempered mortar. Ezek. xxii. 26, 28. Almost as many methods have been tried to confound this distinction, as there are different religious societies in the world. But this distinction is of God's making: the churches of Christ and the world, are two distinct opposite bodies, visibly so, which are always at variance, and can never coalesce: he who attempts to unite them, attempts to overthrow the divinely established order, and so is fighting against God. But the baptism of unbelievers, on the footing of their being disciples, christians, church-members, &c. is breaking down the wall, mixing the world with the churches of the saints, and confounding the distinction between him that serveth the Lord, and him that serveth him not. If the kingdom of God is made up of visible believers and visible unbelievers promiscuously, where will the world be? What will become of the distinction so much insisted on in the scriptures, as essentially necessary to faithfulness in the Lord's vineyard, so that the hurt of people may not be healed slightly, by crying peace, when there is no peace. If any man defile the temple of God, by taking the visibly uncircumcised in heart into it, he must be tried for his life. If instead of gold, silver, and precious stones, living stones fitted for the building, any assistant builder build wood, hay, and stubble, gospel light will manifest, and fiery trials will consume his work, and he will lose his crown of rejoicing in that great day. Let those who baptize, and introduce into the church, of which Christ is the only foundation, visible unbelievers, tremble at the consequences. If unbeliever baptism is divinely appointed, let the divine authority for it be fairly pointed out, and let all who tremble at the word of God observe it; but until fairly pointed out, let it be discountenanced by all who look for divine approbation. Let none be blindfolded by those who would baptize persons as neither believers nor unbelievers, as the scriptures give us no direction respecting our religious treatment of that unknown class of human beings.

LETTER I.

SIR,

In beginning your letters to Mr. ELDER, you say that on perusing his letters to Mr. JACKSON, it occurred to you, that his views of the ordinance of baptism ought not to be circulated in the community as the doctrine of the scriptures; and that, from a desire to contribute to the more general diffusion of divine truth, you have been induced to make them the subject of the remarks which, in your letters, you have submitted to his consideration. I give you full credit for conscious sincerity, in differing in opinion and practice from Mr. ELDER, and it is not with reluctance I give you praise for the desire you manifest to contribute to the more general diffusion of divine truth; and also for several excellencies in the execution of your good design. As a teacher of religion, and a pastor of a flock, you are no doubt called upon to use all scriptural means within the compass of your ability, to preserve the truth of God, so dear to the heart of every christian, from being adulterated; and the flock which you are bound to feed with wholesome and nourishing food, from being led astray and becoming the prey of ravening wolves. You write upon the subject like one who understood and had well digested his own system. This is evident from the clear, concise, comprehensive, and well arranged manner, in which you have communicated your views to the public. Had your views been the truth of God, you have given sufficient proof that you could have exhibited it to advantage.

I do not see that Mr. ELDER has much reason to complain of harsh usage from you, either as it respects the general spirit of your piece, or the liberal use of illiberal epithets. In a controversial piece, a few exceptions may be overlooked. In this respect, Mr. JACKSON of all the men in the world, had the least cause of complaint, though he raised a loud clamour. But the chief excellency I admire in your letters, is, your resting the cause on the scriptures alone. Confident as I am, that the Baptist principles are, not only contained in the scriptures, but closely interwoven with the principal doctrines of the gospel, and profusely scattered over the whole face of divine revelation, I regard your abandoning human authority as a great victory gained to the Baptists. By this I would not insinuate that there are not questions and difficulties sometimes started, relative to the faith and practice of christians, which human authors may assist to solve and remove. Of this kind are many of the remarks of Pedobaptists on the word baptize. I see nothing improper in a respondent's citing human authors to confront those which the first writer produced as confirmations of his position, provided warning be given that it is not as authority, but as confronting pretended opposite authority, and as detecting fallacious statements and sophistical arguments, they are produced. Neither is there any impropriety in a disputant's quoting writers of eminence, who held the opposite side of the question, whose judgment therefore could not be swayed by partiality, to confront

and invalidate human evidence on the same side, as is done in Pengilly's Guide to Baptism, a pamphlet which I would strongly recommend to your careful, prayerful, and candid perusal. I have been told (for I have never seen their pieces) that it is in this point of view that Messrs. Booth and Judson quote so many human authors. It seems evident that for the above purposes only Mr. ELDER cited them.

But if you have not been uncommonly harsh, you have been sufficiently contemptuous. Should one form his opinion of Mr. ELDER from your pamphlet, he must conclude him to be a simpleton, led by the nose, having no judgment of his own, nor a sufficient degree of biblical and general knowledge to form a judgment for himself. This representation is groundless. Another point on which Mr. ELDER has much cause of complaint is your misrepresenting his meaning. See for instance, your account of his removing, in p. 34, Mr. JACKSON's difficulty respecting the immersion of the Philippian jailer; p. 52, 53. The mis-statement there is so gross, and the sarcasm founded on it so misplaced, as to prove a spot on your candour not easily wiped off. Mr. ELDER does not take for granted that whatever is in Calcutta is likewise in Philippi, &c. but finds from history a general fact, of which he gives the tank in the prison yard at Calcutta as a specimen, viz. that the habits and manners of the people in other countries are dissimilar from ours. So in eastern and warmer climates, they have generally, in prison yards, as well as in private yards and gardens, cisterns of water for necessary purposes. They are usually furnished with tanks: therefore there was nothing unlikely in the action being, what the word used to express it requires that it should be, viz. immersion. As an instance of the unfitness of the inhabitants of one country to judge of what happens in another country whose customs are very dissimilar, I would remind you of the eastern king, who dismissed as base liars, unfit for commercial or friendly intercourse, those Europeans who told him, that in Europe water becomes so firm that horses travel on it with their carriages. That king would throw away as false, the bible itself, should it happen to assert what Mr. Ross witnesses every winter. Your remark on bush, bushel; lint, lintel; as compared to bapto, baptizo, are of the same class: for no person will say that bushel is derived from bush, or lintel from lint; but every scholar knows that baptizo is derived from bapto; and is, if not exactly, yet nearly synonymous. The Greek language possesses a peculiar facility of forming one word from another with but a small shade of difference in meaning. The English language furnishes but a few examples; of which take for example, efficacious, effectual; lamb, lambkin. These are only specimens of misrepresentation. And he who, to support his cause, misrepresents his fellow who is alive to answer for himself, may be expected to use greater liberties with the sacred writers, who have gone the way of all the earth. You will allow that others may feel in respect to your piece, as you did in respect to Mr. ELDER's. I hope the same benevolent design and philanthropic feeling, which, you say, has moved you to write, has moved me to meet your performance with these remarks.

In p. 6. you say "Any special purpose of mercy and grace, toward man in general or the church in particular, is in scripture language termed a covenant; and the revelation of such a purpose is called

"making a covenant. Hence, the word, as found in the sacred records, is of greater extent than in other books. It includes not only agreement by mutual consent, but likewise any arrangement by decree, command, promise, or even testament. Inattention to this has given rise to much needless controversy. The system of ordinances given to the church of Israel, is by Moses called the covenant; by Paul in his epistle to the Galatians, the law; and in the epistle to the Hebrews, according to our version, sometimes covenant, and sometimes testament. The term in the original is the same." If the same original term is rendered indifferently "covenant" and "testament," why do you say, in stating what it includes, "or even testament?" Was it because you did not know that the two words, being indifferently the translation of the same Greek word, in the same epistle, from the same pen, in reference to the same transaction, must in those writings be synonymous? Or was it because you were afraid others would know it, and then look into Heb. ix. 16, 17. and see your view of a covenant completely overthrown by the apostle? Or *even testament*, as if it was a great wonder the word covenant should ever mean testament, and therefore we should seldom meet with it in that sense. Now the word testament, as used among men, comes much nearer the scripture covenant than the word covenant itself, in its common acceptation. Allowing a covenant might be revealed in the form of a promise, command, &c. still it is of no force till ratified. But the very design of making a covenant is to bind forcibly by the covenant: therefore what has no force to bind is not a covenant. It is impossible to separate the divine covenants from the confirming victim. This at once destroys your idea of two covenants with Abraham. What you call the second, and which only you allow to be everlasting, not being separate from what you call the first, ratified according to scripture, is of no force. There must of necessity be the death of the testator. See the preceding essay on the Abrahamic covenant.

You say, p. 7. "This [first] covenant is confirmed by no seal, nor called everlasting;" and "this [second] covenant is confirmed by a seal, and expressly called an everlasting covenant." I understand it to be one and the same covenant, though different parts of it were revealed at different times, and the same part renewed several different times. It was first a promise only, then it was confirmed into a covenant. Gen. xv. 17. when the emblems of the divine presence passed between the parts of the ratification sacrifice: so it is immediately called the covenant though never before: and to complete the covenant, the token was added. Gen. xvii. chap. Where have you learnt that your second covenant was confirmed by a seal? Does the bible say so? Mine does not. Does the new testament say so? Mine does not. Do the scriptures say that any covenant is confirmed by a seal? I never saw such a thing in the scriptures. Do the scriptures say there is any connexion between a seal and a covenant? Not that I can see. How then could a covenant be confirmed by what has no connexion with it? I find indeed that circumcision was given as the token of the covenant: but a token is not for confirmation, but for calling to remembrance. So a seal and token are two different things. Circumcision answered the double purpose of being the

ken of the covenant, and a seal confirming the fact, that the faith which Abraham had before circumcision was justifying faith, and was imputed to him for righteousness. Whoever is justified otherwise than by that faith, is not a child of Abraham, and shall never reach his bosom. The bible says nothing about the seal of the covenant. The phrase had its rise in a mistaken view of the truth. If one cannot express, illustrate, and defend his doctrine and his practice, in scripture language, I shall suspect his doctrine and practice to be unfounded in scripture—to be a human innovation. Were the greater part of preachers and writers on religion confined to scripture language, they would be much at a loss to express their meaning and give one a copy of their religious principles. This fact proves two things: 1. that they have not learnt their religion from the scriptures: 2. that theirs is not the scripture religion: for scripture language is sufficient for expressing the scripture religion in all its parts; and had they learnt their religion from the scriptures, they would find it easy to express it by scripture language.

As a linguist, a controversialist, and a teacher of the scriptures, you are doubtless prepared to inform us what is the meaning of Gen. xvii. 8. "The land of Canaan for an everlasting possession." When you tell your hearers that the seed of Abraham has been for nearly 1800 years dispossessed of the land of Canaan, and that the whole world including that land, shall be burnt up. 2 Pet. iii. 10. does the word "everlasting" never occur to your mind? By some means or other you get over this difficulty. The word everlasting has exactly the same meaning, and is subject to the same law, when attached to the word covenant v. 7. as when attached to the word possession v. 8. In its literal sense in both places, and also in v. 13. it has an end; in its spiritual sense, in each place, it has no end.

In p. 7, 8. you mention the distinction between the covenant seed and the natural. This distinction is very proper; it is recognized throughout the scriptures. But really it seems to me you do not understand it according to the scriptures, though I suppose you do exactly according to your system. Those whom, as the natural seed, you distinguish from the covenant seed, you represent as having been the covenant seed once: only they ceased to be so; when, how, or why, I do not see. Who, Sir, told you they were the federal seed? There is no such thing in the 17th of Gen. Where did you learn that they *ceased to be* the federal seed? I can find no such intelligence in the scripture account of these persons. Read Gen. xvii. 18—22. and say, *if you can*, that Ishmael was ever in the covenant. "Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac: but to the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived. Gen. xxv. 5, 6. Here is not a word of their ever having been, or at any time, in any manner, or for any cause, ceasing to be, in the covenant. Being members of Abraham's family, they must have the family mark; but Isaac alone and his seed were in the covenant.

"Again," you say, "it is evident that the federal seed never were confined to the natural posterity of Abraham, for, at the very first, the seal of the covenant was extended to all the men of his house, and these, before the making of this covenant, amounted to 318 men

fit for war, beside the younger males and those born afterward." Were the men of his house circumcised as covenant people? Would you baptize 318 men fit for war because their master professed faith? If not, why urge the example of Abraham, when you so far depart from it? If not, you belie your own assertion, p. 21. "We still baptize households." What had become of these when Jacob went down to Egypt? Did they multiply none? Had God no care of this part of the federal seed? or did they cease to be the federal seed? or what? What is the good of a covenant being everlasting, if it does not everlastingly secure its blessings to the federal seed? How does this agree with the immutability of Jehovah's counsel? You exhibit your system very explicitly, but truly it appears to me very anti-scriptural. Jehovah, for particular purposes, designed to exhibit to man a general model of the plan of salvation by grace. To be a fit model, there must be a people of supernatural origin, springing up from nothing, as it were, like the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which increased till it filled the whole earth. This people must be miraculously delivered from bondage, miraculously supplied with necessities, and miraculously put in possession of an inheritance which was typically everlasting. The plan of accomplishing these things, the constitution under which they were placed as a united people, and the covenant relation in which God stood to them as their God, who engaged to do all these things for them, must be revealed by promise, and confirmed by covenant, to become unalterable during an age which is typically everlasting. As without a supernatural birth, no one is interested in, or a partaker of salvation by grace; so no one connected with Abraham by natural descent only, could be interested in, or a partaker of the typical blessings. As none can have a place among the heirs of salvation, without the renewing influence of the Spirit, which is the distinguishing mark of the spiritual family; so none was allowed a place among the heirs of Canaan, without circumcision, the mark of the typical family. As predestination according to the divine purpose, which he purposed in himself ere the world was, is a fundamental, essential part of the plan of salvation by grace, this was exhibited in the model, first in preferring Isaac to Ishmael, but much more strikingly in preferring Jacob to Esau, though being twins, they were born in similar circumstances, and though Esau being the first born, was naturally intitled to the birthright. As no one is excluded from spiritual blessings, merely on account of the divine purpose, till he voluntarily reject them, and thus count himself unworthy of eternal life; so Esau could not lose his birthright, till he had despised it and voluntarily sold it for a trifle. It is not meant that the sinner has a natural right to salvation, as Esau had to the birthright. The parallel might be run much farther between the model and that represented. When the building is finished, it takes the attention from the model, which is now laid aside, having answered its purpose. This model had its commencement in the person of Abraham, Isa. li. 1, 2. and had its termination in the death of Christ, the great antitype. To it properly belong the old covenant, the whole system of Jewish ceremonies, &c. Really, Sir, if the covenant with Abraham is the gospel, the everlasting covenant, as it includes a carnal offspring; and if this offspring are sealed to God as his covenant children, I do not see

how any of them can cease to be his federal seed, or come short of eternal blessings, unless by a failure of the divine promise. And were I to think God was man that he could lie, or the son of man that he could repent, I must have very different affections towards him from what I have, and but a fearful prospect for eternity. Do you lay to heart that you are robbing God of his glory, and his people of their comfort, as well as wresting the dictates of the Holy Spirit?

You say p. 3. "By this covenant a line of distinction was drawn between God's professing people and the world." In this opinion you are not singular. Even many Baptists maintain the same sentiment. I suppose they received it, like many other errors, from the Pedobaptists; and also, like many of these errors, they still retain it. On which side of this line of distinction did Lot stand? Was not he one of God's professing people? Did none of the Midianites, for instance, retain the knowledge, the worship, and the profession of the true God? I suppose you will hardly deny that Lot and Jethro were professing people of God. What then comes of your assertion? Had circumcision been practised in the family of Jethro, it is unlikely his daughter would have been so averse to having her children circumcised, or that she would have denominated Moses a bloody husband, because of the circumcision. At any rate, Lot and Jethro, and their descendants, had nothing to do with the Abrahamic covenant in its literal sense. See Deut. xxiii. 1-5. Was it impossible that an Ammonite or a Moabite, and others there mentioned, should become professing people of God, before the tenth generation? Had you said the line of distinction was drawn between the typical people of God, and the rest of mankind, I would have cheerfully confirmed the sentiment. The line of distinction there is not drawn between the professing people of God and the world, but between the typical people of God and the heathen nations; and both the professed and the real people of God were mixed with the world on both sides of the line.

Concerning the covenant with Israel at Sinai, you say, p. 8. "It may be remarked, that it was not an everlasting, but a temporary one, added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made, (Gal. iii. 19.); and therefore when he came, it waxed old, and vanished away: (Heb. viii. 13.)" You take great notice of the word everlasting, only, it would seem, to get infants into the church; p. 12. for in every other respect, the covenant seems, in your hands, so far from being firm and everlasting, that it is so yielding and pliant, as to dissolve and let adults out, whenever it suits your purpose. I have represented the Sinai covenant as of the same nature with the Abrahamic. Both were made by the same God, promised the same blessings to the same covenant heirs, were ratified by similar sacrifices, brought to remembrance by the same token, and in fact were of the same duration. I leave it for you to point out the difference between them, as it regards infants and privileges. I call upon you to show wherein the Abrahamic covenant, in its literal sense, differed from the Sinai covenant, with respect to descendants and privileges; and also to produce plain scripture authority to prove, that the Abrahamic covenant, in its spiritual sense, includes a carnal offspring. Does that covenant pre-

mise and convey spiritual blessings to descendants who are not born of the Spirit? Till this is done it is only deceiving people with the pretence without the reality, to tell them their infants are included in the covenant. You acknowledge that the covenant at Sinai is called the law. p. 6. The Abrahamic covenant gets the same name. Ps. cv. 8—11. Gal. iv. 21. referring to v. 30. The Lord made a covenant with Israel in the land of Moab, that he might be a God unto them, as he had said unto them at Sinai; and as he had sworn unto their fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. Deut. xxix. 12, 13. It appears then, that the covenant with Abraham, and that at Sinai, are both like this in the land of Moab. But things that are similar to the same are similar to each other. Seeing then that the Abrahamic covenant, in its literal sense, and the Sinai covenant are similar, when the latter vanished, that which is similar to it in the former, vanished also. Particularly what was to be in their flesh for an everlasting covenant, Gen. xvii. 13. you tell us, p. 12. was changed, or vanished away, to make room for another rite.

I wonder you overlooked this covenant; especially as it included their captains of their tribes, their elders and their officers, with all the men of Israel, their little ones, their wives, and their stranger that was in their camp, from the hewer of their wood unto the drawer of their water. Deut. xxix. 10, 11. But upon second thought, I know not but it was on this very account you passed it over unnoticed: for it evidently pays no regard to the distinction between adult seed and infant seed, a distinction of vital importance to your system. I hope, that as your system stands in no need of human authorities, but can be sufficiently defended from the oracles of God, you will, in your next publication, show us from these oracles, what foundation you have for the above distinction; and at what age or degree of intellect the divine oracles direct you to withhold from the seed those covenant blessings to which you think them entitled in infancy: and also, at what age or degree of intellect those infants must arrive, to be "fit" p. 29. to partake of those covenant privileges which you deny them in infancy. It is evidently essential to your theory and practice to make a distinction in regard to privileges, between infants and adults, a distinction which seems to me wholly anti-scriptural. Now, Sir, till you produce from the oracles of God, sufficient light to direct you in every essential point relating to the above distinction, I must still insist upon it, with every reasonable man, that the distinction in question has nothing to defend it better than human authority. I challenge you to produce one instance of a covenant promise or privilege to an infant, that would not be to him equally certain, if he were an hundred years old. I challenge you again to produce a single instance of a covenant privilege being refused to any of the covenant seed on account of minority; after his bodily strength and his mental intellect were sufficient to partake thereof. Was it not very unwarrantable of you to write to Mr. LINDER as you do p. 24. about children of twenty or thirty years old? Yes, children of twenty or thirty years old. The very mention of it, in your opinion, might convince him that he was on untenable ground. Why, because it is unscriptural? No indeed; but because it does not tally with the system of infant baptism. Take



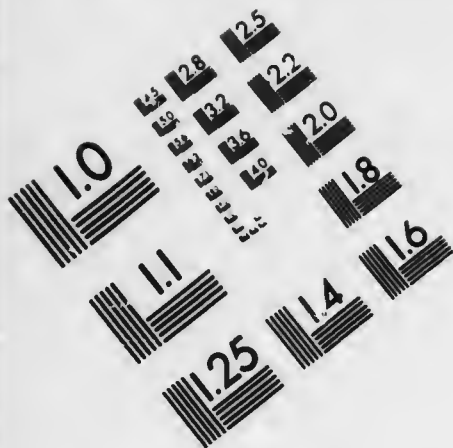
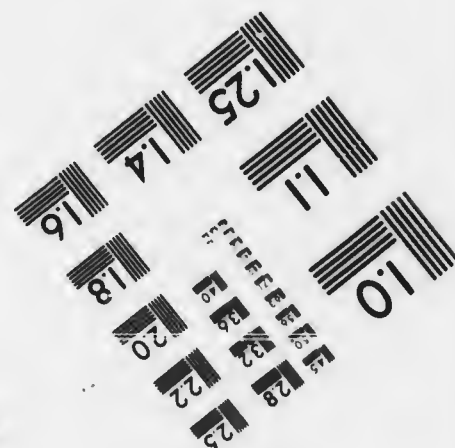
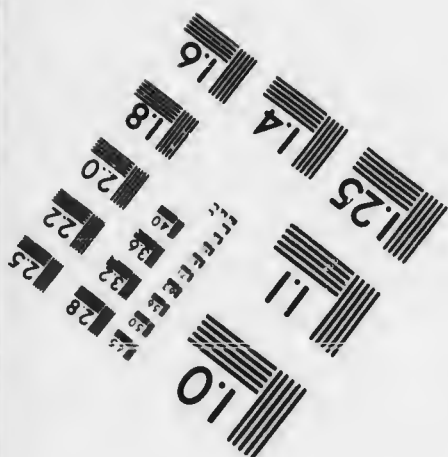
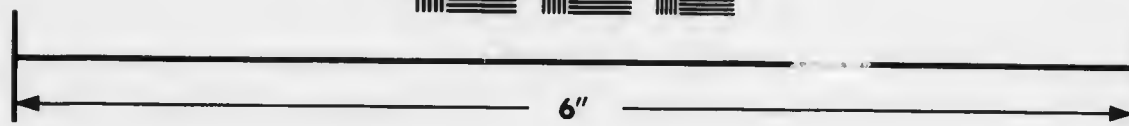
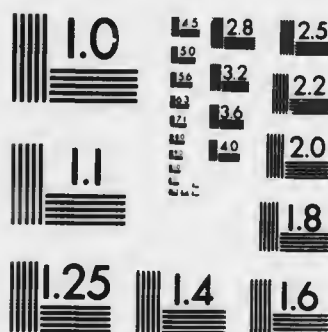


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your concordance and turn to the word children, and you will find that, in the infallible standard, it is as frequently applied to persons of twenty or thirty years old, as to those under that age. Yet the very recurrence to it—to a word in its scripture application—might convince him that he was on untenable ground!!! The very objecting to it in that application might convince you that you were on untenable ground. Where do you read about infant seed? No where in scripture. The very recurrence to it might convince you that you were on untenable ground. You cannot express or maintain your system, without the use of terms, phrases, and distinctions, wholly unknown in the sacred records. "The day in which the apostles lived, was a day of great grace; and God was pleased sometimes to give his word abundant success in the conversion of whole families. In some of these families, there would be children or descendants of from twenty or thirty years of age, down to infants at the breast. Perhaps some would be converted as young as ten or twelve years; and God would thus perfect praise out of the mouths of babes and sucklings. In such cases, they would receive the word gladly, be baptized, and added to the church. But their thus professing faith in the Saviour, would not dissolve the connexion between them and their parents. It would still be necessary for their parents to instruct and admonish them; and it would be necessary for them to be exhorted to obey their parents in the Lord." ELDER'S Letters. p. 15. Now, Sir, this is the passage; and I appeal to every reader, if it does not accord with truth and soberness. Wherein does it contradict scripture, reason, or experience? Must not that man have a very bad cause, and be desperate in his determination to defend it, who could vent his spleen on such a candid passage?

The true partizan, of whatever denomination, may sometimes be convicted of fighting for victory, instead of contending for truth. This is evidently the case, when one lays great stress on a particular branch of evidence, when he thinks it is in his favour, and totally overlooks it when he cannot twist it to suit his purpose. When you were so very exact in enumerating covenants, as not to neglect even that made with the beasts of the field, that you should have so committed yourself as to neglect the covenant with Levi is unaccountable, especially as the great word everlasting belongs to it. This covenant appears of vital importance in determining the first point you attempt to prove, viz. the continuation of the same church. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,—Phinehas hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel—wherefore, say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace, and he shall have it and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel." Num. xxv. 1C—13. See also Deut. xxxiii. 8—11. Mal. ii. 4—9. According to this covenant, the priests were to teach Jacob the judgments, and Israel the law of God; to put incense before God and whole burnt sacrifice upon his altar. The priesthood, the ceremonial, and the polity of the church being changed, comes very near changing the church itself. Who has put an end to the everlasting priesthood, given in covenant to Phinehas and his seed? You cannot charge Mr. ELLEN with this crime. Had the epistle to the Hebrews been

lost, it seems evident from your industry in collecting far-fetched, irrelevant, inconclusive passages, and twisting them to bear upon the subject, you would have found means to press the everlasting priesthood also into your service; but the apostle has been so explicit in proving the abolition of the Levitical priesthood, that Christ was not a Levite, but was a priest after the order of Melchisedec, &c. that your insisting on this covenant would be too glaring. In order therefore to retain full possession of the term everlasting, and turn it to your account, you conceal this covenant from our view, as if afraid the abolished everlasting priesthood should wrest the term everlasting from you, and your whole superstructure should come tumbling down. Why is not the church of Scotland a continuation of the church of Rome? Because their polity, their laws, and their offices are different. For the same reason, a christian church is not a continuation of the Jewish church. The Levitical priesthood is continued in Christ in the same sense as is David's royalty.

Your view of the covenant of royalty, p. 8, 9, 10, 11, proving the continuation of the same church, seems to me totally irrelevant. In examining this covenant, neither the token nor the confirming sacrifice being given us, all we have to do with is the promise. The promise is, simply, that David should never want a man to sit upon his throne. Knowing the depravity of the human heart, the tendency of sin to provoke God to anger, and the fact that, for sin God had cast off Saul and his family from the throne of royalty, David would naturally feel afraid that his depraved offspring would, by transgression, provoke the Almighty to cast them off in like manner. To remove these anxieties, and, at the same time, to satisfy David that he still maintained the character of the righteous supreme Governor, and the sin-avenging God, he informs him, that, if his children should forsake law, and walk not in the judgments, then he would visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; yet his loving kindness, in choosing him the father of the kings of Israel, he would not utterly take from him, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail, in promising David a son to sit on his throne for ever. This day, Christ, in pursuance of this covenant promise, sits, as king of Israel, upon the throne of his father David. The promise had a reference to Solomon, and the succeeding kings in his line, and as far as it respected the temporal throne of the wordly kingdom of the literal Israel, it was fulfilled in them. But the promise, ultimately, referred to Christ; and it was in this view that it was all David's desire and all his salvation, though his literal house should not prosper. Christ now sits and reigns on the throne of his father David. But in what sense is it David's throne? Because the throne on which David sat as king, was typical of that on which Christ sits; the kingdom over which David reigned, was typical of that over which Christ reigns; and the son whom David left to succeed him on his earthly throne, was typical of Christ, who was not only his son after the flesh, but also the antitype of Solomon his royal son. If you find out any other sense in which Christ reigns upon the throne of David, I do not envy you the discovery. It was not over a church but over a kingdom that David reigned. Christ the antitype of David's son and successor, sits upon the antitype of David's throne, and reigns over the antitype of David's kingdom; and

in this sense he is David's son and successor. But what has this to do with the continuation of the same church? Only that the Jewish church was typical of the church of God in its new covenant state, which the Baptists do not deny, and which greatly strengthens their argument.

We must next turn our attention to the new covenant; and the rather because you pay so little attention to it. It appears to be evidently an eye-sore to you. With heavenly authority it frowns your system out of countenance: from its presence you shrunk with terror, and was glad to slip along the best way you could. Though you say p. 16. that you read it both in Jeremiah and in Paul's epistle, we do not know how to believe you; for you do not even quote its promised blessings, but observe you "can find no law there," neither *written on the heart, nor put in the inward parts*. Why did you not add verses 33, 34? If the words, a God to you, and to your infant seed, had been found in this covenant, Mr. Ross would not have forgotten to give it to his readers in large capitals. But "this shows how near a person may come to the discovery of truth, and yet miss it." You complain p. 72. that Mr. ELDER has taken a strange view of the new covenant, and, without any reason that you can see, suppose it different from all other covenants recorded in scripture: and that in a point in which they all agree, viz. including infants. If your bible contains no more of it than you have given us p. 9. where you were professedly describing the covenants, and commenting on them, I do not wonder at your not seeing the reason why Mr. ELDER viewed it different from the other covenants you mention as including infants. You have failed of your usual perspicuity in respect to this covenant, for I cannot even conjecture what are your views of it. Your treatment of the new covenant reminded me of Louvet's artifice, when passing through a village in France, after he had been denounced during the tyranny of Robespierre. Conscious that his forged pass could not stand examination, and knowing that he could not proceed without showing it, he contrived to divert the attention of the officer by some good wine, and some good stories. Still as he was in the middle of his story, he would, as if recollecting himself, present his pass; but still as he presented it, he withdrew it to finish his story. So from bottle to bottle, and from story to story, till they forgot to examine his pass, all swearing heartily when they left him, that it was as good a pass as ever was written, though they had not read a line of it. The existence of this covenant is so fatal to your scheme, that you are afraid it should be examined; and as your opponents urge it, you cannot get on without mentioning it; therefore you present it as if it were shut, and, for fear your reader should presume to open and read it, you hurry it out of sight, and present him with something else, to divert his attention from it. Thus you try to make it pass with your reader as if favourable to your scheme, without allowing him an opportunity of considering its import. Now, Sir, do you pay the Baptists such a compliment, as to suppose there is none among them capable of detecting and exposing such disingenuity? Do you forget your responsibility to God? As you did not think proper to furnish your reader with a description of, or a comment on this covenant, will you allow me briefly to supply your lack of service?

I do this the rather, because, as we live under this covenant, we are more immediately interested in it than in any other; just as a rational man must feel more interested in studying the constitution and history of his own country, and his own times, than in studying those of any other.

"But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Read also Heb. viii. 6—13. where you will see that the better covenant, of which Christ is the mediator, is the second, the new covenant which he ratified by his blood, Luke xxii. 20. established upon better promises, and which, being brought into operation, superseded the first till it waxed old and vanished away. See also Heb. x. 12—19. where you will find, that the one offering by which he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, is the one sacrifice for sin, to the perfection of which the Holy Spirit witnesseth in the words of the new covenant. This covenant then has no particular reference to the millennium, but to the whole gospel dispensation. On account of the weakness and unprofitableness of the old covenant promises, especially to a people who broke the law, God promised to make a new covenant with the house of Israel; and at the same time intimated that it should be different from the Sinai covenant, under which the Jews then were. This difference, he also intimates, was to affect the connexion between parents and children. See verses 29, 30. "In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten the sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge." Jeremiah gives the covenant only in embryo, and Christ gave the law and the prophets, in the two great commandments of love to God, and to one's neighbour. However, in it we have the principal blessings of the gospel. 1. A heart on which the divine law is inscribed, or that delights in the law of God in the inner man. 2. A spiritual covenant relation to God, as the God of the covenant heirs, and they his acknowledged people. 3. That knowledge of God which is eternal life, which precludes the necessity of the heirs teaching each other to know the Lord, and which is obtained by divine teaching. All the children of this covenant are taught of God. 4. That perfect remission of sins through the blood of the new covenant, even that very covenant under which they are placed, and which effectually prevents calling their sins to remembrance. These, Sir, are the blessings of the new covenant, and they decisively exclude from being interested in it, every person who does not possess them. Though unbelievers live during the gospel dispensation, they are not interested in it till they believe. Can you now see any reason why Mr. ELDER viewed this covenant as not including infants?

Will you retort, how then can those who die in infancy be saved? Allow me to tell you and the world, once for all, that neither you nor I have any thing to do with that. I defy you and all mankind, to pro-

duce a single passage out of the whole book of God that even bears upon the subject. Those who die in infancy, or in idiocy, or in heathenism, without ever having an opportunity of hearing the gospel, I cheerfully leave where they ought to be, in the hands of a Being of infinite perfections; fully confident the Judge of all the earth will do right. It does make me shudder to see the presumption of a blind mortal, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind. It is not the divine method to gratify curiosity, by giving instruction on matters not immediately necessary to direct our conduct. All inquiries of that nature are answered by—what is that to thee, follow thou me. Strive to enter in at the strait gate. Those who indulge in prosecuting such unrevealed speculations, would do well to study Deut. xxix. 29. It is not with those who die in infancy, but with those who live to be capable of instruction, that the gospel has to do: and you and I transgress the limits of our instruction, and reach beyond our depth, when we meddle with any other. The state of those who die in infancy will not be affected by your arguments or mine: let us therefore do as the scriptures do, address those who have ears to hear, rational beings, and discuss what relates to them, as if there were no such beings in the universe as those who die in infancy. Wishing you and yours may enjoy, in an abundant measure, all the blessing of the new covenant,

I remain,

Yours, &c.

A. C.

LETTER II.

SIR,

After having given what you thought necessary for your design in explanation of the covenants, you proceed to open and confirm your first position, viz. the continuation of the same church. Before I proceed to affirm or deny any thing respecting the position itself, allow me to state what I understand by the word church, that you may know in what sense I use it. There is frequently a great deal of sophistry concealed in equivocal words, or in an equivocal use of words sufficiently definite. True canons of criticism ever tend to precision. The mists of ignorance and error are dissipated, by introducing the light of sound criticism. In Heb. xii. 23. we read of the church of the first born sons. This church is composed of the whole body of the redeemed, and is properly called the general assembly of believers. In this sense, the church is the same in all ages, and there is but one church. This church ever has been, and ever shall be, till the consummation of all things, invisible in its church capacity. Different parts of it have, at different times, been in different states, according to the infinite wisdom of its divine head. To this church, no unregenerate person ever did belong. In no other sense than as united in Christ, can it be called a church. In Acts vii. 38. we read of the church in the wilderness. This means the Jewish church. This church also is one. It was a visible, earthly, temporal model of the invisible, heavenly, eternal church above mentioned. To this body, the term church is applied but this once in the whole bible. In the new testament, we find the terms church and churches times innumerable. When the term church does not mean the whole body of the redeemed as united in Christ, it means invariably (except the church in the wilderness) a particular society of believers, called out of spiritual darkness by divine energy accompanying the divine word; united together, in a state of separation from the world, by the bond of that love which the faith of the true gospel begets in the heart of all believers; and in the constant habit of meeting together on the first day of the week, in a place agreed upon, from a regard to the authority of Christ, and an earnest desire of mutual edification; by unitedly observing the all things which Christ commanded his disciples to observe. No visible society which does not answer this description, can be called a church of Christ. No two or more of these societies are ever called a church in the singular; but wherever two or more of them are referred to, they are invariably called churches in the plural. It is thus I understand the meaning of the word church in the sacred writings. Were it my present business, I would not hesitate to combat any other religious meaning attached to the word. This reduces to a nonentity the universal, visible church, the universal, invisible, militant church, as distinguished from the church triumphant, the christian church, and a multitude of other meanings arbitrarily attached to the word. I readily admit that Christ has a people scat-

tered over many countries, and among many various societies: but the word church represents them, not as scattered, but as assembled. When I mean one of those christian societies, described as the meaning of the word, I call it a christian church, because there are many of the same kind, unless I have in view some particular definite church.

When you attempted to prove the continuation of the same church under the Jewish and the christian dispensations, I should suppose your first attempt ought to be, to ascertain what was essentially necessary to constitute any body of people a church, and prove that those essential requisites belonged to both churches in the same sense: and then examine from the scripture account of each, wherein they agreed, and wherein they differed. Did they agree in those particulars which constitute sameness as a church? 1. Were their members of the same description? 2. Were they admitted into both churches on the same footing? Does the one require any thing of candidates for admission, which the other does not? 3. Are they united for the same design? 4. Do they attempt accomplishing this design by the same or similar means? 5. Are their privileges the same, or of the same kind? 6. Are they governed by the same or similar laws? 7. Are their officers, offices and relations, similar and of the same kind? 8. Is their polity a body corporate the same? Are their ceremonies necessary for their existence as a church the same? Had the truth been on your side, you would doubtless have taken some such method as this to prove your point. But it appears you believed it, and determined to prove it by the best arguments you could find. It would seem your belief was prior to, and independent of arguments, and that you sought arguments to prove to others what you believed yourself without arguments; for no person, without a previous bias, could believe it from the arguments you advance.

In addition to the reasons already assigned to disprove the continuation of the same church, I observe, 1. That the law itself enjoined upon its subjects, unreserved submission to the Messiah when he should appear. Deut. xviii. 15, 18, 19. This implied that no previous law should continue in force after his coming, unless revived by him. 2. Jer. xxxi. 29—34. xxxii. 40. and Esek. xvi. 60—63. promised a new covenant, which should be different in kind from the Sinai covenant: and that this difference, which should consist chiefly in the character and privileges of the covenant subjects, would affect particularly the existing religious connexion between parents and children. 3. When the Messiah should come, he was to act as a purifier. Mal. iii. 1—6, 16—18. In this capacity, he should be an object of dread to many, so that they would exclaim, "Who shall abide the day of his coming," &c. for he was to establish a visible difference between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth the Lord and him that serveth him not. The Canaanite should no more be in the house of the Lord of hosts; nor the uncircumcised and the unclean. When a church which is so constituted as to admit the righteous and the wicked promiscuously, is so purified in its constitution and members, as to draw a visible line of demarcation between him that serveth the Lord and him that serveth him not, it is not the same church.

When John the Baptist came as the Messiah's forerunner to prepare a people for him, he began by preaching a new doctrine, introducing a new rite, inculcating duties on a new principle, and giving new and unexpected warnings. Not only did these novelties indicate the approaching introduction of a new constitution, but the very nature of them implied that the predicted constitution should be what I have represented it. Let it be observed, that whatever John did in his public ministry, he did it as a witness testifying of Christ, that through his witnessing all men might believe on Christ. John i. 7. Let it also be observed, that the public ministry of John in all its parts, and that of Christ personally, were the same in kind, the same in form, and for the same purpose. Read Mat. iii. Mark i. Luke iii. John i. and iii. 27—36. with Acts xix. 4. Christ, during his personal ministry, did not act as king; for his reign was only at hand, not fully come; and therefore his ministry, like that of John, was preparing subjects for his future kingdom. The general descriptive appellation of John's ministry is the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. The design and tendency of it was, that men should believe on him who was to come after him; that is on Christ Jesus. Acts xix. 4. Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. John pointed out to them repentance as a duty, and the remission of sin as immediately connected with repentance; but laying no stress on, i. e. virtually annulling, all their burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin, their earthly connexion with Abraham, and all hereditary privileges. Though he represented the remission of sins as the never-failing concomitant of repentance, he nevertheless explicitly showed that it was not in virtue of repentance, but in virtue of that one sacrifice—the Lamb of God, which was to be offered to take away sin—not the sin of one man only, nor the sin of the Jewish nation only, but the sin of the whole world. He explicitly declared: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John iii. 36. Was not this a new doctrine to those who had been taught, by the whole tenor of their covenant, to expect no remission without offering sacrifices; and that the blessings of the covenant were restricted; but flowed freely, to the seed of Abraham in their generations? Accordingly, the ministry of John is expressly denominated "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ." Mark i. 1, 2.

But John also introduced a new rite. My reasons for viewing the baptism of John as a new rite, are the following: 1. It was one man immersing another: we read of no such thing before his time. 2. It had no respect to ceremonial uncleanness, or to ceremonial purification: they were baptized promiscuously, clean and unclean. 3. It had a special reference to moral evil, as making repentance necessary. 4. It was immediately connected with the confession of this moral evil by the person baptized. "Baptized—confessing their sins." 5. In order to this baptism, the confession of sin, and profession of repentance, must be accompanied with a satisfactory visible evidence of sincerity. "Bring forth therefore fruit meet for repentance." 6. The immediate design and tendency of it was to direct men to Christ. "But that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water." John i. 31. How

could the manifestation of Christ be effected by the continuance of a usual ceremony? especially as the Jews did not understand that their purifications had any immediate reference to that manifestation. But as he introduced a new rite, connected with sin as a moral evil, and, in performing the rite, directed the attention of the obedient, confessing penitents to the Messiah as just about to appear, showing them that the very rite itself had a particular reference to repentance and the remissions of sins, as the essential requisites in preparing people for the approaching reign of the Messiah, he took that method, which, of all others, was best calculated to lead their minds to Christ, as thus manifested to them. 7. The stir occasioned by his baptizing, and the question which long afterward appeared to be undecided among them, whether his baptism was from heaven or of men, show clearly that his baptism was a new rite. One must do real violence to his own judgment to doubt on the subject. That it was observed during the old covenant, is no objection to its being a new rite: the Lord's Supper, which was undoubtedly a new rite, was instituted and observed during the continuance of the old covenant. It was a matter of no doubt with the Jews whether Elias, or the Messiah, or that Prophet, had authority to introduce novelties, as David and Solomon had done, in the courses of the priesthood, the singing, and temple service. But since John professed to be neither the one or the other, his authority to start innovations was questioned by them. Why in all the world would they raise such a noise about a rite, which had been all along commonly practised among themselves? If they had received it from Moses, and of course believed it to be from heaven, why should they hesitate to answer it was? Their not believing that John had an immediate commission from heaven, and of course authority to introduce novelties in religion, made them reject his baptism; and by this unbelieving disobedience, they rejected the counsel of God against themselves, and thus prevented their having a place and a blessing in the Messiah's kingdom. It appears evident then, that John's baptism was a new rite among the Jews, and that its design and tendency was to direct men's attention to the present Messiah, and his approaching reign, that they might prepare for a place and a blessing in his kingdom.

John enforced the performance of duties on a new principle. He inculcated moral duties as such, without any admixture of ceremonies. He enforced them, not as fulfilling the law, but as fruits meet for repentance; not by the consideration of long life in the land of Canaan, but of a place in the new kingdom; and the neglect of them was not now to be atoned for by ceremonial sacrifices, but by him who taketh away the sin of the world. Are moral duties ever insisted on under the law, as fruits meet for repentance? or as the necessary testimonials of a title to, and fitness for church privileges? Is not this view of duties one of John's innovations?

He gave new and unexpected warnings. The covenant promise was to Abraham's seed, in their generations. Being the covenant seed, they of course expected all covenant blessings would be sure to them, and their children after them; who, as well as they, were the children of the covenant. But John very unexpectedly warned them of the folly and danger of trusting in this covenant relation to Abra-

ham, because it would avail them nothing as a qualification for a place in the Messiah's kingdom. The constitution was entirely changed: the approved qualification for membership in the one church, was wholly disregarded as a qualification for membership in the other. The reign of the Messiah is distinguished from all other reigns, by its being the reign of heaven. Its administration is heavenly, on heavenly principles, requiring heavenly tempers in its subjects. This he illustrates by different figures. Think not in yourselves, we have Abraham to our father, for God can raise from these stones children to Abraham—Abraham obtains children otherwise than by carnal descent. The axe is now laid to the root of the trees, every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be hewn down and cast into the fire, covenant relation to Abraham notwithstanding. It is not that covenant relation which is hereditary in their generations, but that which is by grace through faith, and manifested by the fruits, that qualifies for a place in the new kingdom. His fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather the wheat into his granary, but burn the chaff with unquenchable fire. If therefore you are not good grain, the fan will separate you from the grain; your having a place among the wheat under the former covenant, is no presumption that you will be continued under the new; for the time was not then come to separate the chaff from the wheat: but now it is just approaching; be prepared for it; for the floor will undergo a thorough cleansing. I appeal to the discerning reader, whether this is not the strain in which he would expect the faithful harbinger of the Messiah, to warn a people who evidently relied too much on carnal descent. I appeal to every reader, whether I have not given a fair, impartial, unstrained representation of the warning, as we actually have it in the three Evangelists, Mat. Mark, and Luke. Were ever such warnings contained in, or belonging to the covenant with Abraham? If the harbinger of the Messiah, in announcing the approaching reign of his Master, and in preparing for being fit subjects of his kingdom, those who had been free subjects of the Jewish kingdom, preached a new doctrine of such a spiritual nature, introduced a new rite of such a spiritual tendency, inculcated moral duties on such a new and spiritual principle, and gave such new, faithful, levelling, unexpected warnings, to the members of the Jewish church, who, as Abraham's covenant children, were the acknowledged people of God at the very time, does it not look like a change of things?—like a new constitution; especially with regard to the qualification of members, and the ground of their admission?

5. The doctrine of regeneration, as taught by Jesus Christ, is in direct opposition to the continuation of the same church. The very words of the covenant, "I will establish my covenant between me, and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations" are sufficient to prove that descent from Abraham in the covenant line, constituted the covenant relation, and the title to covenant privileges. "With thy seed after thee, in their generations." How could it be in their generations; for an everlasting covenant, if descent in that line did not constitute the covenant relation? The Pedobaptists are unobtrusively dexterous in taking just as much of a passage as will suit their purpose, though the part they leave, if connected with the part they take,

as it is in the unmangled text, would give the whole passage a meaning very different from what they attach to it. This is exceedingly evident in their treatment of Gen. xvii. 7. The whole passage runs thus: "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 to thee, and thy seed after thee." We learn from subsequent parts of the history, that Ishmael, and Esau, and the sons of Keturah, were not included in the seed to which the promise was made: for "in Isaac shall thy seed be called." But there never was any distinction made in the family of Jacob, as it respected this promise. When Ishmael and the others were out, their descendants could not get in afterward. The promise being confirmed to one line of seed in their generations, necessarily left out the other lines in *their generations*. To me it is, most evident, and till you disprove it, I shall consider it as granted, that if Gentile believers are warranted to claim this promise to them and their seed, it must be to them *in their generations* for an everlasting covenant. It is to their children; their children's children, and their great grand children, in their generations perpetually. Now I can have a capital **EVERLASTING** as well as yourself. But you take no notice of the words "in their generations." These words have as firm a footing in the covenant, and are as important in their place, as the words "to thy seed." But by keeping them out of view you make the covenant to run thus: "Believers of all nations are in the covenant, and their infant seed with them, till they arrive at some certain age or degree of intellect, to be determined by Pedobaptist clergymen; and then, if they reject (professionally I suppose) the King of Israel; the everlasting covenant is broken to let them out, and closes up its breach again to keep out them and their descendants, perhaps to the tenth generation; but if they or their offspring believe in Christ, the covenant opens to let the believer and his infant seed in again. These shall be subjects to the same vicissitudes of that well-ordered, sure, and everlasting covenant, as their predecessors." I appeal to every rational man, whether your theory and practice do not exactly coincide with this statement. But as long as the words, **IN THEIR GENERATIONS**, are in the covenant, it disclaims forever all such mutilations of it. It is evident then, that they were members by birth. This you grant p. 24. Read our Lord's discourse to Nicodemus, and see how persons became members of the kingdom of heaven; which, by your comment on Mark x. 14. you grant, means the Mediator's kingdom, or the christian church. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John iii. 5. This is addressed to one who was actually, at that very time, a member of the Jewish church: yet he was told by the faithful and true Witness, that without this spiritual birth he could not be a member of the christian. Can these two churches then be the same? By carnal birth, the one admitted her members; without a spiritual birth not one can ever enter the other. Either disprove the existence of this spiritual state of things under the new covenant, or prove its existence under the old, or prove that a carnal church and a spiritual are the same. You admit that the greatest change took place, when Christ appeared in the world. p. 9. It is an inquiry which deserves more attention

than you appear to have given it, whether that change be not so great as to overthrow all you have advanced on the subject. There never existed any such thing as the visible Patriarchal church. I use the phrase, "The christian church" in addressing you, though I believe no such thing ever existed. The christian, universal, visible church is a mere chimera.

You advance four arguments, which appear to you decisive, proving the christian church, to be a continuation of the Jewish. The distinction between typical and typified overthrow your four arguments together. The children of believers, as well as those of unbelievers, must themselves believe, that they may become Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Read the 4th of Rom. and the 3d of Gal. once more, bearing in your mind this fact, that Abraham is never called the father of all them that believe, and their infant seed; nor are they who are Christ's, and their infant seed, ever called the seed of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise. Your second argument I considered, when explaining the covenant with David; and your third in the first essay. Is it really possible you yourself believe that the new covenant was made with the fleshly seed of Jacob? Unless you do, all you have said on the subject is nothing to the purpose. Look at Rom. ii. 28, 29. Philip. iii. 3. 1 Pet. ii. 9. and you will see the house of Israel and the house of Judah, with whom the covenant was expressly made. You see dreadful consequences to christians, arising from distinguishing the christian church from the Jewish. p. 12. You say to Mr. ELDER, "You do not seem to consider what dreadful consequences to christians would follow, were you able to tear the church asunder, and make it two: as, in that case, christians would no longer have Abraham for their father,—have any right to his blessings,—nor be heirs according to the promise; and they would lose all claim to the new covenant: and all this to drive infants out of the church." Now, Sir, if we can say like one of old, "Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer," we need not fear the consequences which give you so much uneasiness. But, Sir, according to our view of the matter, every true member of a christian church is a child of Abraham, legitimately; by spiritual birth, by faith in Christ: but according to your view of the matter, a great part of the church have not Abraham for their father, either by a carnal birth, or by a spiritual: they are only the children of those who have Abraham for their father. You will not maintain that the children of believing Gentiles have Abraham for their earthly father, and I am sure you will not, in the face of all the scriptures, that he is their spiritual father, till they are born of the Spirit; for it stands on record: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed." What relation, then, have they to Abraham at all? Nothing in the least, more than the children of unbelieving Hottentots. Disprove this if you can.

You assert p. 12. that our Lord instituted baptism to answer the same purpose under the new testament, as circumcision answered under the former dispensation; and give two reasons for the propriety of the change. 1. "Under the former dispensation, there was no ordinance implying forgiveness of sins without shedding of blood,

Heb. ix. 22. But under the new testament, there is no shedding of blood in religious worship." I heartily approve of this sentiment, but I do not see how it helps you, as I conceive the blood shed in circumcision had no reference to the remission of sins. But what comes of the baptism for the remission of sins, which you say p. 77. was a Jewish baptism, and p. 70. was under the old testament dispensation? Though John's baptism was during the continuance of the old covenant, it does not seem to have been under it; i. e. to have been an ordinance, belonging to it, any more than the Lord's supper; which also was instituted and observed during the continuance of the old covenant, before Christ died, or said, It is finished, or the vail of the temple was rent. 2. "Again, one end of this seal of the covenant, was, to draw a line of distinction between God's professing people and the world; but after the Jews rejected their king, they still retained circumcision, and so another rite to answer this purpose became necessary; and our Lord instituted baptism for that end." I have showed already that the professed people of God and the world were mixed on both sides of the line. Besides, did not the Ishmaelites, for instance, retain circumcision, and render another rite equally necessary under the old covenant as under the new? You then give us four proofs of the assertion.

"1. You grant that baptism now draws a line of distinction between God's professing people and the world, as circumcision did under the former dispensation." Please to observe, that my object in writing is to vindicate, not Mr. ELDER, but the truth of God. Though he grants you your request, I have already given you a reason why I cannot grant it with respect to circumcision; and I have too high an opinion of some Quakers to grant it with respect to baptism. Indeed, I do not believe the Quaker view of baptism half so dangerous to mankind, as Mr. Ross's. Circumcision in the flesh drew a line of distinction between the typical people of God, and the uncircumcised nations. The circumcision of the heart draws a line of distinction between the real people of God, and the unrenewed people of the world. It may be difficult to trace the origin of the phrase, the professed people of God," as distinguished from the real people of God on one hand, and from the world on the other, and forming a united body in itself. Perhaps it arose from national christianity being introduced, and then a few faithful ministers warning carnal professors, that profession without possession will not do. Though the phrase includes hypocrites and carnal professors, visibly so, it also includes such real christians as make a public profession of christianity: but it recognizes no scriptural line of distinction. Let it be as it may, you need not stumble upon it; you may safely roll it away, you will lose no good by losing it. What a number of antisciptural ideas and phrases have been introduced among men professing christianity? You will now say, that I have in my own mind the idea of the professing people of God. Should you prove even that, you would only show that I had not yet wholly purged out the old Peribaptist leaven; just as you may perceive a little popish mud spattered on the Reformers, after they had protested against popery; or a little Jewish educational prejudice in the primitive disciples, after they became christians. But though I grant (for who can deny

it) that there are on earth people professing christianity, yet I do not grant that they are a united body, as your visible church, christian church, and professing people of God, implies: nor do I grant that they are distinguished from the world; for among us they are the world. Where will the world be when you have got the whole population of every land into the church? Are not carnal professors of christianity very similar to the unbelieving Jews, in the time of Christ, as it regards their state and character before God, their hopes and prospects for eternity, and the grounds on which they found their hopes? Had you been a faithful imitator of the perfect pattern, instead of encouraging them, as distinguished from the wicked world by their obedience to Christ's ordinances, you would tell them they are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them; that because they are of the world, the world loveth them as its own; that publicans and harlots will enter into the kingdom of God before them; that unless they repent, they shall all likewise perish; that it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorra in the day of judgment than for them: yea, woe unto them, for how can such a generation of vipers escape the damnation of hell? It appears that a great part of the teaching of Christ and his apostles, went to level the distinctions which religious pride had erected among men; that this levelling constituted a principal part of the preparation for the advent of the Messiah; Luke iii. 4, 5, 6. and that their annihilating such distinctions was a great cause of their being so hated, especially by the Jews. The gospel is hated to this day for the same reason; and a very keen contest on this subject between Mr. Ross's letters and the gospel of Christ is strikingly apparent; the one giving a high preference to unconverted christians, the other reducing all unconverted men to one level, as condemned criminals, and enemies to God.

"2. Circumcision was the rite by which converts were admitted into the church, under the former dispensation, and that baptism answers the same purpose under the present, cannot reasonably be denied." However unreasonable you may judge me, I must deny it; and the fear of incurring the charge of unreasonableness will not deter me from denying it: "for with me, it is a small matter to be judged of you, or of man's judgment." I am aware that here also, many Baptists retain the dregs of Pedobaptism. But let us examine the fact. 1. Respecting circumcision. As the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant did not run in the female line, a token was given which was inapplicable to females: but females, like proselytes, were along with the males of Abraham's covenant seed, admitted to such privileges as were suited to their sex and circumstances. Perhaps, nearly one half of the members of the Jewish church, and of proselytes to the profession of the Jewish religion, were uncircumcised. You will probably admit that Ruth the Moabitess was a convert; and you will hardly maintain that she was rejected out of the church, or that she was admitted by the rite of circumcision. Therefore, though circumcision in a few cases accompanied the receiving of persons into the church, this was not always the case: and it was itself in no case, the rite by which persons were admitted into the Jewish church. 2. Respecting baptism. Acts ii. 41. "Then they that gladly recei-

ved his word were baptized: and the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls." Now I insist upon it, that this conveys an information essentially different, as it respects the rite of admission from that conveyed by the following statement. "And the same day, they that gladly received his word, were added to the church by baptism, to the number of about three thousand." Should any person quote the passage in this manner, I contend that he would misrepresent the sacred writer; for he represents their being baptized, and their being added as two distinct and separate things; the latter rendering represents their being baptized and their being added as inseparable. Had baptism been the visible representation, and their being added the invisible reality represented by it, in that case the language would have been correct: otherwise the latter rendering represents baptism as the rite of admission, whereas the language of Luke would still be correct, though a month had elapsed from the admission of the three thousand, to their being baptized. Other circumstances related, not any connexion stated between their baptism and their admission, make it appear they were all baptized the same day. Again, let us look at Saul and the eunuch. Into what church suppose ye were they admitted by baptism? Not into the church of the first born, for into that they were previously admitted by spiritual birth. John i. 12, 13. Not into the Jewish church, for of that, one, if not both were previously members: besides, this looked rather like a voluntary renunciation of it, than of admission into it. Not into any particular christian church, for we do not read of any disciple being present except the baptizer and the baptized. We do not know that the eunuch was ever admitted into any christian church. The fact is, that the idea of baptism as a rite of admission into the church, or into fellowship is of comparatively modern growth, and never once entered the minds of the sacred writers. You must establish by a *thus saith the Lord*, that church into which they were admitted by baptism, and a divine precept or precedent establishing baptism as the rite of admission, or let us hear no more of baptism, as the rite by which converts are admitted into the church.

S. Circumcision under the former dispensation showed the person's federal relation to Abraham, and baptism does the same under the present: Gal. iii. 27—29. *For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. And if you be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*" This proof also requires proving. Did the circumcision of the Ishmaelites show their federal relation to Abraham? Even among the Jews itself, it is doubtful: for a federal, gave a federal title to all the promises of the *sedus*. But one of the chief promises of the *sedus*, was the inheritance, to which the circumcised proselytes had no right: therefore, circumcised proselytes had not a federal relation to Abraham; and circumcision could not show them that they had what they had not. Again, does Mr. Ross really believe that it is the same kind of federal relation which existed between Abraham and the literal Jews, and was shewn by circumcision, that now exists between Abraham and those who are Christ's, and is shewn by baptism? If he does not believe it, there is a sophism in his proof wholly inconsistent with candour, and unworthy of an honest man. If he does believe it, I would

earnestly entreat him, as he values his immortal soul to study the gospel of the grace of God; for it is incontestibly evident, that if he has no other federal relation to Abraham than the Jewish nation had, he can never arrive in Abraham's bosom. I really tremble at the view of the perversions of scripture which the Pedobaptist system has occasioned. When the Galatians, by believing in Christ, became Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise, do you really think that Paul could consistently address them, as Christ and his servants addressed the circumcised Jews, saying: "I know that ye are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise; yet I must tell you that unless ye repent, ye shall all perish; ye must be born of the Spirit, or ye cannot enter the kingdom of God." I would fain hope that Mr. Ross is not so grossly ignorant of divine truth, as to admit the consistency of such an address: though one of his Pedobaptist brethren addressed his congregation in the following terms: "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Does Mr. Ross think such a mode of address antisciptural? I contend that the principles maintained in his letters necessarily lead to it; unless men are saved without repentance. Such awful warnings were not only given, but earnestly pressed home upon the consciences of the Jews who were in federal relation to Abraham, and circumcised in virtue of it: but the very reverse is evident in the apostolical epistles. 1. Cor. xv. 1, 2. Gal. i. 6, 9. Col. i. 12, 13, 14. 1. Pet. v. 12. Now I shall tell you one point in which the federal relation subsisting between Abraham and the Jews, differed from that subsisting between Abraham and believers: and I call upon you to disprove it as soon as possible, and promise you faithfully, that as soon as you shall have scripturally disproved it, I shall become your proselyte, and throw my pamphlet in the fire as wholly antisciptural. The difference is this. The federal relation subsisting between Abraham and a Jewish parent, was, with all its privileges, necessarily and unavoidably conveyed and transferred entire, by ordinary carnal generation, to the male child, to the full extent in which the parent possessed it. The federal relation subsisting between Abraham and believers, cannot possibly be conveyed or transferred, in any sense, in any degree, or in any of its privileges, from the parent to the child, by ordinary carnal generation; but in order to obtain it as the parent possessed it, the child of the believer must be born of the Spirit, as really as the child of an unbelieving Hottentot. As long as the word "everlasting" stands in immediate connexion with the words "in their generations," Gen. xvii. 7. the first proposition cannot be disproved. As long as John iii. 5. 6. stand in the sacred record, the second cannot be disproved. You are bound to disprove the one or the other, or else give up all claim upon the Abrahamic covenant. Till you do, I shall take for granted that you have abandoned the argument from the covenant. Again, how does Mr. Ross's baptism show his relation to Abraham? Suppose it should be contested in a court of justice, whether Mr. Ross or Pietou has any federal relation to Abraham; how would you produce your baptism to prove it? It is merely on human testimony you know you were baptized: it left no mark on the body or on the mind by which it can be

discovered. Besides, what a small number of those whom you baptize, have any federal relation to Abraham!

4. "Finally, the Spirit of inspiration denominates baptism circumcision: Col. ii. 11, 12. "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. Buried with him in baptism." Again, Philip. iii. 2, 3. "Beware of the concision, for we (christians) are the circumcision." It is plain to any person of reflection, that the Apostle, by the concision, means the circumcision in the flesh, that is, the Jews; and by the circumcision, the christian church: showing that the former retained the external part, but christians enjoyed the substance." This comment on the latter passage is so excellent, that I am glad to see it from the pen of Mr. Ross: only where has he found the christian church? I really hope it will, in some degree, be a means of turning the attention of christians from the shadows, and fixing it on the substance. But surely, Mr. Ross, after giving this scriptural explanation of the passage, cannot mean that baptism is the substance which christians enjoy: and unless he mean this, the passage is nothing at all to his purpose. "The Spirit of inspiration denominates baptism circumcision." If this were not a direct falsehood charged upon the Spirit of inspiration, we might at once give up this part of the contest. In your sober moments, when discussions respecting infant baptism do not over heat your spirit, are you not afraid to father upon the Spirit of inspiration what he never said? I have in another part of my pamphlet so fully discussed the meaning of the phrase, "made without hands," that I shall say nothing about it here. In what sense can baptism be the circumcision of Christ, as distinguished from the circumcision in the flesh? Were they not both alike enjoined by the authority of Christ? Do not you hold that both meant the same thing, were for the same description of persons, and had the same connexion with Christ? By what process of reasoning do you satisfy yourself, or expect to satisfy your readers, that the Spirit of inspiration even *alluded to* baptism by the term circumcision? for, surely, you will not in a second edition say that he demonstrates baptism circumcision.

Allow me here, to notice a remark of yours, p. 68. you quote from Mr. ELDER, relating to Mr. MERRIL: "The result was that the Baptist minister was invited to bury a number of them, with their Lord in baptism." Then you enquire: "Does the Spirit ever call baptizing people burying them? or would any person except a Baptist use such a manner of expression?" Mr. ELDER says: "To bury them with their Lord in baptism." The author of the epistle to the Colossians says "Buried with him in baptism." What now is the difference in the manner of expression? Query, Mr. Ross being judge, Was not Paul, or the Spirit of inspiration, a Baptist? Query, Which corrects the diction of the Spirit by that of the party? Mr. Ross or Mr. ELDER? This reminds me of some who scoffingly inquired of a Baptist, if he would baptize them in the *Cascade Burne*. Did not that sound like the diction of the Spirit, though scoffingly uttered?" "Baptized in the *River Jordan*." That a Baptist, whose mind had been once shaped in a Pedobaptist mould, should, occasion-

ally and unawares, slip words and phrases inconsistent with Baptist principles, is not to be wondered at ; as it is very difficult to get wholly clear of confirmed habits. But Pedobaptists have no such excuse for talking like Baptists. Their doing so is the effect of truth, in spite of confirmed habits. Read the ii. and iii. of Colossians once more, praying for the experimental enjoyment of the circumcision of Christ, and of dying, being buried, and rising with Christ. For the difference between circumcision and baptism, see p. 60.

Wishing you and your flock, a speedy reformation in principles and practice,

I remain, your's truly,

A. C.

LETTER III.

SIR,

In p. 13. you say: "Having taken this concise view of the subject, I shall state to you the reasons which influence our practice." Again, in p. 21. you present to us in one view the reason of your conduct by a recapitulation of the preceding arguments. I shall put the arguments at large, and the brief recapitulation together, and examine whatever appears deserving attention.

Reason 1. "Children were admitted into the church by direct divine appointment and their right confirmed by an everlasting covenant. They possessed this privilege two thousand years without dispute and their right is still maintained by a vast majority of christians." The last part of this reason smells strongly of that church which makes universality and antiquity marks of the true church. It also seems needless to a cause that "can be sufficiently defended from the oracles of God." However, as it is rather leaving "the Bible alone," I shall leave it to its fate. As to the first part of the reason, I have already shown the nature and duration of that church and covenant which included children, and the ground on which children were included. You say p. 14. "It is certainly incumbent on those who would exclude them to show their authority." I deny this, and will show why. You grant p. 9. that the church underwent several changes at different times; and that the greatest change took place when Christ appeared in our world. This shows that however it may appear to us, it is not inconsistent with the divine character, nor with the good of men, that, in the course of time, certain changes relative to religion should take place. The nature and extent of these changes must be learnt by an examination of each change by itself, and compared with the state of things preceding and succeeding it. As the greatest of these changes took place, at the time that Baptists date the cessation of infant church-membership; if, at that time, the standard of the qualification of church-members is raised beyond the reach of infants; if we never, after raising the standard, read of infants as church-members, either as received or excluded, acting or treated, or in any capacity whatever; this is sufficient evidence that then they ceased to be church-members. It is, therefore, now incumbent on you to show how this incapacity is consistent with their

being members, under that covenant which disqualifies them by raising the standard.

Again, suppose the king gave orders to re-embodify a broken regiment, and directed the recruiting officer to give the bounty to all sound able-bodied men, of 6 feet high, from 16 to 45 years old. Though it were known that His Majesty had formerly admitted into this regiment persons below the standard size, yet the recruiting officer was not at liberty to deviate from his instruction, to please one who, like Mr. Ross, would say, "The king has for many years received into this regiment persons of 5 feet 8 inches; and it is incumbent on those who would exclude persons of that height, to show their authority." The faithful officer would like, the Baptists, follow the royal instructions, and pay little attention to any such demands.

Again, you grant that two testaments were made, the old and the new. Suppose that a certain rich gentleman had willed all his property to the protestant clergy of British North America. Mr. Ross and Mr. Elder both, would probably expect a little. But as the gentleman was yet alive, he could alter the will. Accordingly, he makes a new one; leaving the whole to the protestant clergy in British North America, who have passed their 50th year, and Mr. Ross to be his sole executor. Suppose then Mr. ELDER should put in his claim, pleading that he was included in the first testament, and that it was incumbent on Mr. Ross to show his authority for excluding him. Would not Mr. Ross laugh at his folly and impertinence, and show that the standard of qualification was altered; and, as Mr. ELDER's age was not included in the last testament, its having been included in the first availed nothing? It is needless to multiply instances. All I mean by them is to show how unfair you would state the point at issue. I request your attention to Isa. lii. 1. The general opinion is that Zion and Jerusalem mean the christian church. If the uncircumcised and the unclean are to be taken literally, Mr. Ross has no business in Zion; for I expect he is both uncircumcised and unclean. If they are taken spiritually, those who are uncircumcised in heart and in ears, whether infants or adults, are excluded. I take you for point blank, positive, divine authority, to Gal. iv. 30. "Cast out the bond woman and her son."

You grant that the readmission of persons who are in the church already, involves a degree of absurdity. Suppose then one of your children, who is born in the church, and sealed a member of it, should grow up a very wicked young man. You say p. 24. "In the mean time, it (the church) rejects all members who have not a consistent conduct:" consistent with the word of God I suppose. What do you do with this young man? Do you exclude him, or do you not? Do you say that by his wickedness he excludes himself? I should suppose this equally true of all who are scripturally excluded. But do you let all your inconsistent members exclude themselves, and say nothing further about them? Suppose this same young man, a few years after his exclusion, repents and desires admission. Suppose also, that at the same time, a few other young members, who, though very circumspect in their deportment, had not yet communicated, desired to communicate. What difference do you make between the readmission of this excluded member, and your treatment of those

who had not been excluded? Suppose you tell your child, that, as his father is a believer, he (the child) is of Abraham's federal seed. But when he arrives at maturity he does not walk in the steps of Abraham. Then, to be faithful to him, you tell him that, as he does not do the works of Abraham, he cannot be a child of Abraham, but as he does the works of the devil, he is of his father the devil. He answers: "My father is yet a believer; I have no other nature than I always had; I said and did evil, and nothing but evil, when I was one year old, as well as now; and the worst thing I do now, is only the legitimate exercise of that nature which reigned uncontrolled in me then. How then have I changed my father? The change is not in me, only as it respects strength and intellect. How now would you answer your son in such a case?"

You say, p. 14. "We find that none of those who were believers in Christ at the time of his death, were ever admitted into the church under the new testament dispensation, because they were never out of it; for in them was the church continued." I grant you that, as descendants of Jacob, they were members of the Jewish church, till the bond woman and her son were cast out; and that they were at liberty to conform, occasionally, to some of the Jewish ceremonies, even after that event. But certain expressions and facts inserted in the gospels incline me to think that the transition from the old dispensation to the new was not quite so abrupt as your system represents it. Were I to join two sticks together, I would not let each continue its full thickness to the very end, but would shave off the side, near the end of each, till they would lie close together, while the ends passed each other a little. Your plan is to let both keep their full thickness to the very end, saw the ends square off, and glue them together, end to end. The Lord's supper indisputably belongs to the new testament. Luke xxii. 20. This is the new testament in my blood. Yet it was instituted during the old testament. Some of the Jewish observances were continued some time by the Jewish christians, during the new testament. As Christ's kingdom cometh not with observation, we can hardly expect it "but end foremost." It grows imperceptibly out of small beginnings. The seed sown bringeth forth without noise, first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. The leaven put into the meal, takes sometime in its latent operation, before the whole is leavened. Thus, the kingdom of God was in the midst of them, though they saw it not; for unless a man be born again he cannot see it. Was not Christ's little band chosen by him out of the world, and separated from the world, so that they were not of the world, but were hated by the world? John xvi. and xvii. chap. According to your own plan, those who are pointedly called the world, who hated Christ and his chosen few, were still at that very time the Jewish church, Abraham's federal seed, God's covenant people, and distinguished from the world by circumcision. But while Christ acknowledged that they were Abraham's seed, he tells them, plainly, that they were of their father the devil, and chose to do his works. Had they been Abraham's seed, by faith, they would no doubt have done the works of Abraham. It appears, then, that those who had believed through grace, received power to become the spiritual sons of God, and were transplanted into the kingdom of heaven, out

of the Jewish church, which now ceased to be the covenant people of God. All the remarks I made relative to the ministry of John the Baptist, go to establish the same idea. If this is correct, Christ's little band was the embryo of the first new testament church, viz. that at Jerusalem. This church originated in Christ's calling the disciples. To this, the ministry of John was preparatory and subse-
quent, and entirely of the same kind, and on the same plan. John was like an officer, enlisting and preparing soldiers for the future regiment. Luke xvi. 16. But all the laws and regulations of this church were not given at once, nor were they to be in full operation before the famous day of Pentecost. Perhaps the disciples before that day bore a relation to the church at Jerusalem afterward, similar to that which the family of Abraham, before the law at Sinai, bore to the Jewish nation afterward. The christian code of laws was not completed till after the day of Pentecost: but was afterward completed and brought into operation, as the circumstances of the church required. This subject is attended with some difficulty. I have stated it as it appears to my own mind.

You ask, p. 15. "At what period was the church of God not the gospel church?" I remark that there is a very unfair advantage taken of Mr. ELDER, in the manner in which you ask and answer that question. You know very well that he means what you yourself call the christian church. Why then quibble on a word? It is unworthy of a man who can defend his cause without subterfuges, to have recourse to quibbling. You took his word in a sense in which you could not but know he did not use it. Do you believe yourself that the church in the wilderness was the gospel church, in the same sense in which it is under the new testament? You might as well say that the Jewish church was the kingdom of heaven; and that Christ and his servants announced as at hand, what had been among them from the time of Moses. Do you believe that the gospel preached in the wilderness, was exactly the same as that preached to us? What then has become of Moses, who died in the wilderness through unbelief of that gospel? Was it not the good news of entering into the rest beyond Jordan that was preached to them? Moses, through unbelief of the typical gospel, fell short of the typical rest. Do you believe the preaching of the gospel in a church, is sufficient to constitute it a gospel church? Why then so much ado about the members, constitution, ordinances, &c. of a church? Why did Mr. Ross separate from the church of Scotland? The Jewish church and nation were identified. It was essential to it to be established by law, as the established religion of the nation. If it was the gospel church, is not Mr. Ross a sectarian, and not of the gospel church? Why is he a protestant? There are many in the church of Rome who preach the gospel.

In p. 15. you conclude; "Since the right of children to membership in the church was granted by an everlasting covenant, and recognized by our Lord Jesus Christ, every attempt to deprive them of it by any man, or body of men, must be highly offensive to the great head of the church." Now, Sir, did you not feel old Adam swelling big, when you had penned that decisive sentence? There is a bone that will cost the Baptists some gnawing. No, Sir, they need not put their teeth on it: the gospel mortar has already pounded it as fine

as flour. Why press in the everlasting covenant to prove infant baptism? Only prove that baptism now is subject to the same regulations as circumcision was under the law, and we will readily grant you liberty to baptize all the males of your household, and of the sojourners among you, from eight days old and upward, from the hewer of your wood to the drawer of your water. I sincerely hope I have sufficiently showed that the everlasting covenant will not answer your purpose, and that we shall hear no more of it from you, in that sense. Let us counterpoise this sentence, so big with importance, by another of the same form, equally well-founded, and equally important. "Since the right of adults to membership in the church was granted by an everlasting covenant, and recognized by our Lord Jesus Christ, every attempt to deprive them of it, by any man or body of men, must be highly offensive to the great head of the church." Take your balances, and weigh which of these arguments is the heaviest. I would defy Aristotle himself to find any difference. Under the old testament, no qualification was required of adults more than of infants: under the new, no less is required of infants than of adults. If you choose to deny these assertions, produce from the oracles of God, the specified, different, required qualifications, for infant and adult church-membership. I find it very difficult to obtain a distinct conception of the tenor of that law, which settles the manner of succession in the case of infant hereditary right to church-membership, founded on the everlasting covenant, as you suppose it recognized by our Lord in these words: "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Does it settle a right of succession to church-membership on all infants, or only on some? Does it settle this right on the infants of all the professors, or only on those of real believers? Does it settle this right on all the infants of believers, or only on a part? Does it settle this right on the infant grand children and infant great grand children, &c. or only on the immediate offspring of believers? These are important questions, sometimes started, and always quashed, rather by a stretch of clerical prerogative, than by a candid elucidation of divine truth. Scriptural answers to them are essential to a right founded on the Abrahamic covenant. Examine the everlasting covenant once more, and our Lord's words alluded to, which you conceive to be so clear and satisfactory on the subject, and see what answers they afford to the above questions. Since you and Mr. JACKSON agree so well, see if you draw the same answers to the above questions, from the everlasting covenant and our Lord's words: and should you differ, see which of you takes the words most naturally, and does them the least violence.

You quote from Mr. ELDER the following sentence. "I conceive we cannot discover from the law of circumcision, who are fit subjects of baptism, as the covenant of circumcision has waxed old and vanished away, and a new and better covenant has been brought in, which embraces the believing Jew and Gentile, and it is from this new covenant we are to learn who are interested in it, and what laws they are to obey." You then observe p. 16. "Seldom can so many and so gross mistakes be found in the same number of words." Had you not been a very fastidious critic, or rather a very crafty disputant, you would have set to your seal that the above sentence is correct;

for it is nearly, if not quite self evident, to every believer of the gospel. But you found that it bore an unfavourable aspect toward infant baptism. Infant baptism you were determined to defend. The most likely way to prevent the reader's seeing the inferences which the sentence naturally suggested, was, to brow beat it and put it out of countenance, by telling him that it contains many, and very gross mistakes. I would beg the reader to read it again, compare it with the word of God, regardless of Mr. Ross's commentary, and try it by the true touch stone. But Mr. Ross has told the gross mistakes it contains. 1. "It confounds two distinct covenants." It has been proved again and again, and you cannot, scripturally, disprove it, that the covenant of which circumcision was the token, as it included a carnal offspring; and circumcision itself as the token of it, whether as given to Abraham, or at Sinai, or in the land of Moab, is vanished away, and made room for that new and better covenant, of which Christ is the mediator. 2. "It embraces the believing Jew and Gentile, which, on the Baptist principles, it cannot do." This is very unfair. You charge the mistake on the sentence to condemn it, whereas, it is evident, that in reality, you do not think the mistake is in the sentence, but in the Baptist principles, which you suppose to be inconsistent with the truth in the sentence. On the Baptist principles it can, and must embrace all believers, and no other; for all believers, and believers only, are, on their principles, to which you have given your sanction, p. 13, the circumcision, i. e. the true Israel. They are the Israel of God, without respect to nation or country. It is to them the new covenant was promised, and that as believers, and as believers only. 3. "It is from this covenant we are to learn what laws they are to obey," whereas "in Jeremiah's prophecy or in Paul's epistle, the covenant contains no law." The new covenant or testament means the gospel dispensation. The principles and laws by which Christ governs his church as king of Zion, according to the tenor of the new covenant, are the laws which believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, are to obey. But as your bible contains only an intimation of making the covenant, and not the very substance of the covenant itself, we do not wonder at your not seeing that the covenant subjects were to have *laws written on their hearts*.

You next proceed to the words of Christ: "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." As nothing exists without a cause, what do you think influenced the disciples to forbid children being brought? Their Jewish prejudices were all on the opposite side, unless the children were uncircumcised. You see such a similarity between their conduct and that of the modern Baptists, that you probably suppose both are under similar influence. My reasons for objecting to infant church-membership are briefly these. 1. I see no divine authority for it under the new covenant. 2. At the commencement of the new covenant, the standard qualification required for church-membership was raised so high beyond their reach, as necessarily to leave them without: 3. The arguments by which their church-membership is defended, are so very repugnant to the whole tenor of the gospel, that I cannot possibly preach the gospel, without going right in the face of them. If these reasons influenced the disciples, they must have a foundation in truth, before they could so far conquer Jewish preju-

dices, as to lead the disciples, in opposition to their confirmed habits, to forbid infants being brought to Christ. Again, allowing that on account of the very superior visible spirituality of the gospel over the law, the disciples overshot the mark, and, by mistake, concluded that infants could not be baptized, how does Christ set them right? Allowing that he corrected them respecting church-membership; yet, as the Jewish church contained many uncircumcised members, and many, according to you, who did not eat the passover till they were fit, and John and themselves, by their master's authority, baptized many confessing their sins, why might they not think that, in all reason, these infants, though members of the church, should wait unbaptized till they were fit to confess their sins in sincerity? Our Lord's words and conduct on the occasion, as interpreted by yourself, is far from being sufficient to prove infant baptism. You seem angry with Mr. ELDER for mentioning baptism in connection with the text, and call it twisting it round; but you must twist it to something more than infant church-membership merely, before it will establish infant baptism. Again, Mr. ELDER asks: Does he mean, such in age—or in humility? You promptly answer: Such in age. I love this promptness and decision: no evasion, no equivocating. Let a man show that he believes what he says; and that he is neither afraid nor ashamed to avow and defend what he believes. You attempt to substantiate the truth of your answer, by the fact, that the disciples would hinder none for their humility, but for their age; and that our Lord was displeased with them for hindering, not humble persons, but little children. This is granted you: but in your application of it to prove your assertion, there seems to be a flaw to which you did not advert. It is evident that when you penned this passage, you felt strong and confident of the goodness of your cause, and therefore was fair and good-humoured. While in this humour, allow me to speak to you plainly. I have been exactly where you are. I know your feelings. I sympathize with you. I sincerely believe you in a mistake on the disputed subject, and that this mistake is a great hurt to your own mind, and to the cause of truth. I know from your situation, your mind must shrink from a change of sentiment. I know that nothing I can advance will produce any change, without the divine blessing. Trusting and praying to God for his blessing, I desire to follow you through all the lurking holes to which you retreat; fully confident that the time is not very far distant, when none shall be baptized, old or young, but upon a personal profession of faith and repentance.

I shall suppose that a beggar comes for alms to a pious nobleman's house. The servants, unwilling to be troubled with the beggar, or have their master troubled with him, turn roughly to him, and rebuke him for having the assurance to come to trouble their master. The master overhears them, is displeased, and says unto them: "Suffer poor beggars to come to my house, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a poor beggar, shall not enter therein. And he took the beggar into his house, and fed him, and clothed him, and blessed him." If this is not a fair parallel with Christ's words under consideration, I am destitute of common

sense. What now would you think of the man who, on the strength of this statement, allowing Christ to be the nobleman, would maintain the church-membership of all beggars; and argue that it was a beggar, and not a humble person the servants would hinder; and that it was for hindering a beggar, not a humble person, their master was displeased with them? The truth evidently is, that believers resemble infants and beggars; not in age and size and bodily wants, but in humility, docility, and poverty in spirit. 1 Cor. xiv. 20. 1 Pet. ii. 2. Mat. v. 3. Those included in the "such," and none else, make up the kingdom of heaven. It is wholly, not partly, made up of *such*. If, therefore, *such* refers to age and size, Mr. Ross is forever excluded.

I think you are exceedingly unfair in your remarks on Acts ii 39. In v. 38. "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, v. 39. 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." Does not the conjunction in the beginning of the 39th, join the 38th and 39th verses together? On every rational principle, the promise in the 39th refers to the gift of the Holy Spirit in the 38th, which God promised by Joel, which Jesus Christ, having ascended on high, Eph. iv. 8. received of the Father, v. 33. and shed forth so that they both saw and heard it. This promise is received through faith. Gal. iii. 14. But you ask p. 18. "Do these words, 'The promise (be it what it will) is unto you and to your children,' favour the continuation of the right of children to the promise? Or does it give the least hint of their exclusion?" The words put parents and children on a level, and the next clause puts those that are afar off on a level with both, and the last clause explains how the promise is to all the three classes. Pray, Sir, do you think the restriction and limitation in the last clause, applicable to any of the three classes, or to all the three, or how? What use do you make of that part of scripture? If you admit its application to any of the three, on what principle do you separate it from the other two? If you think it applicable to all the three, why set it in opposition to the Baptists? Do you think they are so averse to children, as not to allow them the promise of the Spirit, when the Lord shall call them? I suppose I need not prove to a Seceder that the calling is to salvation: though the manner in which you quoted Isa. xlix. 1. shows you can quibble on a text when it suits your purpose. That passage refers, exclusively, to Christ's being called, not to salvation, but to his public ministry, which ended in his death. I deny that the children here means infants exclusively, but is used in the same sense as descendants. Baptists do not object to any on account of age, merely. But they believe the new birth is necessary to new testament church-membership; John iii. 5. The fruits of the Spirit are the evidences by which they know who are born of the Spirit. Mat. vii. 15—27. they, therefore, feel bound to wait till the evidence make a satisfactory appearance, before they can admit any person into church-fellowship.

You ask; "Is there the least hint of cutting children off from an interest in the promise? Yea, is not the continuation of their relation to it plainly expressed?" Sir, how unfair, how wicked is it, to detach

a small part of a passage from the preceding context, which is intimately joined to it; from the immediately succeeding clause, which, being on a level with it, helps to determine its meaning; and above all, from the qualifying clause which necessarily limits it in its application! What may not be proved from the scriptures, by such illegitimate principles of interpretation? I would undertake to prove Popery, or Islamism, or any thing you please, from the scriptures, by such unhallowed canons of criticism. There is, Sir, more than a hint of their exclusion, as far as we are concerned, till they give scriptural evidence of having been called by the Lord our God. The promise is to such, and to no other. If you wish any further proof of this, examine to whom is the promise fulfilled.

You seem to lay great stress upon the time of the first public instruction under the new testament; and to expect that if ever children were excluded, that was the time. I maintain, Sir, that children never were excluded out of the covenant that contained them. The covenant and its children were both cast out together. But let us try the force of that argument. The first promise that is directly applied to the children of the covenant on the day of Pentecost, is applied upon their repenting, and being baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. "*Repent and be baptized—and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*" An old testament promise is referred to, which was made to all flesh, and applied to Jews, to their children, and to Gentiles afar off, in the same sense, and on the same footing; even to as many of them, as many of their children, and as many of the Gentiles, as the Lord our God shall call. If this is not a fair interpretation of the passage, I leave you to give one more so. If this does not establish repentance for the remission of sins, as the ground on which a promise is made to Jew or Gentile, if it does not establish an equality between Jew and Gentile, (or, as you would have it, between the professing people of God and the world,) as it regards an interest in the promise; and if it does not cut off all claim to spiritual blessings from carnal descent, I despair of ever establishing any thing by the English language.

But, Sir, I will not grant you that, on the day of Pentecost, was the first public instruction belonging to the new testament dispensation. The more I dwell upon it, the more I am satisfied, that John's ministry belonged to, and was the introduction of the new testament dispensation—the beginning of the gospel of Christ. How could he prepare people for the reign of heaven, but by opening to his hearers its nature, design, &c.? Do you really think that preaching the law was the way to prepare them? The account of Apollos in Acts xviii. 24, 25. is inconsistent with his knowing only the Jewish religion; and he knew then, only the baptism of John. When I compare John's ministry to Acts ii. 38. xx. 21. I find such a coincidence between them, and both so different from Judaism, that it becomes quite evident John's ministry belonged to the new testament. See John i. 12, 13. and iii. chap. Also, comp. Mark vii. 15. to Isa. lxxv. 4. lxxvi. 17. and observe the attention to externals recognized by the old covenant, but disannulled by the ministry of Christ, which was exactly of a kind with that of John. The phrase rendered, "Fulfil all righteousness" Mat. iii. 15. is translated by Dr. CAMPBELL, "Ratify every institu-

tion." According to this, Christ, the head of the church, ratified John's ministry, and the ordinance of baptism as belonging to it. And did not John commence his ministry, his unfolding the nature of the kingdom of God, by invalidating claims founded on carnal descent from Abraham, and by directing his hearers to repentance and faith in the Messiah, as the only way of obtaining a place in the future kingdom? You seem sensible that John is point blank against you, and therefore try to dispose of him under the old testament; but Peter on the day of Pentecost, is in perfect unison with John, and therefore as much against you as John.

In p. 19. you treat of the baptism of households; and in p. 21. say: "The apostles baptized households, and we still do the same;" and then enquire: "Do you baptize households?" The first christian church of which I was a member, contained two whole families, who joined when I did, and still the church was under thirty members. If we have two households for every thirty members, we have households as numerous in proportion as the apostles had. It is fully granted, that the apostles baptized households; but it is disputed that you follow either the apostles, or the established law of the Jewish church, in Exod. xii. 48. To make the proselyte law tally with your practice, (for your practice, like the law of the Medes and Persians, is unalterable,) you would have read it: "Let all his *infant* males be circumcised." And to make the practice of the apostles similar to yours, you must show, what you have sadly failed in doing, that they baptized infants in virtue of their parents' faith. You try hard to prove it in the case of the Philippian jailer.

You remark: "You, Sir, in the case of the Philippian jailer, (Acts 16.) bring in one of your auxiliaries saying, concerning his house, 'Who it seems were equally impressed with Paul's sermon as the jailer himself was.'" This, Sir, is in direct contradiction to the text, which says, 'He rejoiced believing.' The words *rejoiced* and *believing* are in the singular number, and what is rendered, 'with all his house,' is expressed in the original by one word (*panoiki*) an adverb. Here we have an express example of several individuals baptized, when there was but one believing, in perfect conformity to the long established law of the church. Exod. xii. 48." This, taken altogether, is a most extraordinary statement. Your own words to Mr. ELDER, may fairly be retorted on yourself. "It is plain to any reader of discernment, that you are under the necessity of misstating or wresting every passage you bring forward in defence of your opinion." Read Acts xvi. 28—34. and say that the family were not impressed with the sermon, as well as the jailer himself. Though you should have taken *panoiki* from us altogether, there is another satisfactory evidence. When he called for a light, (to his family no doubt,) the family were alarmed, if not before, by the earthquake. He took them out of the prison before he asked the important question; and it is altogether unlikely that they staid in the open air with a light, a little after midnight. It is much more likely that he brought them into his house. At any rate, it is certain that all that were in his house were present, when Paul and Silas spoke the word of the Lord, in answer to his question. When the jailer asked the question in the hearing of his family, it was to be answered

in their hearing: and Paul, who knew that the family were as needful of salvation as the jailer himself, in answering his question, adds, (in order to draw the attention of the family,) "And thy house." Meaning, no doubt, if they shall believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, they shall be saved as well as you; for the salvation of Christ is inexhaustible. Having got their attention, the apostle spoke the word of the Lord to him, and to all that were in his house. From this it is evident, that all who were in his house, were suitable hearers of the gospel, and therefore were not infants. If, therefore, they did not believe, Paul must have baptized adults upon the faith of their parents; however conformable this may be to Exod. xii. 48. it is fatal to your plan of baptizing infants only, in virtue of the parents' faith. Thus, as they were all suitable hearers of the gospel, and were all baptized, your practice forces you to conclude they all believed: as the apostle baptized them at all, my principles force me to conclude they believed. You and I then, must agree with Mr. ELDER and Luke, in concluding that the family were impressed with Paul's sermon equally with the jailer himself. "The words rejoiced and believed are in the singular number." Truly so, because "with" governs "all his house." Mr. Ross is a Pedobaptist with all his flock. Though "is a Pedobaptist" is in the singular number, will any reader say that his flock are not Pedobaptists equally with Mr. Ross himself? Oh! but what is rendered, 'with all his house,' is expressed in the original by one word (*panoiki*) an adverb. Truly, your mere English readers are under strong obligations to you, for your very satisfactory illustration of the meaning and use of the Greek adverb! Well does the proverb suit. "An ounce of common sense is worth a pound of learning." You have an expeditious method of dispatching all that stand in your way. Do you feel no guilt in thus disposing of the words of inspiration? Albeit it is one word, an adverb, it must have some meaning. The Spirit of God did not insert it there without some use. Let us hear the great Parkhurst. *Panoiki*, An Adv. from *pan* all, and *oikos* a house, q. d. *sun pante oikō*. With all one's house or family. occ. Acts xvi. 34. Josephus (as *Welstein* has remarked,) uses this word, Ant. lib. IV. cap. 4. s. 4. *Oste antous PANOIKI siteisthoi en te iera polci*. "So that they with all their families might eat it in the holy city." Could Mr. Ross make such a parade of Greek criticism, and still be ignorant of this? If he did know it, I forbear making any remarks, but leave the reader to make his own reflections on the consistency of such a knowledge, with the manner in which Mr. Ross has disposed of the word *panoiki*.

In p. 19. you find great fault with Mr. ELDER's notion concerning seals, and quote a sentence from him, which, by your three notes of admiration, you hold up to universal ridicule. But let not him who putteth on the harness boast as he who putteth it off. I am a stranger to Mr. ELDER but I thought I could discover in his book, both the views and the spirit of an amiable christian; therefore, it would be unchristian not to love him. I hate to see any person, especially a christian, held up to ridicule without cause. Mr. Ross is not destitute of common sense. How is it then that he sees neither truth nor sense in what is real fact? I can account for it no otherwise, than by ascribing it to Pedobaptist prejudice. Here is Mr. ELDER's obnoxious

sentence "A seal is for confirmation of some transaction already taken place." Now, Sir, is not this true? "Then," you say, "the rainbow is a confirmation that there was a flood, but no ground of hope that there will be no more floods. A seal annexed to a grant of land, is a confirmation of past possession, not of future right." The mean sophistry which these sentences involve, deserve a severer castigation than I, at present, choose to bestow. It is of more importance to unravel this tangled skein, that we may discover the truth. 1. You confound two distinct things, a seal and a token. A seal confirms, a token only calls to remembrance. 2. The promise, however, that there should be no more floods, was not confirmed by a seal, as none of Jehovah's covenants are, but by a sacrifice. 3. The rainbow has been constituted, not a seal to confirm, but a token or memorial, bringing to remembrance the covenant which God had already established, that he might look upon it, and remember his covenant. The already confirmed transaction, not the rainbow, is the sure ground of hope that there will be no more floods. I should suppose that, as Mr. Ross dipped so deep into the Greek language, he dipped into natural philosophy also, deep enough to know that the rainbow was seen in the clouds *before the flood*, and could therefore be but a poor ground of hope that there should be no more floods. 4. The seal annexed to a grant of land is a confirmation neither of past possession nor of future right, but of a deed, a transaction already taken place in the mutual agreement of the giver and receiver, which deed or past transaction is the ground of future right. Should you still inquire: "Is this true? Is it sense?" I must only leave you to enjoy your sense, but I must enjoy mine till I get a better. Will you, Sir, be kind enough to produce the grant of your, and your children's future right to promised blessings, with the seal annexed, confirming that right, that we may see and examine it, for fear it should be forged.

In the same paragraph, you quote from Mr. ELDER: "Circumcision was a national mark of distinction, to separate the seed of Abraham after the flesh, from all other people;" and add: "I say, it was not;" and then refer us to Gen. xvii. 23, 27. when Abraham's household were circumcised, as well as Ishmael, his then only son. I have already explained how slaves and proselytes were circumcised.

In p. 20. you produce the argument to prove the church-membership of infants from 1 Cor. vii. 14. and say: "This text has cost the Baptists a great deal of pains." Please, Sir, allow me to correct this assertion. The text has cost the Baptists no more pains than other plain texts of scripture: but as they love the truth, they are sorry to see it perverted; and as they love the souls of Pedobaptists, they are sorry to see them reject the counsel of God against themselves; and, therefore, they take a great deal of pains to rescue scripture texts from the perversions of Pedobaptists. You say p. 21. "The children of married heathens were quite legitimate, but still unclean." Pray, Sir, who told you that? Does the apostle say so? No. On what then does this bold assertion rest? On the ipse dixit of Mr. Ross. If it has a firmer foundation, let us see it. Again, "Nor does the Apostle maintain that the unbelieving wife is sanctified by marriage with her husband, but by his faith." I wish Mr. Ross would maintain a more tender conscience. Your reference to

Tit. i. 15. will help you nothing; for to apply it to the case in hand, it will run thus: "To the pure or believing partner, the impure or unbelieving partner is pure or holy. You cannot prove from this, that the unbelieving partner has any holiness in himself, but only that he is holy to his believing partner: i. e. as far as his relation to the believing partner is concerned, he is sanctified to, and for the use of the believing. I am astonished, even myself, how every passage, when fairly examined, is so far from yielding Pedobaptism any support, that it stands directly opposed to it. How, Sir, do you learn that the apostle maintains, it is by the husband's faith the unbelieving wife is sanctified? Does the apostle himself say so? Nothing, like it. The apostle does not say that she is sanctified by marriage with, or by the faith, of her husband. But by the husband. How do you expect to give an account of your conduct in fathering upon the apostle, and on the Spirit of truth, what they never said? However your ipse dixit may pass among Presbyterians, and other Pedobaptists, on earth, it will not pass without strict scrutiny at the general assizes. Had not the apostle said that the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, we should probably hear a great deal about the husband's being the head of the wife, and many other reasons why the wife should be sanctified by the husband; but the apostolic statement is such, that it costs you a great deal of pains to give a plausibility to a contrary statement. You admit, however, what I never knew a Pedobaptist to admit before, viz. that it is in consequence of the sanctification of the unbelieving partner, that the children are holy. The necessary inference is, that whatever privilege the consequent holiness of the children intitles them to, the antecedent sanctification of the unbelieving parent, intitles him to the same. If the children of believers are holy, why does Mr. Ross treat them as unclean, in every respect but that of baptizing them? a ceremony which they neither understand nor remember, and from which they derive no good. You barely refer to the dedication of the first born sons to God, to ascertain the meaning of the term holy. In this you have done wisely. Those who attempt to strengthen their cause, by adding the dedication of the first born to the circumcision of all the males, invalidate both arguments. They are different ceremonies, for different purposes, requiring different qualifications in the subjects, and the one will in no case stand for the other; therefore, what is founded on the one can have no relation to the other; every additional weight put in one scale goes to counterpoise the other. I cannot but remark how easily satisfied you are, when you wish to smooth over difficulties. You say, "The term *holy* is applied to what was dedicated, or what ought to be dedicated to the Lord." Cannot you tell which? or were you afraid of inspection? To dedicate is to make holy. If a thing was holy before, in that sense, to what purpose is dedication? Is it to sanction the holiness of infants, who yet must be dedicated in baptism?

In page 22. you say: "The principles you have embraced, involve you in many difficulties to which you have not adverted. Some of them I shall submit to your consideration. 1. You found your principles upon a supposition that an everlasting covenant has vanished away." Sir, did the word everlasting never occur to your mind, when

studying this subject? "This has already been fully considered. Its typical meaning, the only sense in which it included a carnal offspring is vanished. Its spiritual meaning remains.

"2. You continually confound Abraham's natural with his federal seed; or, as Paul says, Rom. ix. 7, 8. the children of the flesh with the children of the promise." Sir, that one passage of Paul's is sufficient to invalidate all you have advanced in support of infant baptism. I am astonished that you refer to it. Is it possible you did not see it was directly opposed to your system? Or did you, by a dextrous piece of sophistry, attempt to turn against your antagonist, what lays for his system, a foundation immovable as the throne of God? I challenge you to produce a single passage in the new testament, where the phrase, "the children of the promise," includes any but real believers. Does the phrase, "the children of the flesh," ever include any but the federal seed? It is not the federal seed that are contrasted with the children of the flesh, but the children of the promise. The children of the flesh, and the children of the promise, are equally, though not in the same sense, the federal seed; those according to the literal, these according to the spiritual meaning of the Abrahamic covenant. Though Ishmael was never of the federal seed, he is said to have been born after the flesh, having been the type of the fleshly federal seed. Two nations, two manners of people, two sorts of children, were in the womb of the covenant, and they struggled together (as witness the killing of the prophets) till they were separated at the commencement of the new covenant, when Christ, the head of the spiritual nation, become the first begotten from the dead.

When I first renounced Pedobaptism, it appeared plain to me that Abraham's carnal descendants in the line of Isaac and Jacob, were distinguished as the covenant seed to whom the promises were made, from the rest of Abraham's carnal seed. To this distinction, I thought none of the Baptist writers I had seen paid sufficient attention, and that just in that place the Pedobaptists had the better of them. Here it is evident you feel confident, and so do I, that you have the advantage of Mr. ELDER. At the same time, it appeared equally plain that the same seed were distinguished, as the children of the flesh, though still a covenant seed, from those who, being Christ's, are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. This distinction, by far the most important to us, I thought the Pedobaptists entirely set aside; confounding the children of the flesh and the children of the promise, (who are both a covenant seed,) under the one name of the children of the covenant. Confounding the two seeds is the very corner-stone of the Pedobaptist system: it is therefore the more necessary to mark the distinction accurately. Of all the Pedobaptists I have ever seen, though in reality all equally confound them, yet no one does it so glaringly as yourself. These two different children being promised and referred to, in the same words, "thy seed," to the same man, in the same covenant, and this covenant being called everlasting, has, I believe, confused and bewildered many sincere and pious people. Especially, when they saw those who ought to know better, applying the promises and privileges, in their spiritual meaning, to those who are born only after the flesh, but who, in fact, are neither

typically not spiritually the children of the covenant. Attending to the distinction, and, at the same time, to the connexion between the type and the antitype, is the only way of reducing this confusion to order, and of applying, scripturally, his proper portion to every person, according to his real and apparent state before God. As the difference between the carnal seed and the spiritual, is real in its nature, and important in its consequences, and that between the carnal covenant seed, and the seed not in covenant, is only ceremonial or typical in its nature, and not necessarily involving any more important consequences, than an increase of punishment for misimproving superior privileges, I view the mistake of the Baptists as comparatively unimportant. The worst consequence I see attending it in our day, is, that it leaves a lurking hole for the Pedobaptists to hide from the sword of the Spirit, and so prevent their return to the truth. Mr. Ross and I visit a gentleman's place, we see there at a distance a rough block of marble, and another block polished by the artisan into the figure of a man, and a living man standing together; Mr. Ross supposes there are two men, and a block of marble; I suppose there is one man, and two blocks of marble. Reader, which is in the greatest mistake? Ever since I viewed the distinctions in question as I now do, I wished I was capable of communicating to the religious public my view of the matter. I do it now in consequence of your letters; whether it shall be considered by the children of God as doing good or harm, remains to be determined. If, through inadvertency, I have any where confounded the distinction between the covenant seed and the seed not in covenant, point it out to me, and I shall acknowledge my obligation with gratitude. On the other hand, if I have any where confounded the distinction between the children of the flesh and the children of the promise, when the Baptists point it out to me, I shall be glad to acknowledge it.

"3. Your principles," you remark, "place a barrier in the way of accomplishing the promises made to Abraham, and his seed Christ." All the promises you refer to relate to nations, and you suppose that as nations include infants, the promises can never be fulfilled to them as nations, unless infants are included in the promises, and regarded as members of the church. This is the pith of your objection. Now, Sir, I apprehend the promises are to be accomplished individually, not nationally. 1. By taking them as applied to individuals, they accord with the words of Christ: "He that believeth:" "Unless a man be born again." Here, you see, it is all personal and individual. 2. The apostles interpret them as of individual application. Referring to the case of Cornelius, James says. Acts xv. 14. "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets;—v. 17. That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called,—v. 19. trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God." Here it appears that when God took out of the Gentiles a people for his name, and some from among the Gentiles turned to God, the apostles concluded they saw the accomplishment of the promises to all the Gentiles. See Rom. xv. 9—12. All ye Gentiles, all ye people, referred to those who from among the Gentiles turned to God. 3. The apos-

ties evidently acted on the principle of applying the promises to individuals not to nations. You never find them delivering their message to nations, *in their national capacity*; or to the rulers or representatives of a nation, *as such*. They preached the gospel to every creature, individually, viewed simply as a rational, accountable creature, possessed of an immortal soul, a guilty helpless creature before God. What a striking contrast there is in this respect, between the apostles and the otherwise great Reformers of the 16th century! The latter, full of the idea of their national christianity, are insinuating themselves into the favour of rulers, regaling themselves with Princes, straining every nerve to interest kings in their quarrels, and engage them to fight their battles. The apostles, in circumstances no less trying and dangerous, having never dreamt (after the day of Pentecost) of national christianity, are in every want, and every peril imaginable; but remembering a distinguishing mark of the kingdom to which they belong, viz. To the poor the gospel is preached, and following the example of their esteemed Master, they never appear in kings' courts, only when brought there in chains and bonds, to bear an humble personal testimony, perhaps by their death, to the blessed gospel of their risen Lord. 4. The idea of a national religion is at the bottom of all the persecutions that ever were in the world. Though the Jewish religion was national by divine appointment, they were to execute vengeance on the enemies of their religion. If Christ's kingdom were of this world; his servants also would fight; but now his kingdom is not from hence. As long as a national religion exists on earth, persecutions and wars will continue: for the word is gone forth from the Most High: "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, till he come whose right it is." Ezek. xxi. 27. Whenever the government is taken from off the shoulders of Immanuel, and put upon the shoulders of a dying worm, the kingdom is no longer the pure spouse of Christ, but an adulteress, which will not fail to be drunk with the blood of the saints. 5. More real good can be done by personal, than by national christianity. The latter must necessarily, and in the nature of the thing, beget and nourish ambition, and attachment to worldly grandeur; and in proportion as this increases, heavenly mindedness and spiritual habits, devotedness to God and deadness to the things of time and sense, diminish. Though by a national religion you may have a greater number of professors, you will have a smaller quantity of real godliness. David and Solomon themselves experienced the unfriendliness of worldly grandeur to spirituality of mind.

Had not Constantine the Great, or some one else, made christianity national, the man of sin could never have arisen. Infant baptism is at the very bottom of, and necessarily leads to, national christianity, or, I suppose, a dissenter could hardly be found contending for national christianity. By a dissenter I do not mean, one whose aspiring efforts to establish *his* religion, are crushed by the hand of superior power; but one who is a dissenter from principle, holding a Christocracy. If the Baptist religion were established to-morrow, I would still be a dissenter. The Baptist religion is spiritual in its nature, of course can never become the national religion, without altering its nature. John xviii. 36. The promise that all nations shall serve Christ, and the declaration that Christ died for every man, and is a

propitiation for the sins of the whole world, the one being a necessary consequence of the other, are of exactly equal extent, and stand upon the same footing. As it is absurd to suppose that Christ made reconciliation for the sins of those who were themselves suffering for their sins, thousands of years before he died—that he was made sin for them, **THAT** (in order that) they whose eternal state had, long ago, been unalterably fixed in sin and misery, should be made the righteousness of God in him, and be saved through his life; so it is equally absurd to suppose that all nations, i. e. as you take it, every individual, or at least, the body of all nations, shall serve him, while they continue to be of their father the devil, doing his works, under the influence of a nature that is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Such promises and declarations mean, that Christ's dominion shall extend to all nations, and shall not, like that of his royal type, be limited to one nation; and that the benefit of his death extends to all the world, and is not confined, like the Jewish expiations, to one small spot of the world. Compare Luke ii. 10. *Good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people;* with Dan. vii. 14. *There was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him.* Sinners must have something more than a profession, in order to serve him acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. It is the effect, not of national profession, but of a personal belief of the truth. How can Isa. xxv. 6, 7. be accomplished without infant communion? Are not they part of all people? Does not that establish infant communion as well as Isa. lii. 15. establishes infant sprinkling?

You seem quite displeased with Mr. ELDER's view of the distinction between the church and the world, and you ask him some questions on the subject. "Did not Christ commission his apostles to convert and bring into the church all nations? Is it not the duty of the whole population of every land to come into Christ's church? If not, pray inform us whose duty it is to keep out? We hope the time is coming when the whole population of every land shall be brought into the church. In the mean time, it rejects all members who have not a consistent conduct. You seem not to advert to the difference between the church's learning the way of the world, and the world's coming into the church." How ready you are to catch at any inadvertence in your antagonist's mode of stating his sentiment! As Mr. ELDER put no qualifying epithet to the phrase, "whole population of the land," you take an advantage, and would represent him as limiting the apostolic commission, and objecting to the conversion, and consequent admission into the church, of the whole population of the land. Is this fair? Is it candid? Is it worthy of an honest man? Did you not know perfectly that what you here charge your opponent with, is not his sentiment or practice individually, nor those of the Baptists generally, nor by any means the necessary or legitimate consequence of their principles? Does not all the world know that it is their principle, to preach the gospel to every creature without distinction, holding out to all the fullest assurance, that whosoever believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and had an unquestionable right to church fellowship. Did not the Baptists, of all the religious denominations in Great Britain, lead the van, set the example, and by their zeal for

the salvation of perishing sinners, provoke very many to rouse from their religious apathy, and not allow the Baptists alone to occupy the whole field of missionary labour. And perhaps there is more real good done by the Baptist missionaries in India alone, than by all other British missions to the heathen put together. Ah! Mr. Ross, such unworthy conduct makes me feel keenly.

Does not rejecting all members who have not a consistent conduct necessarily imply all that Mr. ELDER could mean, by objecting to the whole population of the land coming into the church? But it has puzzled Mr. Ross, and all his Pedobaptist brethren, to reject all inconsistent members; nor can they ever succeed in it upon Pedobaptist principles. Every attempt of yours to reject inconsistent members, is an acknowledgment of, and acting upon, the principles of the Baptists. Your principle is, that the christian church is the same as the Jewish, and that we are to determine who are fit members of the former by ascertaining who are members of the latter. Now it is notorious that none were excluded from the Jewish church for immoral character or erroneous principles, in any one instance, but by death. On the Pedobaptists' principles, you can punish offenders by death, and call every sentiment that does not coincide with the established religion, *blasphemy*; and when you inflict the torture, you may say: "For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy;" but you cannot purge the church. Did the Jewish church contain no members of inconsistent conduct? Was there ever a Jewish law of discipline that required the exclusion of inconsistent members, or that made moral character indispensable to church membership. Look not at Abraham, Moses, Daniel, &c. singular characters; but look at the body of the stiffnecked and rebellious house, that almost continually went a whoring after their idols. Do you think the Pharisees and Sadducees were consistent members of a church? Why did not Elijah excommunicate king Ahab and his idolatrous subjects? Why did Jeremiah continue in church communion with Jehoiakim, Zedekiah, and idolatrous Judah? Why did not the church then reject members of inconsistent conduct? Would you have treated Aaron and the calf-worshippers as Moses did? What sort of church members will you have, if you follow such examples? What characters would not pass in that case for consistent members? Will you charge these faithful men with acting inconsistently with their principles, or with being too lax in discipline? You are reduced to the necessity of admitting into your church such characters as the Jewish church contained, or acknowledge that the law respecting the proper characters for church members is so far altered, that we cannot reason analogically from the one to the other. If you choose the former, I expect all christian people will flee your communion; if the latter, you have given up the argument for infant baptism from the Abrahamic covenant.

Again, as the infants of professors are all members of the church, is not a foundation laid for every evil in the church? Do you reply, that you hope by instruction, &c. to keep them from evil? You are faithful enough to Mr. ELDER not to allow him a hope without a reason of his hope. What is the reason of your hope? Is it derived from theory or experiment? The theory grants that children have a cor-

rupt nature: and who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." Though Abraham, the father of the faithful, had eight sons, only one was interested in the promise. How can Mr. Ross upon such a theory build a hope, that all the children of all professors will prove fit members of a christian church? He will surely not plead that the promise is more extensively secure to them, than it was to the Friend of God. Is he more safe in building upon experiment? Not a whit. Continued and extensive experiment for nearly 6000 years, abundantly confirm the theory, that what is born of the flesh is flesh, and will produce the works of the flesh. Nor did your principles allow you to exclude them. Christ, notwithstanding all the malice of the Jews, could be excluded only by death. It is therefore perfectly inconsistent and absurd for Pedobaptists to talk of the church's rejecting inconsistent members. You maintain, and that as essential to your practice, that baptism initiates into the covenant, is the rite of admission into the church, and draws a line of distinction between the church and the world. Now, with this idea in your view, take a look at Christendom, and see what characters are initiated into the church, and included in it, by this great line of distinction between the church and the world; and then try if you can muster courage enough to repeat the assertion, that a church established upon Pedobaptist principles, rejects inconsistent members. Whenever you attempt rejecting inconsistent members, you must necessarily proceed upon the Baptist principle, "that under the new testament, faith, repentance, fruit meet for repentance, and the works of faith and love, are indispensable requisites for church membership and church privileges." Without acknowledging it, you cannot take one step in rejecting inconsistent members. If the world come into the church with their worldly principles, and habits, and children, will not the church learn the way of the world, or rather be the world? If they are born again, they are no longer the world, but converts, fit members for a christian church.

The fourth difficulty in which you think his principles involve him is, that they place the children of professing christians in a strange situation. These children you consider in three different situations; 1. dying in infancy; 2. during infancy; 3. surviving infancy. Concerning the first, I remark, 1. The gospel, and gospel principles, take no notice of those who die in infancy; and when we take notice of them, we do it without scripture authority. 2. The gospel, and gospel principles, take no notice of infants at all, except as examples of docility, sincerity, &c. The revealed gospel has to do with rational hearers only, who have a capacity for understanding and believing it. The end of its publication is the obedience of faith, of which infants are incapable. 3. Your principles of hereditary christianity, hereditary heathenism, &c. consign inevitably to eternal damnation, all who die in infancy, unless their parents are christians. Your view of the covenant leads to the same conclusion.

Concerning the second, I remark. 1. The dying children of professing christians are just in the same situation as other children; for, in Christ, there is neither Jew nor Greek; and according to Paul, there is no difference. What! says Mr. Ross, "Does not the Spirit of in-

aspiration call the children of believers holy?" So are the children of unbelievers, just in the same sense. No man can attempt successfully to restrict that holiness to the children of believers. There is just as much propriety in saying, that the unbelieving wife is sanctified *notwithstanding* the faith of the believing husband, as in saying that she is sanctified by his faith; under the law Jews were forbidden to eat pork, just as they were forbidden to marry heathens. Believers, who are Jews inwardly, might hesitate whether they might eat pork, as well as whether they might continue in the married state with unbelievers. The scriptures answer to this effect: "You may eat pork, &c. *although you are Israelites indeed*, for it is sanctified *to you* by the word of God and prayer: just as you may, *although believers*, continue in the marriage relation, and perform and receive the duties of that relation, to and from your unbelieving partner; for the unbelieving is sanctified *to you* by the word of God and prayer. But you say they are holy, as they ought to be dedicated to the Lord. I deny it. Being called holy, Luke ii. 23. and being dedicated, mean exactly the same thing. A person or thing is holy, not because *he ought to be*, but *because he has been dedicated* to the Lord. If baptism is in the room of circumcision, it has no connexion with dedication, for circumcision had none. All the males among men, and among men only, were circumcised: only the first born males, and those among men and beasts, were dedicated or made holy. Dedication was, in every case, a ceremony quite different from, and independent of circumcision: therefore, the phrase, "dedicated to God in circumcision," (or in baptism either,) is an antisciptural phrase. Is their holiness typical or real? If typical, what did it typify? If real, wherein does it consist? If neither real nor typical, it cannot be religious, nor qualify its possessor for religious privileges.

2. You are in a mistake in saying they are born in the church. Not in the church of the first born, for into that none enter but by spiritual birth. John iii. 5. Not in the Jewish church, for it is extinct. Not in a Christian church, for into such none were received but professed believers, visible saints. See the address in the beginning of all the apostolical epistles. "But," you reply, "does not Christ recognize their church membership in the words: Of such—such in age—is the kingdom of heaven?" Here comes a deist with his children to Mr. Ross, to get them baptized. Mr. Ross examines him about his faith in Christ. He promptly answers, that he does not believe in Christ. Well but, says Mr. Ross, what induces you to get your children baptized? Why, says he, I read in your letters, Sir, that "Of such in age is the kingdom of heaven;" I find that a man is more respected in society for being baptized, and though I believe not in Christ myself, yet for the future respectability of my children in society, I wish to have them baptized; and since you, in your application of that passage, say promptly, "Such in age," I bring you "Such in age," and I am sure, whoever would refuse, you cannot. (Query. Is this a mere supposition? Is it not an awful reality of frequent recurrence, when thousands, for no better reasons than the deist's, get their children christened?) Ah! but, says Mr. Ross, don't you know I was then speaking of the children of the professed people of God? Well, but, replies the deist, I have examined the passage in

the three Evangelists, and I find nothing about the profession of those who brought them; besides, your application of it to "Such in age," necessarily excludes all regard to the profession or character of their parents, or those who brought them. Oh! but don't you know, says Mr. Ross, that their bringing children to Christ implied faith in God? True, answers the deist; and my bringing my children to you implies my faith in God; and you have no business to ask me any questions, but bless my children by baptism, upon the evidence of my faith in God, which is implied in my bringing my children to you his professed servant. Besides, I profess to believe there is one God, and do well. He has made me: I am his and none but his. Whatever you urge, says Mr. Ross, we hold that the children of believers in Christ are holy, and that their parents, or one of their parents, believing in Christ, makes a great difference between them and the children of unbelievers in Christ: so, our church rules do not allow us to baptize any children, but those whose parents profess faith in Christ. Well, well! answers the deist, I see plainly that you clergy say one thing when you explain passages of your bible, and do quite another thing when you are practising the rules of your own church. Because C. D. my neighbour, has not honesty enough and independence of mind, to avow what he believes, but cringes to your profession; though I know him myself to be a drunkard, attend dancing frolics, swear, lie, and cheat, think and talk of the world, and do forbidden things on the sabbath, and thus prove himself, in every respect, as much a man of the world, and as unprepared for heaven as myself: yet you give his children the honour in society of being baptized christians, while mine must be hooted out of every company as unbaptized infidels, merely because their father had the misfortune to avow what he believed. And I find, that notwithstanding the promptness with which you told Mr. ELDER, and the community at large, that it was "Such in age," it now turns out to be, "Such in parentage." Leaving Mr. Ross and the Deist to settle it, I proceed. It appears evident that if Christ, in that passage, recognised the church membership of infants, and that when he says, "of such is the kingdom of heaven," he means, such in age, he has totally annihilated all distinctions on account of parentage; so that, whatever weight is allowed to our Saviour's words, it subtracts that weight from all those passages and those arguments, which support infant church membership on any supposed preference given to the children of believers. You must therefore give up the one or the other; else what you build with the one argument is overthrown by the other. The everlasting covenant, and our Saviour's words, as you interpret them, are in direct opposition to each other, respecting the grounds of infant church membership. I choose to abide by our Saviour's words, and maintain that the children of believers are no more born in the church, and therefore, no more members of it than others.

3. You think you have got Mr. ELDER in a dilemma from which he cannot escape. You class the inhabitants of the world into Jews and Mahometans, Christians and Heathens, and say: "Pray tell us in your next publication, to what class the children of professed christians belong?" Here observe, that the scriptures class all mankind into believers and infidels. Will you have the kindness to tell us to which

of these two classes the children of believers belong? This question must be previously settled. Till it is settled, Mr. ELDER is quite safe on the horns of your dilemma. You plainly insinuate that the infants of believers are christians. The word christian, occurs but three times in the scriptures. The disciples are called christians in Acts xi. 26. If the Saviour deserves credit, whosoever doth not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yea, and his own life, cannot be a disciple of Christ. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, deny himself, and come after Christ, cannot be his disciple. Luke xiv. 26, 27. The scripture account of the primitive disciples shows them to have been such. The christian in Acts xxvi. 28. must be made such by persuasion. That in 1 Pet. 4, 16. felt such attachment to Christ that he could suffer for his sake. We would naturally suppose that a christian belonged to Christ: but we are assured that, if any person have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Rom. viii. 9. Now, Sir, suppose in your sermon you were to describe the character of a christian, would you make it include those whose hearts are unrenewed, and in whom love to Christ never had the least influence? If you use scripture terms in an unscriptural sense, you may prove what you please from the bible. I ask no other liberty than that to put the top stone on popery. If you apply the term christian to those who are not scripturc christians, then I may with equal propriety say, My Lord God the Pope. If he is Lord God, he is infallible, without doubt, and then popery is divine. Unless we use scripture words in a scripture sense only, when treating of religion, what is the good of the scriptures? The smallest deviation from truth cannot be supported without principles which will equally support the grossest errors. A false principle of interpretation is therefore much more to be dreaded, than a single error.

4. The most glaring and daring part of your letter comes now under review. I shall quote it at large, fully confident that it is as much calculated to make Baptists from among true believers, that class alone whose friendship and fellowship I am anxious to secure; as any thing I could say on the subject. Here is the passage "Christ, in both the old and new testaments, is called a shepherd; and you do not deny that under the former, his flock was like other flocks, consisting of sheep and lambs; but under the latter, a strange anomaly has taken place, and Christ's sheep bear not lambs but kids, which must be turned out to feed with the goats. But Christ will not so give up with his lambs. He gave a charge to Peter: "Feed my lambs." John xxi. 15." Again, "you exclude them from the sheep for whom Christ laid down his life, and will not allow them a place in his kingdom. On the other hand, we hold that the infants of believers have an interest in that everlasting covenant in which God saith, "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed," that they are subjects of the Mediator's kingdom, and a part of his flock, to which he pays special attention. Isa. xl. 11. "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

On this most extraordinary passage, I must make a few remarks. 1. Your premises, the view you took of the covenants, confounding the literal and spiritual meanings as you did, applying the spiritual bles-

sings to the literal children, led you, necessarily and unavoidably led you, to your present conclusion. Your tracing therefore your premises through arguments, proofs, reasons, and recapitulations, till you arrived at the legitimate conclusion, shows discernment and judgment. Many Pedobaptists tremble at the conclusion, who yet hold the same premises; but I never could view this in any other light, than as a deficiency in judgment. Had your premises been good, I would rather blame you for not going farther, than for going as far as you did. 2. I wonder when you arrived at your conclusion and looked at it, that you were not startled at the premises, which fairly led to such a conclusion. 3. According to this passage, the children of believers are the lambs which Christ carries in his bosom, and pregnant believing women, perhaps the pregnant wives of believers, as they are sanctified by their husbands' faith, are those with young which the Saviour leads so gently. 4. The greater number of children are born to believers, the more numerous the church is; therefore, when we pray for the increase of Christ's church, we mean, chiefly, that children may be born to believers; and when we use means for increasing the flock, it will be greatly, if not chiefly, by promoting a numerous progeny among believers. 5. All these lambs have in them the nature of sheep, and therefore need only a little time and food to become full grown sheep; and therefore all the noise made by divines about original sin, total depravity, the nature and necessity of regeneration, the necessity of divine agency in renewing the heart and preserving the saints, &c. are totally inapplicable to the children of believers. 6. A strange anomaly takes place when those which are born and bred lambs, as soon as they attain their growth, are metamorphosed into goats which hate and persecute the sheep, which hear not the voice of the shepherd nor follow his steps. 7. Some of the sheep for which Christ laid down his life, notwithstanding Christ's assuring the contrary, will perish, unless all the children of all believers be finally saved. 8. Unless all the children of all believers be finally saved, some of those who belonged to the Mediator's kingdom, to whom he paid special attention, gathering them in his arms, and carrying them in his bosom, shall be denied in the great day; for the Chief Shepherd shall say to them, "I never knew you." 9. If any of them perish, the everlasting covenant is broken, and Jehovah's being a God to a person is no security to him from ruin. 10. If the children of believers bear the same relation to their parents, in a religious sense, as lambs bear to the mother sheep, Christ's assertions, John iii. 5. and Paul's Rom. ix. 8. are unauthorised falsehoods. 11. Unless renewing grace prevent it, a church acting upon that principle, will soon become a company of carnal men, enemies to all true religion, when the place of the departed converts is supplied by their unconverted offspring. 12. The Pedobaptist lambs and Baptist kids mix together; and experienced as Mr. Ross is in the business of a shepherd, he can scarcely distinguish them; for their covering, their horns, their voice, their food, and their habits are the same. 13. When Christ gave a charge to Peter, "Feed my lambs," he would naturally reply, "Lord, the milk they can take, I have not; the milk I have, they cannot use; therefore, unless a different sort of nurse is provided, instead of thriving, they must soon perish for want." 14. They are born into the

world, with the nature and habits of goats; we feel anxious they should be transformed into lambs, possessing the habits, and loving the company of sheep, and thus be fitted to feed with them; therefore you misrepresent us. 15. We believe that Christ's flock under the latter, as well as under the former testament, consists of sheep and lambs. As aged, established, experienced disciples are the antitypes of the sheep among the Jews; so young, feeble, inexperienced converts are the antitypes of the lambs. The figurative titles of sheep and lambs are therefore properly applied to these two classes of christian converts. Your remarks necessarily imply that unless infants are allowed to be lambs, the flock will have no lambs at all: therefore, whenever you use the expression, "Christ's lambs, we are compelled to understand you as meaning the literal infants of believers. Unless all these remarks are fairly founded on this unparalleled passage, I confess myself wholly unable to discern between white and black. I therefore make the following reflection. That Mr. Ross having, in pursuit of arguments to establish infant baptism, run himself completely ashore on Arminian ground, will soon renounce publicly, either the Calvinistic or the Pedobaptist scheme.

I sometimes tried to speak to my fellow sinners about the character and privileges of Christ's sheep as described John x., without ever thinking of the subject of baptism; and I found that they know the shepherd's voice; they know himself, and they follow him. Allowing that the lambs are not so fully competent to these things, yet, I enquire, whether growth of intellect is the only thing needed in order to attain that character; or must a new and divine nature be necessarily communicated? It is incontestibly evident that the representation you have given of the children of believers, entirely supercedes the necessity of the renewing influences of the Holy Spirit, in their case. Consider the awful apostacy and alienation of the human heart from God, as described in the oracles of truth. Every imagination of man's heart is only evil continually. Gen. vi. 5. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Jer. xvii. 9. From within, out of the heart of men, proceed that black catalogue. Mark vii. 21—23. The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Rom. viii. 7, 8. See also Rom. iii. 9—19. where it is evident the apostle took for granted, that if he could prove that awful description properly applicable to, and primarily intended for the professed people of God, as you call them, the Gentiles would be, confessedly, as wicked, and so every mouth would be stopped. Do you really believe this? or do you say, like Ignorance in the Pilgrim's Progress, I will never believe the hearts of the infants of christians are thus bad? This hereditary religion appears to be at least an essential part of the works of the law, as opposed to the hearing of faith. I heard indeed persons maintain that the children born to believers have no original sin; the sins of the parents having been pardoned, could not be transferred to the children. Though the persons alluded to were doubtless real christians, on that point they must have been blinded by Pedobaptist principles. Do you think the children of believers need to have their consciences purged from dead works, that they may be fitted to serve the living

God; [Heb. ix. 14]. and to be created anew in Christ Jesus, in order to perform those good works which God before ordained that they should walk in them? Eph. ii. 10. Or do you think that instruction and training is sufficient to fit that carnal mind for divine service and spiritual enjoyments? Or have you a well grounded confidence, that divine renewing influence will, in every instance, attend the christian instruction of Christ's lambs? Scripture observation and experience concur in showing the necessity of a radical change of heart, or, in scripture phraseology, of a new heart, for the acceptable performance of any spiritual exercise. The tree must be made good, before the fruit can be good. Mal. vii. 18. Without this radical change, the sinner is ever trusting to his sincerity, &c. to make his service acceptable; which consideration will ever make it abomination to the Lord. But, under the influence of divine teaching, the radically changed sinner looks wholly and exclusively for acceptance for his person and services, to the interposing blood of Immanuel, the great Mediator, in which case his service cannot fail of acceptance. Your doctrine of hereditary christianity, or sheep bearing lambs, is as contrary to this, as light is to darkness. The divine testimony represents the gospel as the seed, or the very first original of this radical change. 1 Cor. iv. 15. James i. 18. 1 Pet. i. 2, 3. It represents faith as the only possible means of receiving the word to profit. 1 Thes. ii. 13. Heb. iv. 2. Accordingly whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. 1 John v. 1. As every seed bringeth forth fruit according to its own nature, or as that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit, so, the new nature which, in the sinner, springs and grows from the holy, incorruptible seed of the gospel, received in the heart by faith, must be spiritual and holy, incorruptible and durable. Accordingly, the reason assigned why the children of God cannot sin, is, because this seed abideth in them. John iii. 9. I request, I demand, that in your next publication, you will explain the consistency between your hereditary christianity, and the scripture doctrine of regeneration. The public has a right to expect it. A man who has set up for a teacher of christianity, and is publicly supported as such, to come forward and publish a sentiment, to appearance at least, utterly irreconcilable with some of the leading doctrines of christianity, is under an imperious obligation to the public, to come forward again, and remove this difficulty. The practice of infant baptism merely, would never call forth such an effort of my pen. But, from my very heart, I believe the principles by which you defend it, as truly subversive of real christianity, as any system of religion I am acquainted with. I frankly confess, that every religious feeling of my heart was overwhelmed with horror, when first I read in your book the passage now under consideration. What do you make of regeneration at all? Wherein does it consist? At what stage of the religious progress of the lamb growing up into a sheep, does it take place? Or is it like the term "convert," applicable only to proselytes.

Again, the privileges of the sheep are great, and the sheep esteem them valuable. When one of Christ's sheep is in a lonely cottage, unnoticed and unknown, in pain and sickness, poverty and want, what a cheering ray of consolation darts in to scatter the distressing

gloom of the mind, from the consideration that the good shepherd knows them ! He knew them from eternity; he redeemed them unto God, from this present evil world, by his own precious blood; their name is engraven on his heart; he cannot forget them. However contemptible in the eyes of the world, and neglected by it, of them the world is not worthy. They can put unlimited confidence in the wisdom, power, and pastoral care of the good shepherd. But what a damp on their confidence ! what a repulse to their ardent expectations ! what a gloomy cloud intercepts the cheering beam of consolation ! when they are represented as no more in covenant relation to God, no more subjects of the Mediator's kingdom, no more the sheep for which he laid down his life, and no more the objects of his special care, than those who are evidently living without God in the world, manifestly saying to the Almighty, "Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways, we have neither inclination nor relish for communion or intercourse with thee ;" and who, unless they repent, must be the miserable objects of the dreadful vengeance of Almighty God in the gloomy regions of dark despair, weeping and gnashing their teeth with remorse, and gnawing their tongue with pain for ever and ever. Thus, Sir, you have made a daring attempt at robbing the true sheep of their consolation in time, and of their prospects for eternity. For the abundant consolation of the heirs of promise, the good Shepherd, in addition to the encouraging inferences which may fairly be drawn from his active, inexhaustible love, already manifested in laying down his life for them, with infinite wisdom, almighty power, and unsearchable riches, at its command, has pledged his word of honour, and confirmed by his blood, that he will give unto the sheep eternal life, that they shall never perish, neither shall any be able to pluck them out of his hand. On the strength of this glorious assurance, the evangelical poet is enabled to sing, in reference to the safety of the sheep, from the craft and cruelty of the arch-enemy, "When he can match Jehovah's power, then we'll begin to fear." But does not your system represent the good Shepherd as failing in fulfilling his word, when, with very few exceptions, his lambs grow up under his special care to be goats, which he shall put on his left hand, denying that he ever knew them; and shall consign them eternally to everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

If you know any thing about the religion of Christ, you cannot but behold with regret, the prevailing propensity of professing christians to rest satisfied as they are, at an awful distance from God, crying peace, peace, when there is no peace. You cannot but have seen that the Jews, in the times of the prophets and of Christ, were under the influence of the same delusive principle. Isa. lviii. 1—5. John viii. 33. You cannot but see that all the attempts made at reforming them, were commenced by setting before them the necessity of a reform; and that it was for disturbing their repose, by questioning the goodness of their character, and the safety of their state, their enmity was roused, till they often put the reformers to death. Under the old testament, indeed, the Jews were, typically, the covenant people of God, and the prophets never question their covenant relation: but as the promises of that covenant were only typical of the better promises on which the new covenant is established, and so did not contain

the promise of eternal life, the prophets dissuaded them from trusting for acceptance with God, justification and eternal life, to a covenant which did not contain these blessings, and through which they were never intended to be conveyed. Rather, they urged the temporal and typical blessings enjoyed under that covenant, as arguments to enforce obedience to so kind a God. But at the introduction of the new covenant, when all the types were withdrawing, see how John the Baptist warned them, endeavouring to sweep away the refuges of lies, and finally lost his life by it. Jesus Christ and his apostles walked in the same steps, and came to the same end. Had Paul preached circumcision, he would have got clear of persecution. Are not you preaching circumcision under another form? Does not this new form of circumcision place professing christians in a state extremely similar to that of the Jews in the time of Christ? Only, the one was typical, the other merely imaginary, the effect of both is the same. Does not this state of things call for another John the Baptist, to warn the deluded professors of christianity to flee from impending vengeance, and not trust to carnal relation, nor to the new form of circumcision? I beseech you to consider the tendency of your book, in relation to this delusive propensity to put confidence in the flesh. To me, it appears a soft bed, and downy pillows, for those who have the form, without the power of religion, to sleep upon, and to sear their conscience against conviction. I know many will dislike this faithful dealing; but let such seriously examine lest that dislike arises from a love of enjoying that false repose which flows from the delusive state here stated and lamented. Those who have the most need of plain dealing and faithful warning, to rouse them from carnal security, are commonly the most bitter opposers and contemptuous despisers of what they so much need. Therefore, the more this plain dealing is opposed, the more evidently it will appear that it was needed.

I have always understood that the religious body to which you belong wished to be thought to hold Calvinistic doctrines. I have also understood, that the total depravity of human nature—enlightening the understanding, purging the conscience and renewing the will and the affections, in regeneration—the necessity of regeneration in order to fit us for serving God here, and enjoying him hereafter,—the inefficacy of human means, and the necessity and efficacy of divine agency, in regeneration—justification by faith alone, without our obedience to the law, in any shape or form—sovereign, distinguishing love, in conferring spiritual blessings—and the continuance in holiness, as the only, and the certain way to final happiness, of all the flock of Christ—I have understood these to be the distinguishing, essential doctrines of Calvinism. It appears evident as daylight, that your doctrine of hereditary christianity, as sheep bearing lambs—lambs which shall prove goats at the day of final decision, stands directly opposed to all these; and that, if you had advanced such sentiments in connexion with any other subject, than the tottering edifice of infant baptism, the religious body to which you belong, would call you to an account for promulgating such sentiments. As the case is, unless you publicly retract the sentiment of hereditary christianity, maintained in the passage under review, or prove its consistency with the

calvinistic doctrines just stated, I hereby hold you up to the world, as an **ANTICALVINIST IN DISGUISE**. Truth never fears the light. Sincerity never shrinks from scrutiny.

The third part of the strange situation in which you suppose Mr. ELDER's principles place the children of professing christians, is, when they survive infancy. You observe: "Again, when your children survive infancy, your principles cast impediments in the way of their instruction, of which you are not aware." What can these impediments be? Mr. ELDER tells you that "the children of a pious Baptist have the advantage of his prayers, instruction, and example; and of the preaching of the gospel; and whenever they believe in the Lord Jesus with all their heart, the doors of the church are wide open to receive them." Of what real value is any thing else possessed by your children? Christ is the door of the fold, as well as the good shepherd; and if any person come into the fold any other way than by Christ, i. e. by believing in him with all their heart, the same are thieves and robbers. "The bible," you remark p. 26. "the law of Christ's kingdom, is the source of christian instruction. Now, when we put it into the hands of our children, we may say, This is the law of the kingdom to which you belong;" (Is this truth?) "you are under its authority, and bound to conform to its rules. But if you speak to yours, according to your principles, you must say, This is a good book, I recommend it to your consideration: perhaps you may hereafter come under it; but now you are not under its jurisdiction, for you do not belong to the kingdom whose law it is. You cannot, in your instruction, urge the authority of Christ, as your children are not, on your principles, of his kingdom." Again, page 24. "It is evident that the authority of any law is confined to the subjects of the kingdom."

On this I remark, 1. It is quite consistent with the former part of your book. Having got members into the church without faith or a new heart; sheep possessing the qualities of goats, into the fold, John x. 9, otherwise than by the door, Christ; and subjects into the kingdom, possessing the nature of rebels, as the ruling principle of their heart; the members are instructed as saints, who are inclined to believe the truth when set before them, the spiritual food is offered to the sheep, as a flock that delights in the green pastures of the bible; the subjects, as if loyal subjects, Rom. viii. 7. are ruled by the laws of Christ's kingdom. By and by, the members openly refuse the instructions of the bible, the sheep turn away from bible pastures, preferring carnal to spiritual food, and the subjects of the kingdom break out in open rebellion, declaring their tongue is their own, and boldly demanding, Who shall be lord over us? Is this an exaggerated representation? Is it not daily exemplified in the glee with which the lambs attend frolics and merry-meetings, while the pleasure they have in religious meetings is derived chiefly from the company of giddy associates, and the opportunity afforded of gratifying the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life? Still, they cannot be given up, as they are sheep, covenant children, &c. I appeal to every one who knows the plague of his own heart; if this is not the most effectual method devisable, to confirm them in their delusive rebellion, to rock them in the cradle of carnal security, and to prevent,

as far as its influence goes; their repentance and conversion to God. For this I must insist upon, notwithstanding all, you can urge in favour of your lambs, as absolutely necessary to their salvation. But, blessed be God, he is able, in spite of this soul-deceiving doctrine, to convert the children, even of those who preach such awful delusion to them. I would here remark, and wish it may not be forgotten, that many Pedobaptists, when baptism is out of sight, preach the gospel as purely, and warn sinners as faithfully, as is pleasing to God and his people, and leave their hearers inexcusable. But this is in flat contradiction to the principles by which they defend infant baptism, whereas they are the very foundation of the peculiar principles of the Baptists. 2. "The authority of a law is evidently confined to the subjects of the kingdom," seems with you a fundamental doctrine. On it you found the idea, that Baptists cannot, without dereliction of principles, urge the authority of Christ on their children, that Christ has no authority out of the church, &c. But you will recollect that he has authority to execute judgment; that he is the Creator, the Upholder, the moral Governor, and the final Judge of all; that this authority extends to all his rational creatures; and that the bible contains all the instructions, on these and all subjects connected with them, which infinite wisdom saw proper to bestow upon man. Do you keep these topics out of sight when instructing *your lambs*? 3. Were you placed among the heathen you would have to lay aside the authority of Christ, except over yourself, till some would choose to become converts; for you would not be so inconsistent as to urge the authority of Christ, or, which is the same thing, the sanction of his law, by which he maintains his authority, in his kingdom, as a reason why they should repent and believe the gospel of the kingdom. Mark i. 15. 4. You would lead one to think the bible contains nothing but laws peculiar to Christ's kingdom, and intended for its government; and therefore no use can be made of it out of the church. I remember a person once urging as a reason why the worst characters should be admitted into the church, that they should be brought under the law, the government, and the discipline of the church. If a person who still maintains his rebellious principles, assume the appearance of a loyal subject, what will you call him, a sincere christian, or a hypocrite? 5. We can explain to our children the relation in which they stand to God as his creatures, and the obligations arising from that relation; how the duties of that relation have been neglected; the apostacy of the human heart from God, evinced in its dissimilarity to God, and its aversion to his character, his government, and his grace; the goodness of God in creation, providence, and redemption; the person, character, and offices of Christ at large; the person and work of the Holy Spirit; the nature and necessity of faith and repentance, or the new birth; the sovereignty, the freeness, and the suitableness of the salvation of Christ, to the lost and ruined state of the chief of sinners, and, of course, to them; the enjoyments, hopes and prospects of believers, in time; and for eternity; and lastly, teach and exemplify before them the effects and influence of these truths on the heart and conduct, by walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. All these we can state and urge upon their consciences by divine authority. But as your children are

born lambs, subjects of the kingdom, &c. they can have no personal interest in the greater part of such instruction: all they are personally concerned with, is, to learn the laws of the kingdom, and how to obey them. If our children understand, believe, and love the truth we can teach them, they will soon say, What doth hinder us to be baptized? While they do not understand, nor believe, nor love the truth, what good will it do them to be told that they are subjects of Christ's kingdom?

You observe p. 28, 71, 72. that, if after prophecy had ceased among the Jews, a sect had arisen, denying infant circumcision, they could support their cause with the same arguments, as the Baptists take to oppose infant baptism. I beg you to reconsider what you have said on this subject. I hope, after a careful perusal of this pamphlet, or rather, of the divine oracles, you will not maintain that the Sinai covenant differed from the Abrahamic, as much as both differ from the new covenant. This is particularly the case respecting the notice taken of infants. The supposed Jewish sect could not therefore plead the difference of the covenant, as the Baptists can. At the making of the Sinai covenant, no change was intimated respecting the design, the action, the subjects, or the time of the observance of circumcision. At the making of the new covenant, you yourself grant that circumcision was changed into baptism, and females included among the subjects, as well as believers of all nations. In this also we have the advantage of the imaginary Jewish sect: for when so many changes took place, why might not the change we plead for take place also? You say that the history of the church from Moses to Malachi, where we read of 600,000 circumcised at once, there is no example of infant circumcision, nor any command to that effect in the law of Moses. That I, whose chief time of study is while walking the road, or handling the axe or grubbing hoe, should commit such a blunder, is not to be wondered at. But that a man who whetted his intellectual faculties by philosophy, who studied his bible at a divinity hall, and who has been upwards of 30 years in the constant habit of teaching, if not studying, so small a book as the bible; that such a man should assert, that there is neither precept nor example of infant circumcision, from the making of the Sinai covenant, to the closing the old testament canon is truly astonishing. For a precept see, Lev. xii. 3. For both precept and example, see Josh. v. 2—9. See it sanctioned by Christ. John vii. 22, 23. Infants born on the sabbath were circumcised next sabbath, which was the eighth day, that the law of Moses, which enjoined the eighth day, should not be broken. Let the reader judge what confidence is due to the judgment of Mr. Ross, on the subject of circumcision. Perhaps he is equally mistaken about baptism. Mr. Ross appears to study systematically rather than scripturally: he first adopts a theory, and then tries his utmost to support it, instead of carefully examining and comparing all the particular cases in the word of God, and then forming his opinion according to their combined testimony. Is not the term "children," as applicable to infants, in Josh. v. 2, 3. as in Eph. vi. 1. Col. iii. 20. where you would not allow Mr. Elder to apply it to any but infants? Compare Josh. v. with those places in the new testament which record instances of baptism, and see if there is any similarity between

them. Does not the language of the former, "all the people that were born in the wilderness," "the children of Israel," necessarily include infants? While the language of the latter "they that received his word gladly" "if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest," as necessarily excludes them. Nor is one circumstance recorded respecting circumcision, that shows faith to have been necessary in any of its subjects; nor any respecting baptism, that shows faith might be dispensed with in any of its subjects. Moses expressly stated eight days old, as the specified age at which they must be circumcised. Certainly this was sufficient without his mentioning it again. Show the like respecting baptism. Does not your recurring to such a case show plainly, that you were searching for arguments to support a rotten system, rather than honestly inquiring after truth? Ah! Sir, such perversions of scripture will affect you one day. Before you attempt to set infant circumcision and infant baptism on a level, or draw a parallel between them, it might be proper to show that the laws of their institution were similar; at least, that the language used to express the proper subjects of circumcision, and that used to express the proper subjects of baptism, are equally comprehensive, including the same description of characters. Was the fruitful genius of Mr. Ross incapable of inventing any supposition but one that outrages all probability? What could induce a sect among the Jews to deny infant circumcision? The language used to express the proper subjects of circumcision necessarily included infants; the age when they were to be circumcised was fixed to a day; the uniform example from the first institution of the ordinance, was to circumcise infants; this was done that the law of Moses, which could be directly referred to, should not be broken; while no qualification was required that, in any way, excluded infants. Set infant baptism on such a footing, and we will concede it to you,—till you do, I expect you will give up the practice.

By imposing a new restriction on the meaning of the term "convert," you would deprive us of liberty to baptize our children, and receive them into the church, even when they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ with all their heart. You insinuate that we would baptize our children not converts, but remaining in the principles we teach them. I shall suppose that your father was a seceder, and of course, taught you seceder principles. You still hold the same principles. Now, I ask you, Was there no time of your life, in which you had a thorough revolution in your views of divine truth, a complete change of principles, so that you became a true convert? If not, I would advise you to refrain from teaching religion till you do experience such a change, because, in that case, you must, till then, be teaching others what you do not understand yourself. Then it will look very much like the blind leading the blind. We know that however early we begin, and however earnest we continue, to teach our children what we believe, they will no more believe it than we did ourselves, without divine teaching. Through the influence of their apostacy from God, they will continue to love darkness rather than light, to believe a lie rather than the truth, till he who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shine into their heart, giving them the light of the knowledge of his glory, in the face of Christ Jesus. Then they

change their principles: then they change their religion: they exchange the religion of an apostate heart, for that of a heart reconciled to God; the religion of the prince of darkness, for that of Jesus Christ; the religion of hatred, for that of love. It is then they become true converts and ought to be baptized. I deny that the term convert is restricted to one who has changed his religious profession. Produce your authority. My dictionary defines convert, one who has changed his opinion. When I say, I shall become your convert, my reference is not to the change of profession, but to the change of opinion. You seem so enamoured with a religious profession, that, in your esteem, it is worth every thing else. You say that every convert is converted, but every converted person is not a convert. Let us put your meaning of the term for the term itself. Every person who has changed his religious profession, is converted; but every converted person has not changed his religious profession. How does this sound? Should your son become a convert to popery, in what sense is he converted? In what sense can he be converted without being a convert? Is the definition of the term converted in both these sentences the same? I grant the verb to convert, means to exchange; but this change must be in reality, not in profession merely. The noun convert is properly applied to one who has undergone this change in reality, not in profession merely.—As I considered the subject of infant communion in a former part of my pamphlet, I shall only observe here, that to do any thing like justice to the subject, you ought to have explained what sort of fitness was requisite for eating the passover, and what, for eating the Lord's supper. It is incumbent on those who write for the public, to elucidate, not to darken. Thus you appear to have failed; not only in every one of your arguments, but also in every particular illustration of them.

I have now arrived at the conclusion of your first letter, and in the course of reviewing it, have been reminded of another pamphlet which I read once. The title of it was, "The Arminian Skeleton; or Arminianism Dissected and Anatomized." I began to read it with high expectations from the great recommendations I had of the book. I read on, and read on, expecting presently to be introduced into the dissecting room, and see the skeleton anatomized to my satisfaction. At last, I found myself at the end of the book, tired out in witnessing a tedious process of law, in a court of civil judicature, without ever seeing the Anatomist or the Skeleton, the dissecting room, or the dissecting instruments; and was forced to conclude that the author was writing two books, and in a mistake, prefixed the title page of the one book to the other. Your title page promised me, "*Baptism considered in its subjects and mode!*" and having now finished that letter in which you say, page 30. you have showed your reasons for baptizing the infants of such as are members of the visible church, I have met with but one solitary instance of your even maintaining infant baptism: where you say, p. 28. "it is to be administered to converts and their infant seed." Were it not for that one sentence, I would have thought that you had forgot your title page, and instead of considering *Baptism* in its subjects, you had considered *church membership* in its subjects. Allowing you had proved infant church membership beyond the possibility of con-

troversy, and also that their churchmembership entitled them to baptism, still you have taught us yourself, p. 29. to make such a distinction between a right, and its present enjoyment, as might make it proper to delay baptism, as well as the Lord's supper. Infants were included in the priestly covenant, but were not to exercise the priestly office till 30 years old. But in this silence respecting infant baptism, it must be confessed that your letter very nearly resembles the bible; for after all that has been said, it must still be granted, that the bible is as silent about infant baptism, as it is about purgatory or transubstantiation.

I could not but be surprised that, of all the passages you quoted on the subject, not one of them, except that about the Philippian jailer, mentions the subject of baptism at all. This of itself renders your arguments very suspicious. I ask you, If there was a passage that mentions infant baptism, would you not have quoted it to us? Would not that one passage, did the bible contain such a passage, be worth the whole of your book? You would not then be under the necessity of creating an imaginary Jewish sect, to deny infant circumcision; which, however, served your purpose as little as your other circuitous reasoning. If the bible then does not contain infant baptism, how can infant baptism be proved by it? You will not allow that we can see the meaning of a word in a text, in which the word does not occur. Perhaps, it may be equally difficult to prove infant baptism from a book, in which infant baptism does not occur. This reminds me of a Baptist minister in the United States, who, on a certain occasion, advertised in a newspaper, twenty dollars reward to any person who would produce, from the new testament, any passage proving infant baptism. A certain minister gave the editor of the paper a passage which was published. He then demanded his reward. The Baptist replied, the other had not fulfilled the condition. He said he had, and sued for his reward. The Baptist pleaded the reward was ready, but the condition had not been fulfilled. After going through the regular process, the court brought in the verdict. The condition had not been fulfilled; for it was impossible a text could prove what was not mentioned in it. You can give in a similar verdict when it suits you. What would you think of a lawyer who would attempt to establish his case, by referring to acts and precedents, wherein the thing he would prove was not at all mentioned. Would you not think he was very destitute of proof? Would you not also think he was much afraid of the proof that could be obtained?

Search the scriptures, and try if you can find there, either in name or in reality, the following ideas? Infant baptism, the covenant of works, the covenant of grace, the christian church, the gospel church, the Gentile church, the patriarchal church, the universal visible church, the universal invisible militant church, the church-triumphant, the initiating rite, the initiating ordinance, the initiating seal, the seal of the covenant. I believe these ideas are essential to your system. You need to prove their existence before you reason from them. Should you think proper to take any notice of the insignificant performance of an obscure individual, in a remote corner of his Majesty's dominions, I hope you will keep close to the gospel doctrine. Whatever cannot be maintained but at the expence of gospel

doctrine, must be given up. You have taken care, in your last, to keep the gospel entirely out of sight; and in this you have been very politic; for an exhibition of gospel principles, mixed with your Pedobaptist principles, would be like the iron and the clay in the image: they would not mix together so as to form one mass, but would still continue two distinct, incoherent substances, to represent their inconsistency the more glaring. Or they would be like the fat kine and the lean, on the bank of the Nile; the one would eat the other completely up. Whereas the Baptist principles are formed upon, and mingle with, gospel principles, as freely and as naturally as oil mixes with oil. Let these considerations have their proper weight in determining our judgment. You and I have to appear at the tribunal of one, who shall do us ample justice, paying no regard to the opinions of men concerning us. He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears. But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. Let us have a single eye to his glory. Let it be our highest ambition, in all we do, speak, or write, to be found approved of him in that day, that we may hear the judge pronounce our name, with blessings on our head. Wishing you a welcome salutation, to enter, as a good and faithful servant, into the joy of the Lord,

I remain, your's &c.

A. CRAWFORD.

CONCLUSION.

Whatever may be the reader's opinion respecting the merits of the question, or the ability with which it is discussed, I think all must grant, that I have not evaded my antagonist in any one of his arguments. Before I renounced Pedobaptism, I gave the subject such a thorough investigation, that I was fully satisfied, while the sacred writings were referred to as the touchstone of truth, it would be easy to look in the face, any thing that could be said in favour of infant baptism; and therefore I felt no temptation to avoid a fair combat. My first care was to apprehend the precise meaning of my opponent, then to express it in its full force, and, lastly, to bring it into contact with the principles of the gospel, to ascertain wherein it agreed with, or differed from these. Wherein I have departed from this plan, I beg to be first corrected and then forgiven. Anticipating my production has probably excited on both sides, feelings somewhat similar to those excited in the two contending armies, when they beheld the stripling going to engage the veteran. How far the result of this may be similar to the result of that, remains to be tried. In the meantime, I take the liberty of addressing a few words to different classes of my fellow creatures.

1. To Baptists. Beloved, you profess to have fellowship with your dear Redeemer in his vicarious sufferings, and to participate in the blessings resulting from that fellowship, in consequence of which your hearts beat strong with the joyful hope of eternal life. Make it evident to all, that you have not received the grace of God in vain; but that you are actuated by the Spirit, as well as animated by the hope,

of the gospel. As you are dead with Christ from the law, from the world, and from sin, see that it is not a legal, a worldly, or a sinful spirit that influences your heart, and regulates your conduct. As you are risen with Christ, see that you prove yourselves superior to the world, ever bearing in mind that your life is safely deposited with Christ in God, and is not to be sustained or enjoyed, by wealth, fame, or pleasure. You profess to have obtained clearer and more consistent views of divine truth than the rest of your fellow creatures. Let it appear that truth is not with you a mere speculation, but a heartfelt principle of mighty efficacy in transforming the whole man; and that the brighter our discovery of it, the more deep and lasting is its impression upon us. Our most cogent reasoning, unless pressed on the consciences of our opponents, by holiness of heart and life, will be felt but faintly by them. Never forget that it is God, of his good pleasure, who enlightened your mind: you did not make yourself to differ; therefore you have no room to boast nor triumph over your less enlightened neighbour. "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves," for "the wisdom which is from above is gentle," &c. Such of you as are parents, have a heavy charge. You are much blamed for neglecting the christening of your children. Let it be manifest that it is not through indifference about their immortal part. You have been made the instruments of their existence, and have been entrusted with the charge of giving a right direction to their expanding minds. "Train them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." As Baptists, you confess that spirituality was communicated to yourselves by direct divine operation, and not from your parents: nor can you transmit it to your children; therefore be frequent and fervent at the throne of grace in their behalf, that they may be made the subjects of divine teaching, and spiritual blessings. Those who believe that their children are holy in consequence of *their* faith, have not the same cause of anxious concern as you, who believe that in order to be holy and happy, faith is as necessary in children as in parents. For your encouragement, remember you have to do with a prayer-hearing God, who himself manifested a tenderness to children.

2. To Christian Pedobaptists. Dearly beloved brethren, though my views of divine truth force me to conclude you are in an error on the subject of baptism, yet far be it from me to slight or hate you for existing differences. I would, however, call your attention particularly to the fact, that your views of baptism are totally inconsistent with those evangelical principles, by the faith of which you are enabled to die unto sin and live unto righteousness. After all that has been said and written, baptism still stands as a bar in the way of free union. Look at the state of the world at the Reformation; mark the progress of truth thence to the present time; look at the state of the question in the word of God, among true christians, and in controversial books, (taking both sides,) and say, if you feel warranted to expect that the profession of the Baptists will one day become extinct, and that all christians will be Pedobaptists. We feel fully warranted to expect, and do strongly expect, that one day all christians will be Baptists. The increase of the Baptists always bears a proportion to the progress of truth: and no religious profession can be named, from which so few turn away as from that of the Baptist. As unity

is a most desirable duty among believers, so there is no profession in which it is so likely to be obtained, as in that of the Baptists. When men read the new testament and believe it, they naturally feel the force of divine authority, commanding them to be baptized, and that they are disobeying their Lord, and refusing to follow their captain, while they remain unbaptized. It is generally granted that Mr. Ross is a man of considerable ability. Many have publicly asserted that his *Letters to Mr. ELDER*, is the best treatise that ever was published on the subject. If Mr. Ross, with all his ability, and with all his advantages, has, in that first rate treatise, failed in setting infant baptism on a solid, scriptural footing, that failure is not to be attributed to Mr. Ross, but to his cause; for which no scripture evidence is to be found. Since Mr. Ross has failed, you need not expect any other can succeed in the same attempt. Consider also the situation of your children. They are intrusted to you. I beg you will not deceive them with the delusive idea, that in consequence of their relation to you, they are more fit subjects of the kingdom of heaven than the children of infidels. Are you not aware that such doctrine stands opposed to the uniform tenor of divine truth; and if believed, renders nugatory all you can say to them on the necessity of *their* being born again? The idea of *their* being christians, while their equally moral, though unbaptized associates are heathens, is awfully calculated to sear their consciences, and harden them in their sins. If they shall ever be converted, they must be converted from the belief of this very doctrine. When God opened your own eyes, were you not made fully sensible that it was a false doctrine in regard to you?—that you were by nature as well as by practice the children of wrath even as others? and that he who would preach to you, that as your parents were christians, you were better and holier, and, therefore, more fit for the kingdom of heaven than other children who had not that privilege, was a liar and a deceiver, whose instruction it was your duty to shun? And can you feel in your hearts to teach your children what you found false in your own experience, and what, if they learn it, they must unlearn in order to embrace the gospel?

3. To unconverted Pedobaptists. My dear fellow-sinners, I, as well as you, have been born with the carnal mind which is enmity against God, and grew up under its influence, while every faculty of my mind, and every member of my body, were employed by it in rebelling against God, bringing dishonour upon him, and destruction upon myself. If I shall be favoured to spend an eternity in the company of my parents, I feel quite satisfied that I shall be perfectly happy. But what could their holiness avail me? Should I die without being born again, the door of heaven is for ever shut against me. God in mercy (and blessed be his name) has shewn me these things; and also, that the promise by faith is to me as well as to my parents; that *who-soever* believeth shall be saved. This also extends encouragement to you. In your present state, the wrath of God abideth on you; and if you die so, where Christ is, you never shall come. But the same God, who is over all, is rich unto all that call upon him. He that cometh to him shall in no wise be cast out; for he is able to save them all to the uttermost. I therefore call upon you to flee from the wrath to come. Begin not to say in yourselves, We are Abraham's chil-

dren, we were born in a christian land, of christian parents, within the bond of the covenant, in our baptism its blessings were sealed to us, which we personally renewed at the communion table; we have wronged no man, nor have been profane or immoral in our behaviour, and no man has a right to set us on a level with publicans and sinners.—According to your own system, all these privileges were enjoyed by one to whom the Saviour said, "Ye must be born again!" Now, the axe is laid to the root of the tree—if, therefore, ye do not yield good fruit, ye shall be cut down as cumberers of the ground, and cast into the fire that shall not be quenched. But the tree itself must be made good, before it can bring forth good fruit: therefore, ye also must be born again. Without a new heart and a new life, all your privileges will but aggravate your crimes, and render more intolerable your punishment.

4. To the children of Baptists. My dear young friends, though your parents are Baptists and christians, that does not make you either. The principles of your parents teach, that true religion is not hereditary; but that every individual, personally, must receive it immediately and directly from God. Your parents may instruct you; but if you refuse to receive instruction, you aggravate your guilt. They may correct you; but if you harden yourselves in rebellion, you bring a curse upon yourselves. They may set you a good example; but if you do not imitate their example, you prove that you are destitute of their ruling principle, that you do not walk in the same road, and cannot arrive at the same end. They may pray for you; but unless you repent and pray for yourselves, you are despising and refusing the very blessings they request their heavenly Father to bestow upon you. After God has favoured you with all these privileges, will you despise them all, and choose to walk in the way to destruction? The principles believed, exemplified, and inculcated by your parents, enforce upon you the necessity of the new birth, and of the personal enjoyment of true religion. Those children who are taught by their parents and preachers, that they are a part of Christ's flock, for whom he died; that they are in covenant relation to God, and holy subjects of his kingdom, may naturally be expected to rest secure. Like children born to a large estate, who need no anxious care, nor prudent industry, to obtain a livelihood, because this comes to them through their parents; so these will naturally neglect personal religion, because their hereditary religion is secure, and if not quite sufficient, gives such a preference that the deficiency is easily made up at any time. Nor is this expectation more than is actually realized, as is evident by looking all around. But you have nothing of this kind to plead in excuse for your negligence. Your parents, according to their principles, can communicate to you, not one particle that will stand you in any stead before God. You must believe in Christ personally; you must repent personally; you must enjoy religion personally, you must live to God personally. Like the poor man's child, born to live by his own personal industry, his pressing wants imperiously call for attention and diligence; so you, on the very brink of eternity, loaded with guilt ready to sink you in eternal misery, unable to help yourselves or obtain help from any other creature, the most pressing necessity loudly calls upon you to make no delay but flee from

impending vengeance, and come immediately to Christ, that you may find rest and safety for your souls; for "now is the accepted time." Dearly beloved, lay these things seriously to heart in time, for in eternity, which is at hand, it will be too late.

5. To the children of Pedobaptists: Oh! my dear young friends, I have some business with you, the most important business that ever man had with man. God saw you ruined in the fall; and he so loved this ruined world as to give his only begotten Son, to die as a sacrifice for sin, to redeem from destruction such ruined sinners as you. Christ loved the souls of men, and gave himself for them, a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour unto God; a sacrifice in which the Father is well-pleased; and through which he is reconciling sinners to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. To you is the word of this salvation sent. You are called to receive it in faith. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. By faith the promise of eternal life is to you, for it is to all who believe. By faith the promise of the Holy Spirit is to you, for it is to sons and daughters among all the nations of the earth, even as many of them as receive the call, to repent, and believe the gospel. Jesus Christ is the only consecrated way by which we draw nigh to God. He is the only Mediator, or medium of intercourse, with the father. Begin not therefore to put confidence in your own obedience, in your privileges, or in what has been done for you by any mere man, or even by the Holy Spirit in you. The obedience of Christ, finished upon Calvary, is the only ground for a sinner's acceptance with God. Till, by faith in the Beloved, the sinner is accepted of God, and his sins blotted out, as having been transferred to the Surety, and the punishment of their demerit borne to the last stripe;—till then, all are on a level, alike under condemnation, justly the objects of the divine vengeance; and therefore no one can have any preference, nothing to recommend him to the divine favour, no reason in him why he, rather than the chief of sinners, should be accepted of God. Look unto Jesus, therefore, as an almighty Saviour, who is free to the guilty, who offers his services freely to whosoever feels need of them, and is willing to make use of them. While you fancy you have something else to give you a preference, it is to be feared you will think lightly of Christ, for the whole need not a physician. Every ground of confidence but Christ is delusive.

6. To halting believers, who neither are baptized themselves, nor christen their infants. Dear brethren, let your conscience be tender, trembling at the word of God. Trifle not with divine authority. You grant that when Christ rose from the dead, he commanded the apostles to baptize the disciples among all nations, and that in executing their commission, of which baptizing was a part, he promised to be with them to the end of the world. Are you not conscious of habitually disobeying the command, and of slighting the promise connected with obedience? Do not plead that baptism is an external ceremony, and that you can be saved without it. True, unless you are already saved by Christ, you have nothing to do with baptism. But is it not on the very principle of your disobedience, that sinners turn the grace of God into lasciviousness? Can your neglect deserve a better name? If we indulge the disposition to do nothing but what we

must do to be saved, have we not at once renounced the free spirit of children, and imbibed the legal spirit of bond slaves? We must, in that case, either renounce justification by grace, or the influence of the gospel in producing filial obedience. The command, "Arise and be baptized," is as plain and significant, as that to our first parents. The consequence of eating forbidden fruit, teaches us, as little children, to follow the Lord, ceasing from our own wisdom. Take heed lest a secret dread of incurring reproach, is lurking within, seeking excuses for disobedience, and making you easily satisfied with those it finds. The way to glorify God, to enjoy comfort yourselves, and to be useful to saints and sinners, is to yield unreservedly the obedience of faith. In the keeping of his commandments there is great reward.

7. To the reader. Dear friend, I beg you will not be hasty in forming a judgment for, or against this work. I am aware that I have assailed current and popular errors, which have run the gauntlet of ages, and are now established like axioms in the minds of men. But unless they are founded on the divine testimony, they must be abandoned, and the longer they are retained, the more loss will their abettors sustain. I would advise you, therefore, when you have got this length, to begin again and examine every scripture reference as you go along; and see if the plain, easy, natural, unforced interpretation of them is given. It is easy to quote scripture in proof of any thing; but perhaps such quotations may be compelling the holy spirit to bear testimony to a falsehood. In this affair, exercise your judgment, with prayer, and dependance on divine teaching. And may God lead you to the true knowledge of his will. Amen.

THE END.

ERRATA.

- Preface, Page 5, line 30, for war, read the war.
- Pamphlet, 5, 2, for fulfilment, read the fulfilment.
- 7, 7, for is made, read was made.
- " 24, for defence, read their defence.
- 9, 35, for secures, read secured.
- 12, 14, for hold, read now hold.
- " 15, for Gentiles would hold, read Gentiles hold.
- 18, 1, for in a typical manner, read about typical things.
- 19, 2 lines from the bottom, for was, read had been all along.
- 25, line 14, for word, read the word.
- 27, 1, for so joined to who believeth, read so believeth.
- 29, 4, for a spiritual, read by a spiritual.
- 31, 2 lines from the bottom, for for, read form.
- 40, line 40, for baptize, read baptizo.
- 43, 18, for patriarch, read bishop.
- 52, 22, for the heart, read heart.
- 55, 5, for no, read nor.
- " 7 lines from the bottom, for seven daughters, read three daughters.
- 67, line 24, for nor, read not.
- 68, 1, for disciple, read disciples.
- 70, 45, for promises, read premises.
- 71, 8, for It is, read Is it.
- 81, 30, for law, read his law.
- 82, 43, for it if, read if it.
- 83, 32, for and Christ, read as Christ.
- 86, 22, for a body, read as a body.
- 88, 23, for or, read nor.
- 90, 31, for subjects, read subject.
- 91, 42, for that, read say that.
- 93, 4, for for among us they, read for the
- 94, 42, for a federal, read a federal relation.
- 96, 35, for demonstrates, read denominates.
- 99, 34, for but, read butt.
- 107, 11, omit "and."
- 113, 3 lines from the bottom, for and had, read and has.
- 115, line 11, for nor did, read nor do.
- 122, 28, for confirmed by his blood, read confirmed it by his blood.
- 133, 8 lines from the bottom, for as, read or.
- 124, line 17, for the law, read is the law.
- 128, 19, for to exchange, read to change.

ughters.

blood.

