

LETTERS
ON
CHRISTIAN BAPTISM



LETTERS

ON

CHRISTMAS



3 P
8
SCC
8228

LETTERS
ON THE MODE AND SUBJECTS
OF
CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

ADDRESSED TO

THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED CONGREGATIONS OF GEORGE'S
CREEK AND THE TENT,

By ASHBEL G. FAIRCHILD,

THEIR PASTOR.

Isa LII. 14 15. "*As many were astonished at thee, his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men; so shall he SPRINKLE MANY NATIONS. Matth. XXVIII. 19. Teach ALL NATIONS, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*"

UNIONTOWN.

PRINTED BY WILLIAM H. WHITTON.

.....
1830

In the publication of the following letters, the author has consulted the wishes of some of the people of his charge, who were of opinion that most of the treatises on baptism are too large, and too learned, for the bulk of readers.— He has endeavored to compress the leading arguments on the subject within as narrow a compass as possible, choosing rather to omit some important particulars, than to tire the patience of the reader. His principal aim has been to accommodate the style and reasoning to the most moderate capacity. His own people, for whom they are intended, know that an unusual amount of ministerial duties have lately devolved upon him, and are prepared to overlook the imperfections which he has not had time to remove.

LETTER I,

On the mode of Baptism.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

In the investigation of any question, relating to doctrine or duty, our first inquiry should be, "What say the Scriptures?" However plausible the theories which men may adopt, and however ingeniously they may be defended, if they do not agree with the testimony of God, they are unworthy of any countenance. A strict regard to this principle will prove of essential benefit to us in the discussion of the subject under consideration. The zealous advocates of immersion censure us for not complying with their mode of Baptism. In this case, our proper course is to appeal to the Scriptures. Do they contain any command for dipping or immersion? No, not one. The command is to baptize; and this is not a command to dip, as is easily proved by a number of passages where the sense in which the sacred writers used the word clearly appears.

The meaning of the word Baptize.

It is not necessary to refer you to the original Greek, to ascertain the meaning of this word, for it can be discovered by any one who reads our English translation. Take the words of John the Baptist in Math. III. 11. "He (Christ) shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire," and let me ask what is the meaning of BAPTIZE in this passage? Does it signify the same as dip or plunge? He shall "dip or plunge you into the Holy Ghost and into the fire!! Surely an interpretation so shocking cannot for a moment be tolerated by any one who has the slightest acquaintance with the Scriptures. But again let me ask how this prophecy of John was fulfilled. A little before the day of Pentecost, our blessed Saviour said to his disciples, "John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Acts, I. 5. and when the day arrived, how were they baptized? By being dipped or plunged in the Holy Ghost? No, but by the Spirit **POURED OUT** on them. For Peter, on that very occasion, declared that therein was fulfilled the prophecy of Joel, in which God said, "I will *pour out* of my spirit." Again I ask how were the disciples baptized with fire? By being dipped or plunged into cloven tongues of fire? No. In the 3d. verse it is said that tongues **SAT UPON** them. See Acts, II 3.

I am aware that some ingenious writers have labored to prove that the Apostles were immersed *in a wind*, and in support of their opinion, quote Acts II, 2, "and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, **AS OF** a mighty rushing wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." But here we discover that it is not said that there was a wind in the house, but that the sound which came from heaven was like the sound of a mighty rushing wind, and this sound **filled** or pervaded the whole house. So then the promise of the baptism of the Holy Ghost was ful-

filled by the pouring out of the Holy Ghost. And we see that to explain the word *baptize* by *DIP* or *PLUNGE* leads to the greatest extravagances.

The expression *to baptize with the Holy Ghost* very often occurs in the Scriptures, and the sacred writers always explain it of the Spirit's influences *shed down, poured out* or *falling upon* a person. Thus Acts II 17 "I will **POUR OUT** of my spirit. Acts X. 44, The Holy Ghost **FELL ON** all them that heard the word," Titus III. 5, 6, "The washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost shed on us [we are not dipped in it] abundantly through Jesus Christ." Some suppose that by the washing of regeneration is meant being "born of water," and by the renewing of the Holy Ghost, being "born of the spirit," as our Saviour says "born of water and of the spirit." If so, it proves beyond a doubt that the water of baptism is to be shed down or sprinkled upon the subject.

Such is the account which the inspired writers give us of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and such their explanation of the meaning they attached to the word *baptize*. But some Baptist writers seem to think they can give a better explanation of their own. They do not indeed dare to say that men were dipped or plunged in the Holy Ghost, but that they were *overwhelmed* by the Holy Ghost. What do they mean by this unscriptural expression? Do they use it as a softer word for dipping or immersion in the Holy Spirit? Or do they mean by it something less than immersion, as pouring for instance? If so, they give up the point in dispute. But if they mean that the faculties of men were overwhelmed or disordered by the spirit, this is contrary to the word of God. For the Apostles were never in more complete possession of their mental faculties than they were on the day of Pentecost, after receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost. This would not have been the case if the faculties of their minds had been overwhelmed. At any rate the scriptures tell us that men were baptized with the Holy Ghost by having the spirit *poured out, shed down* or *falling upon* them, and the inference is that they were also baptized with water, by having the water poured, shed down, or falling upon them, and this is enough for our purpose.

The baptism before dinner

Further, to show that the inspired writers did not use the word *baptize* to signify *dip* or *plunge* we refer you to Luke XI. 37, 38, where we are told that the Pharisee marvelled that Jesus had not *washed* before dinner. The word translated *washed*, is in the original *ebaptisthe*, from *baptizo* to baptize; literally rendered thus "He marvelled that Jesus was *not baptized* before dinner." But did he wonder that Jesus was not immersed? No, for this washing, or as it is in the original baptizing, is explained in Mark VII. 3, 4, whence it appears that the Pharisee, according to their traditions, washed their hands always before they ate; and it seems that the Pharisee with whom our Saviour took dinner wondered that he had not complied with the tradition. From the whole, it appears, then that when a persons hands only were washed, the person himself was said to be baptized according to the true meaning of the word

The baptizing of tables or couches.

In Mark VII 4, we read of another tradition respecting "washing o cups, of pots, of brazen vessels, and tables. The word *washing* is in the Greek *baptismous, baptisms*; and the word translated tables is *klinai*, properly the *couches* on which the Jews lay at their meals. So that here is the baptism of tables or couches. Was this performed by immersion? Did the Jews take their couches to a river and plunge them under water? No one will say so who has the slightest acquaintance with Jewish antiquities.— It appears then, that by a baptism, the Evangelist Mark did not mean an immersion.

Nebuchadnezzar baptized with dew.

In Daniel IV. 24, 25, is the prophecy, that the king should eat grass as an oxen, and be *wet with the dew of Heaven*. The word *wet*, is in the Greek of the Seventy *bapto*, the root of *baptizo* to baptize. Hence it appears that Nebuchadnezzar was baptized with the dew of Heaven. But how? by immersion or by sprinkling?

More instances of the same kind might be produced, but enough has been said to satisfy you, that the word baptize was not used by the Sacred writers to signify dip or plunge. And hence, we so often meet with the expression to baptize *WITH* water, not *under* water, as it would stand if the word meant, to dip or plunge.* In Luke III. 16 the following words are found, *hudati baptizo humas*. Literally *WITH* water I baptize "you." Here in parsing *hudati with water*, without a preposition, the very rule of grammar which is quoted, shows that the water was the instrument with which the person was baptized; and the idea conveyed is, that the water was applied to the person, not the person to the water.

Some Baptist writers, seem to place great reliance upon *human authority*, and bring forward an array of great names on their side of the question. But if the question were to be decided by men's opinions, I could produce three times as many learned men against them. I trust I have explained the meaning of the word baptize by Scripture itself, which is always the safest guide.†

* Who would say I dip or plunge you *with* water.

† The word *baptizo* to baptize is nowhere translated to *dip* in the New Testament. Schlessner and Parkhurst, two of the most eminent Lexicographers, say that it is not used in such a sense in the New Testament. The Heathen writers indeed seem to have made use of the word, to signify either a greater or less degree of wetting. Scapula and Stephanus render the word by *lavo* and *abluo* and Suidas by *madefacio, lavo, abluo, purgo, mundo*, to moisten, to wash, to cleanse. Origen, a Greek writer of the second century, speaking of the Pouring of the water on the wood by order of Elijah, uses the word *baptizo*, and calls it a *baptising of the wood*.

Sydenham quotes a Greek oracle as saying *askos baptizei dunai de toi ou themis esti. Baptize him as a leathern bottle (which floats) and do not dip him under*. Here *baptizo*, to wet partially, is contrasted with *dunai* to dip under.

There is another instance taken from Robertson's and Schrevelius' larger lexicon where *bapto* the root of *baptizo* is used to signify a partial wetting.—

The Greeks.

It is sometimes urged that the Greeks, "who best understand their own language baptize their children by immersion." I answer that the modern Greeks do not understand the ancient Greek, in which the New Testament was written, any better than we do. They speak a language almost as widely different from it as the Italian is from the Latin. And it has become necessary to translate the New Testament into their present language, to enable them to understand it. So then their authority, as it respects the ancient Greek, is no better than that of an American.

It is highly probable that the practice of immersion with some of them, originated from the opinion they hold, that baptism cleanses from sin. — Hence they concluded that the more water the better, and proceeded by degrees to baptize *their children* by immersion.*

John Baptizing at Jordan.

Our opponents contend that immersion must be the right mode of baptism, because say they "we read of their baptizing at rivers." But who I ask, baptized at a river? None but John the Baptist and even he only a part of the time, for we afterwards find him baptizing at Enon, John III. 23

This Bapti men askon kudor de hugron dunai potc. He indeed baptizes a leathern bottle but it never goes under the liquid water.

To this we may add a well known case taken from an ancient poem ascribed to Homer, in which the lake is said to be baptized with the blood of a frog. *Ebapto de aimati limne porphureo.* The lake was not dipped in the blood of the frog, but was sprinkled therewith.

We could easily multiply authorities if necessary, The truth is no honest man, who understands the Greek tongue, can deny that the word is often used among heathen writers to signify a partial application of water.

If the sacred writers had intended to enjoin dipping as the mode of baptism they could have used the word *duplo* and *duno*, which always signify to dip.

* In some portions of the Greek church immersion may be practised, but in others it is not. Mr. Joseph Huber of Danville Ky. in a letter to the editor of the "Pedobaptist" a periodical published at that place, writes, "I resided upwards of three years in the capitol of the Grand Seignior's dominions as a Greek family of the first respectability. During that time I was present at four baptisms, two in the family and two in the immediate neighborhood;" — "The company were all seated on the sofas around the room. A table stood in the middle with a basin of water on it. The Papa, or Priest was then sent for, who upon entering the room was received by the father of the infant and led to the baptismal water, which he consecrated with a short prayer, and the sign of the cross: then the mother presented to him her babe which he laid on his left arm, and in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost he thrice dipped his hand into the water and *dropped some of it on the child's forehead* giving it a name. I may here remark (he adds) that I never heard during my stay in Constantinople of adult baptisms nor of the ordinance being performed by immersion in a single instance. [See Evang. Luth. Intell. Sept. 1829. Shall we suppose that these Greeks "understand their own language" or not? What shall we say of their practising *infant sprinkling*."

I shall show, in a suitable place, that we are not to take pattern from John's baptism, but from Christ's. But supposing for argument's sake that we are to follow John. What proof is there that he immersed?—None but the circumstance that he baptized a part of the time at Jordan. Our Baptist friends say that he chose that river for the sake of deep water for immersion. But this is assertion without proof. I can assign a much more probable reason, for John spoke uniformly of baptizing WITH, (not under) water. John appeared in the wilderness of Judea, in fulfillment of the prophecy that he should be "the voice of one crying in the wilderness." Now it is well known that that wilderness is very scarce of water. And as the river Jordan ran through it, there was no other as suitable place of resort where the immense multitudes that flocked to his baptism, could obtain water for themselves and their beasts to drink. For we read that "Judea and all Jerusalem and the region round about Jordan came to John & was baptized, Matth. III. 5. This account of the matter is confirmed by the fact that John afterwards removed to Enon, a short distance from Jordan "because there was much water there." This *much water* (in the Greek *polla hudata*) as travellers tell us, consists of a number of small springs of good wholesome water, much preferable for drink to that of Jordan. And this accounts for John's removal thither; for if he had wanted deep water to immerse he would not have left Jordan.

Our Baptist friends urge that it is said, Matth. III, that they were baptized *in* Jordan. But this does not prove that they were immersed; for the Israelites are said to have been baptized in the sea, 1 Cor. X. 2. and we know that they were not immersed. And in Josh. III. 13, the Priests are represented as standing *in* Jordan, and yet from the 3th verse of the chapter it appears that they only stood at the brink of the river. It is agreed that the Greek word *en* translated *in* is rendered *at* in more than one hundred places in the new Testament, and in an hundred and fifty others it is translated *by*. If it be so interpreted here that John baptized the people at Jordan, there is no proof that he plunged his disciples under the water, no more than the fact recorded in history that Alexander's soldiers entered a stream to drink, proves that they went under the water.

Whether we should follow John's or Christ's baptism.

After all, in whatever mode John baptized his followers, it can be no example for us to follow. We are not to take pattern from his baptism, but from Christ's. John's baptism, as well as the sacrifices and ceremonies of the old dispensation, were of divine authority while they lasted; but are not now in force. John was only the forerunner of our Lord and his baptism was only preparatory to, and superseded by that of Christ who instituted his baptism after his resurrection and just before his ascension to heaven. He then commanded his disciples "to teach ALL NATIONS, baptizing them in the name of the Father & of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." See Matth. xxviii. 19. This was the first command to baptize in the name of the Sacred Trinity John's baptism was intended only

for one nation, the Jews; but Christ's was intended for "all nations." John did not baptize in the name of the Father Son and Holy Ghost, for those whom he had baptized [Acts. XIX. 2, 3.] had not heard of a Holy Ghost, which could not have been the case, if they had been baptized in that name.

Though the Jews generally were baptized by the forerunner of our Lord, professing repentance and the expectation that the Messiah was about to make his appearance, yet when he actually appeared, they rejected him, and joined in the cry, "crucify him, crucify him." Thus, after our Lord's death, and just before Pentecost, only one hundred and twenty real disciples could be found in all Jerusalem, Acts, I. 15. *

The re-baptising at Ephesus.

But what puts this matter beyond doubt, is the account we have of the rebaptism of certain disciples whom Paul found at Ephesus, and who had only received John's baptism. Read Acts XIX from the 1st. to the 6th verse inclusive. When these disciples had assured Paul, "that they had not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost" he asks them "unto what then were ye baptized." The very question implied that there had been more than one institution of baptism, and he would know whether they had received John's or Christ's. Accordingly they answered "unto John's baptism." This explained the matter, for John did not baptize in the names of the adorable Trinity. He only administered the baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on him that should come AFTER HIM, that is on Christ Jesus. Paul having given this explanation to the disciples, caused them to receive Christ's baptism from the hands of some minister, who accompanied him in his travels, verse 5, "when they heard this they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.† Because John's baptism being now done away, they could not be considered regular members of the church, until they received the new baptism instituted by Christ.

I am aware that some of our Baptist brethren employ many ingenious

* It must be quite plain to every unprejudiced mind, that the old dispensation did not end, nor did the new begin, till the death of Christ. He observed the passover and other Jewish institutions down to that period. The veil of the temple, which hid the holy of holies from the public gaze, was rent at the death of our Lord, to shew that the Jewish ritual was abolished. John preached that the kingdom of heaven, that is the gospel dispensation, was at hand, and not that it had already come. And our Lord declared that great as John was, the least in the kingdom of heaven, or gospel dispensation was greater than he. And John said of Christ, "He must increase but I must decrease." John III. 30. We hope therefore that in saying as we do, that John's baptism did not belong to the gospel dispensation, we shall not be charged with calling it a heathen baptism.

† This expression does not mean that they were baptized with the Holy ghost, but it denotes water baptism. For it is said of the Samaritans, Acts VIII. 16, that they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, but yet the Holy ghost had not fallen on them, and after the holy ghost had fallen on Cornelius and his friends, they were baptized in the name of the Lord. Acts X. 47, 48.

devices to obscure the meaning of this passage, and nothing would be more easy than to refute their explanations of it. But I need only quote the sentiment of the Rev. Robert Hall, the most eminent of the English Baptists. He says "that there is not, in the whole compass of theological controversy, a stronger instance of the force of prejudice in obscuring the plain meaning of a passage of scripture," than is found in the interpretations of some of his Baptist brethren. And he goes on to show by the rules of grammar, that the persons on whom Paul laid his hands, verse 6, were the very same who were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, verse 5, so that by the construction of some Baptists, Paul must have laid his hands upon all that John baptized, (and that, too, before he, Paul was converted,) and that they all spake with tongues & prophesied, which is ineffably absurd.* Indeed the most intelligent Baptists of our day with Mr. Hall, have given up John's baptism. And it is evident from Acts XVIII. 25, 26, that such as know no other, have need of some Aquilla and Priscilla to "expound unto them the way of God more perfectly."

Our Saviour baptized by John.

Our Baptist friends lay such great stress on the fact that Jesus was baptized by John, and say so much to you about following your Lord to Jordan, that it is necessary we should give the subject due attention. And a little examination will discover, not only that there is no evidence that he was baptized by immersion, but that even if he were, it cannot be any part of his example which we are to imitate. All the proof that he was immersed is derived from the expression "He went up straightway out of the water;" which the Baptists suppose to mean, that he went up from under the water. But this is a construction which the words will not bear. If we examine the words in the original, we find them to be the very same that would be used, in case a person had gone down the banks to the edge of the water. The word *apo*, here translated *out of*, more commonly signifies *from*, and indeed this is the very first meaning assigned to it in the Lexicon. So that the language proves no more, than that our blessed Saviour ascended the banks from the water, and even if it were admitted that he trod into the edge of the stream for the convenience of the admipistrator, it would be far from proving that he went under the water.†

Why Jesus was baptized.

But as much is said about following our Saviour to Jordan, let us inquire why he was baptized. We observe

1. Although he was baptized by John, yet it was not with John's baptism, for that was the baptism of Repentance, and our Lord had no sin to repent of.

* See Hall on communion

† The ancients wore a covering for only the soles of their feet called sandals or shoes. And in a warm climate it would not have been unpleasant to step into a stream.

2. It was not believer's baptism, for that would be to believe on himself whereas he was the great object of faith

3. Nor was it a baptism in the name of the Father, SON and Holy Ghost, for then he would have been baptized in his own name.

So then it was neither John's baptism, nor believer's baptism, nor a baptism in the name of the Trinity that he received. How then can it have been intended as an example for us? Has our blessed Lord, have his disciples said any where that he was baptized as an example for us? No brethren. Then let us hear the true reason from his own lips. John seemed at first unwilling to administer the ordinance lest the idea should be conveyed, that Jesus had become a disciple of his; an idea which some in our day are fond of inculcating. But Jesus said to him "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" Matth. III. 15. Here then is the true reason of his baptism from his own mouth. Compare it with what he says, Matth. V. 17. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy but to fulfil. Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled. It appears there was some precedent, some type exhibited in the ancient law which he was to fulfil by his baptism.* What this type was may be seen in Levit. VIII. 6, and Exodus XXIX, 4. The priests under the law, were types of Christ; and as they were set apart to their ministry by the washing of water, so our Lord the great anti-type was, through his forerunner, introduced into his ministry by the washing of water. The Aaronic priests were also anointed with oil. So our blessed Lord in fulfilment of the type, received the anointing of the Holy Ghost, for the Spirit rested on him in the form of a dove. The priests under the law entered upon their office at 30 years of age, and this accounts for the fact, that our Saviour delayed his baptism till that age. This taken in connexion with the words of the Father, who in an audible voice from heaven proclaimed "This is my beloved son," show that the Lord Jesus was just entered upon the duties of his ministry.

Let it not be charged upon us, that we are making the Lord Jesus "a priest after the order of Aaron," for the accusation is false. We say, if there is any truth in the epistle to the Hebrews, the Jewish priests were types of Christ, and these types were fulfilled by him. And this is the only rational or scriptural account that can be given of his baptism. To follow him then in this particular, is to follow him into his ministry. Let us not attempt this. Let us imitate him daily in his piety toward the Father, and his benevolence to mankind. So far as his conduct is imitable by us, let us daily take up the cross and come after him. But let us never suppose that by baptism we fulfil all righteousness, so that we may safely dispense with such duties as the observance of the Sabbath, family prayer, and the religious education of our children.

* The righteousness which our Saviour fulfilled by his baptism, must have been that either of the moral, or of the ceremonial law. It could not have been the righteousness of the moral law, for that law did not require his baptism. We must then look to the ceremonial law for the true reason of it.

LETTER II,

The mode of baptism continued.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN.

In my former letter I explained the nature of John's baptism, and showed the true reason why Jesus was baptized. We now see with what propriety our Baptist friends refer us on all occasions to the third chapter of Matthew, to find out how baptism is now to be performed. That chapter tells us only of John's baptism, which neither appears to have been immersion, nor if it were, could it be binding on us under the new dispensation. If we would know how baptism is now to be administered, we must look at those instances of it which occurred after Christ instituted his baptism. This took place as we have seen, not till after his death and resurrection, Matth. XXVIII. 19. The Acts of the Apostles furnish us with the account of the baptisms occurring subsequently to that event. These I shall therefore notice in order. First however, I shall consider,

The prophecies respecting Christian Baptism.

As lightly as some professed Christians esteem the Old Testament, I think they all must admit that its prophecies are true. If so, it is not difficult to settle the point in dispute. For it appears to me, that it is as clearly foretold of Christ that he should baptize by sprinkling, as that he should suffer and die. See Isa. LII. 13, 14, 15. "Behold my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. As many were astonished at thee, his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men, so shall he *sprinkle many nations.*" This is part of a prophecy which is continued through the LIII chapter, and from which Philip preached Jesus to the Ethiopian Eunuch; the bible not being then divided into chapters as now. It can apply to none but Christ, whose visage was more marred than any man. Moses and the priests under the law sprinkled only the Jews, but Christ was to sprinkle *many nations.*

I would next observe that this prophecy, is throughout, a very literal one, as you will discover, if you will read the whole, and the part of it which respects the sprinkling of many nations is to be taken as literally as any part. If it be objected, that Christ baptized none himself, I reply, the difficulty is removed by John IV. 1, 2 "Jesus baptized more disciples than John, though Jesus himself baptized not but his disciples."*

We have another striking prophecy in Ezek. XXXVI. 25, 26. "Then," says God, "will I *sprinkle clean water* upon you and ye shall be clean, from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you." Let it not be said that this sprinkling refers to the influence of the spirit and a new heart, for these are distinctly mentioned in the next verses as sepa-

* The ordinance administered by Christ's disciples before his death, as it belonged to the old dispensation and was preparatory to the new; must have been of the same import as the baptism of John.

rate things, "a new heart ALSO will I give you," and "I will put my spirit within you."

The baptism of 3000 in Jerusalem.

Let us now trace the fulfilment of these prophecies, in the baptisms, which took place after Christ instituted his baptism. The first instance is that of the 3000 in Jerusalem, Acts II, 41. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about 3000 souls. I know that some have ventured to deny that they were all baptized and added on the same day. But if my system required such direct contradiction of the word of God to support it, I am sure I would abandon it at once. I ask now, what evidence is there that these 3000 were immersed? None at all, but the very reverse. It was nine o'clock when Peter began his sermon, they were afterwards exhorted with many words, and much time must have been spent in examining so many candidates; so that a very small part of the day remained for baptism. In these circumstances would the apostles have undertaken to immerse 250 persons each? As to the seventy they were never authorized to baptize, and if they were it does not appear that they were present, for the 14th verse says, that "Peter stood up with the *eleven*." But even supposing that the 70 were present and assisted them in the work, where could they find the water for so many to immerse in. There was no river in or near Jerusalem, and the brook Kidron, which is without the city, is dry a great part of the year, and at no time affords depth of water for immersion. Nor is there the slightest intimation that they went out of the city to a stream — And where could the 12 apostles and the 70 disciples have found 82 places in Jerusalem suitable for immersion? Some writers have imagined that they obtained of the rulers and chief Jews the loan of their bathing houses. But can any one suppose that the very men who had put Jesus to death, and were breathing nothing but persecution against his followers, should come forward on the occasion and politely offer the use of their baths? The supposition is too extravagant for credulity itself. The impression made on every candid mind, by the reading of the passage, is that the 3000 were baptized on the spot, and this could have been done by the twelve, in one hour, by sprinkling or pouring.

We may see another fulfilment of the prophecy in the

Baptism of Cornelius and his household.

He was a Gentile, and one of those many nations whom Christ should sprinkle. See Acts X. 44, 48. "The Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word. Then said Peter, can any man FORBID WATER that these should not be baptized? And he commanded them to be baptized &c." Here again I ask, where is the evidence that these persons were immersed? The very expression of Peter precludes that idea, "Can any man forbid water?" What meaning is there in this language if the water was not to be brought for the baptism? Would any man speak of the forbidding of a pond or a river in such a case? Besides, I think it quite evident from the account that the whole transaction took place in the house.

The Baptism in the Jail of Philippi

This baptism is recorded in the XVI. chapter of Acts, and must appear to every unprejudiced mind, to have taken place, in the jail, about midnight. Some indeed contend that they went out to a river, because it is said in verse 30th. that the jailor "brought them out," But this error is corrected by reading the 24th. verse, from which we learn that as the Apostles had been thrust into the *inner prison*, they were only "brought out" into the outer or main part, where the baptism took place. We may also gather from the 27th verse that the jailor's house was joined to the prison, and no doubt communicated with it by a door. For the jailor, awaking out of sleep, saw at once the situation of the prison; and Paul, from the inner part, could see that he was about to kill himself and by speaking in a "loud voice" made himself heard. This destroys at once the hypothesis of the Baptists, who think, because the jailor "brought them into his house," verse 34, that the apostles must have been out to a river; whereas they only passed from the outer prison into his house, through a door. The supposition that they went out to immerse is attended with the greatest difficulties. It was about midnight: and it would have been death, according to the laws of the country, to have let the prisoners out at any hour. Would the apostles have encouraged the jailor to violate the laws of the land, or to risk his life, when if he had to be immersed, his baptism could have been delayed a few days? Besides the language and conduct of Paul and Silas, the next morning, prove, if there was any sincerity in them, that they had not been out of prison bounds. When the magistrates sent saying "let these men go," the apostles refused saying, "Nay but let them come themselves and fetch us out." Could such language be used without hypocrisy by one, who had been out in the night to a river? All the circumstances go to prove beyond a doubt, that this baptism took place in the prison.*

The baptism of the Eunuch.

Of all the baptisms occurring after the Lord Jesus instituted his baptism, only one appears to have been administered at a stream; namely, that of the Ethiopian eunuch. But the circumstances were peculiar. He was travelling through a desert on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza when Philip fell in his company and preached unto him Jesus. See Acts VIII. 26, 27. He desired to be baptized, and coming to a certain water (*ti hudor*) it was convenient to obtain some for that purpose. He exclaimed, "See here.

*It is not probable that the jailor kept a baptismal fount in the prison, though some Baptist churches in the cities have those conveniences to immerse in. This is giving up *river baptism*. The practice may become general among them; and the transition thence to *pouring* or *sprinkling* is easy.

I have lately heard something said about *monumental testimony* in favor of immersion, which means just this—a kind of trough has been found supposed to have been anciently used for dipping. But whether it was the very same used in the house of Cornelius and the jail of Philippi they will not venture to say. Query? may it not be one of the baths of the chief men of Jerusalem!

is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?" He did not say, "here is much water," or "here is a river," for the stream appears to have been too small to have a name. Jerome Sandys,* and others who travelled that road, assert that there is no stream in those parts more than ankle deep. It was natural for the eunuch to go down out of his chariot, *to* or *into* the brink of the water, both out of respect to the ordinance, and for the convenience of the administrator; and the words in the original prove nothing more. But the construction which our opponents put upon the words, leads to the absurdity that both baptizer and baptized were immersed. For what is said of the one is said of the other; "They went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch." Verse 38. And so in the next verse it is said of both, "They were come up out of the water."

We may further observe that Philip had just been explaining the prophecy concerning Christ, one clause of which said, that He should *sprinkle* many nations. And doubtless this very clause was the foundation of the instruction which the eunuch received on the subject of baptism, and which occasioned his desire to have that ordinance administered to him. How improbable that in these circumstances Philip should immerse him.

The baptism of Saul afterwards called Paul.

We have an account of this interesting baptism in two places, first in Acts IX. 18. "And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales, and he received sight forthwith *and arose and was baptized.*"—Next in Acts XXII. 16. Ananias said to him, And now why tarriest thou "*arise and be baptized.*" It should seem that Saul, being exhausted by long fasting, and the exercises of his mind was reclining on a bed or couch, for he looked up upon Ananias, Acts XXII, 13. And it appears that he rose up and was baptized on the spot. This is strikingly manifest in the original Greek. In v. 18. the words are *anastas ebaptishe, standing up he was baptized*. So in Acts XXII. 16. *anastas baptsai, standing up be baptized*; and it is fairly implied that he received baptism in a standing posture. Nor is it at all probable that in his weak bodily state (Acts, IX. 9.) he would have gone out to a stream or pond to be immersed. And now what evidence do our Baptist friends bring to prove that Saul was put under the water? Why the same kind which they produce in the case of Lydia. It is just this, that there was a river near Damascus, therefore Saul must have been immersed. Wonderful logic! As well might some future historian attempt to prove that Dr. Green of Philadelphia baptized by immersion because the river Delaware is near the city!!

Change of Clothing.

It is remarkable that there is not the slightest intimation, in the Scriptures, of a change of clothes on any occasion of a baptism. But this would have been very necessary, both for decency and comfort if immersion had been practised. Nor would a change of clothing have been too trifling a circumstance to be mentioned. For it was not deemed

* See Hicron. De Loc. Heb. and Sandys travels.

unworthy of notice that Stephen's murderers "laid down their clothes." Acts VII. 58. And of Jesus when he washed his disciples feet, it is said John XIII 4, that he laid aside his garments, and in verse 12 that he took them again. Why then is it that in no instance of baptism, a single word is said about clothes. The reason is that they were baptized in such a mode as rendered a change of garments unnecessary.

The baptism of the Israelites

We are informed in 1 Cor X. 1, 2. that the Israelites "were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. But how? By immersion? No, for 'They went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground.'" Exod XIV. 22. The ungodly host of Pharaoh were indeed immersed, but it is not said that they were baptized. "And the waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen and all the host of Pharaoh." Exod. XIV. 28. The mode in which the Israelites were baptized is explained in David's sublime and beautiful description of the passage of the Red Sea. Psalms LXXVII, 15, 17. "The waters saw thee O God, the waters saw thee. They were afraid, the depths also were troubled. The clouds **POURED OUT** water." So then they were sprinkled with rain from the clouds and with the spray of the mighty ocean foaming and tumbling around them.

How do our Baptist friends evade the force of this argument? Why they say the Israelites were baptized, not by being plunged into the sea, nor yet by water applied to them, but by having the cloud above their heads and a wall of water on each side. A strange baptism indeed, without a drop of water touching the subjects! If persons can be baptized merely by being surrounded with water they might be inclosed in tight vessels and sunk under water. But would this be a true baptism?

I shall only add, that admitting as our opponents do, that this baptism was a type or figure of Christian baptism, I cannot see how they refuse to administer that ordinance to infants; for the Israelites were all baptized, children as well as adults.

Noah in the Ark.

Great stress is sometimes laid upon the salvation of Noah by water, 1 Peter, III. 20, 21. "Eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto, baptism doth now save us." I ask was Noah immersed? No, he rode secure *above* the angry billows, while the unbelieving world *sunk* beneath the flood.

There are several other texts which favor the mode of baptism by the application of water; such as 1 John V. 8, "There are three that bear witness on earth, the spirit and the water and the blood, and these three agree in one." Now we know that the spirit is **POURED** out, and the blood of Christ was **SHED**, and as the whole three agree in one it is natural to conclude that the *water* of baptism is to be *poured* or *shed down* — Again, John III. 5. "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit" —

Now we have shown that to be born of the spirit is to have the spirit *poured* or *shed* upon us. Titus III. 5, 6; so to be born of water must be to have water similarly applied to us. Once more, Heb, X. 22, "Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water." Here the apostle speaks first, of the sprinkling of the precious blood of Christ upon the conscience; and secondly of the sign which corresponds thereto; namely, the outward cleansing of baptismal water sprinkled upon the body. I am aware that some say "sprinkling is not cleansing" but in this they contradict God, who says, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you and you shall be CLEAN." Ezekiel, XXXVI 25.

The import of Baptism.

Our Baptist brethren seem to mistake the true intent and meaning of the ordinance of baptism. Instead of regarding it as a sign of the cleansing influences of the blood of Christ, and of his spirit, they think it is intended to represent the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord, and hence they conclude that it should be administered by immersion. But they are mistaken in supposing that dipping the body in water is any true representation of Christ's death and burial. For if you will read the account in Mark, you will see that our saviour was not buried in one of our American graves and covered with earth; but his body was carried into a Sepulchre or vault hewn out of solid rock and entered by a door, and there it was laid. And in what respect does immersion resemble such a burial? What is the resemblance between laying a dead body in a little apartment, hewn out of the rock, rolling a stone against the door, sealing it solemnly and leaving it there three days; I say what is the resemblance between this, and suddenly plunging a *living* body under water and lifting it out again. The similitude is little better than that of the blind man who supposed the light of the sun was like the noise of a cannon. Paul, that elegant scholar, never had a thought of such a resemblance, when he spoke of being buried with Christ. Col. II 11, 12. Robinson, the Baptist historian, confesses that this allusion of the Apostle to burying is misapplied by his brethren, because they take their ideas of the matter from English graves. Mr Judson, Baptist missionary to Burmah, says that no one is qualified for water baptism, until he has experienced that burial with Christ. And you will agree with those learned men if you consider that in the baptism of which Paul speaks we are said to be "circumcised" as well as "buried with Christ" (*Read the whole passage*) and if a literal burial is here meant a literal circumcision is also meant.* So in the parallel passage, Rom. VI, 4, 5, 6, we are said to be *planted* (as trees) to be *crucified*, and to be *dead* as well as *buried* with Christ in the baptism there spoken of. The true meaning of all this, is, that by that spiritual baptism which was represented under the *old* dispensation by circumcision and by baptism under

* The Hermians and Seleuciens put a literal construction on the expression "to baptize with fire," and hence some drew persons who had been baptized through the fire; others applied a hot iron to their ears.

the new, believers are crucified to the world, die unto sin and arise to a new life, as Christ died, was buried and rose again, "Wherein," says the apostle, "that is in this baptism ye are risen again through the faith of the operation of God." But this cannot be said of water baptism, for a person might be sprinkled or dipped a hundred times, and yet be destitute of faith. It is true one class of Baptists affirm that Baptism cleanses from sin, and they quote the words of Ananias to Saul, Acts XXII, 16, "arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins." But they omit the important words which next follow, "calling on the name of the Lord Jesus." And which prove that Saul was not to be cleansed by an outward sign, but by faith in Christ. They lay great stress on 1 Peter III, 21, "Baptism doth now save us." But does Peter say this of water baptism? No; he guards us against such an awful delusion by adding immediately "Not the putting away the filth of the flesh but the answer of a good conscience" that is a conscience sprinkled with the blood of Christ, which answers to, or corresponds with the outward sign.

"What good," it is asked, "can a little water do you?" In reply, I ask what good can much water do you? A little bread and wine is all that is necessary in the Lord's supper. And let us guard against the mistake Peter once made, John XIII. When Jesus said, "if I wash thee not thou hast no part with me," Peter thought it was the outward washing which was to afford him benefit, and hence concluded like many in our day, that the more water the better. He said "Lord not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." But Jesus reproved his carnal views and said, "He that is washed needeth not, save to wash his feet but is CLEAN EVERY WHIT."

After all I am glad to know that some of our Baptist brethren, ministers, as well as people lay as little stress upon baptism as we do. And while they aim at soundness in the faith, they are free from that haughty sectarian spirit, manifested by others. Far from uniting with Infidels in their attacks upon particular denominations, they are willing to co-operate in every measure for the advancement of vital religion. With such Baptists the only contest likely to arise is, which shall most promote the glory of God and the welfare of immortal souls. But alas, we are constrained to say that there are others, who, while they do not profess to hold that immersion is essential to salvation, still give evidence that they are too willing to countenance that idea. They make immersion the principal subject of their public and private instructions. Mankind in every age have been prone to substitute the outward form for the inward grace; and the effect of such preaching is, that too many of their people have an undue confidence in the efficacy of immersion. Hence some of them speak of obtaining great light and deliverance from the burden of sin by passing under the water. Hence the indefatigable zeal they exert to induce persons of other communions to be immersed, amounting in some instances to a degree of persecution. Hence too the utmost soundness in doctrine and holiness of life, the most deep repentance, and eminent faith cannot fit a man to commune with them, unless he has been under the water. They profess to hope indeed, that through their exertions, all sects will in time come to be immersed. But what great benefit will accrue to mankind if they should succeed? What great advantage to com-

pensate for the strife and discord they will produce? Will men be made more holy by being re-baptized in another mode? Is it a fact that persons who have been immersed are more distinguished than others for charity, that greatest of all the graces? Are they more observant of the sabbath, more attentive to family religion and other duties, more active in promoting the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world? O that they would employ all this zeal and labor in winning souls to Christ! I know they try to justify their zeal for immersion by saying that there is but "one baptism," and that "if they are right all others are wrong."— But they might as well argue that because there is but one ordinance of *prayer* if they are right who pray standing, all who kneel are wrong, and have no prayer at all. Supposing, for argument sake, that others have made a mistake as to the quantity of water, and the exact mode of applying it, can this be of such consequence in the view of the infinite God, as to nullify the seal of his covenant and set aside the baptismal vow? No, as well might Presbyterians say, "There is but *one Lord's supper*, and if we are right in sitting down at a table to receive that ordinance, the Baptists are wrong, and have no real supper because they do not sit at tables." Indeed it is astonishing that men laying such stress upon modes and forms, as some Baptists do, should be so careless about the administration of the supper, for they know that the Disciples first partook of it at a table.

If a priest were to come and proclaim among us that there is but one ordinance of marriage, and that all our marriages are null and void, if the ceremony has not been performed according to the Romish church; would we not at once reply to him that though we admitted the validity of *his* marriages, that of *ours* could not thereby be impaired; for that a variation in the ceremony can never set aside the marriage covenant. So should we say to our zealous advocates of immersion when they urge us to be re-baptized, on the pretence that our baptism is good for nothing. We should tell them indeed that if their mode is the most showy, ours is the most scriptural; but that even if we have made a small mistake in the outward form it cannot set aside the seal of the great Jehovah. We should add, that after having received the baptism instituted by Christ, to go and submit to that of John, (~~and~~ supposing that John immersed) is travelling back from the Christian toward the Jewish dispensation—is trifling with the baptismal vow—is pouring contempt on the seal of the God of Heaven. May the Lord discover to such, the uncharitable course they are pursuing towards their brethren of other denominations. May he impart to them that wisdom which is peaceable as well as pure. And may he vouchsafe to us all, the baptism of his holy spirit—and then however separated by ordinances here, we shall all sit down to one marriage supper in the kingdom of God. AMEN.

LETTER III,

On the subjects of Baptism.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN.

It has often been observed in religious controversies that men do not usually resort to misrepresentation and abuse, until reason and scripture have failed them. And I do not doubt that it is a grief to many pious Baptists, that some of their brethren betray the weakness of their cause by the use of those unhallowed weapons. Indeed it is to be regretted by all, that there should be any, who as if they were conscious of the weakness of their system, should try to support it by bitter words—charging their Pædo-baptist brethren as, *not sincere* in their belief—branding them with *Pöpery*, and pouring a torrent of profane ridicule upon what they call *infant sprinkling*. Whilst we hear with meekness the revilings of such men, let us reply to them only by arguments drawn from the word of God. This I hope I shall be enabled to do. In the preceding letters, I briefly stated to you my views of the *mode* of baptism. In this and the following I shall in a few words discuss the question. Who are proper subjects of that ordinance?

And here let me observe that our church holds as firmly to “believer’s baptism” as our opponents do; that is we maintain that believing adults are to receive Christian baptism if they have not been subjects of that ordinance before. And yet our baptist friends appear to think that such baptisms are inconsistent with our system. They quote such passages as Acts XVIII. 8, “many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized.” Here, say they, believers were baptized, therefore the Corinthians must have been Baptists. They do not consider that by this mode of reasoning they would conclude our two congregations to be Baptists also; for it is well known that many adults have been lately baptized in our churches. So then the only question to be discussed at present is, *Whether a believer having been baptized himself, may have his children admitted to that ordinance.* I affirm that he may; and in support of my views shall claim the liberty of referring you to any part of the scriptures which may have a bearing on the subject, for it is all the work of inspired penmen. “ALL SCRIPTURE” says Paul, “is given by inspiration of God, and is *profitable for doctrine.*” I am sure my brethren, you will believe an inspired apostle in preference to those who tell you, that the old Testament is *done away* and so is *not* profitable for doctrine. That part of the word of God is still in force; and such of its institutions as have not been set aside by Christ and his apostles, are evidently binding on us at this very moment. After these remarks I proceed to show.

1 *That infants were once, by the appointment of God, admitted with in the pale of his church, and received the existing seal of his covenant.*

2 That infants have never been excluded by the authority of God, and consequently are still entitled to membership.

In support of my first proposition, I observe, that

God had a church under the Old Dispensation.

This is almost too evident to require proof, and yet some of the Baptist brethren, in maintaining their system, have been driven to deny that God had even a church on earth until the day of Pentecost, or until the time of John the Baptist! And was the God of heaven then without a church for the first four thousand years of the world's existence? Did he call out a chosen people and separate them to himself from all the nations of the earth? Did he often interpose for them by the most astonishing miracles? Did he raise up among them a succession of distinguished prophets and holy men, through whom he made known his will? And did he appoint for them the most solemn ordinances, directing their faith to the blood of a saviour? And notwithstanding all this, was there no church established for the glory of his name? But this sentiment so dishonorable to God; is contradicted by the New Testament. In Acts VII. 38, Stephen says, "This is he (Moses) that was with the CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS, with the ANGEL that spake to him in the mount Sinai, and with our fathers, who received the LIVELY ORACLES to give unto us."* See also Psalms XXII. 22 "In the midst of the congregation will I praise thee." What David here calls a congregation, the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews calls a church; for he quotes him as saying "in the midst of the CHURCH, will I sing praise unto thee," Heb. II. 12, Granting then, that there was a church under the old dispensation, the next question is,

How were persons admitted into that church?

How would a heathen who wished to renounce Idolatry, embrace the true religion, and enter the church of God; how I say, would such an one be admitted; and what religious rites would he undergo? The answer to this question is found in Exod. XII. 48, 49. He must be circumcised, and then he would be allowed to eat the Passover, which held about the same place in the ancient church, as the Lord's supper with us. But were his children to be left out and counted still as heathens? No; the same passage says, "Let all his males be circumcised and then let him come and keep the Passover." Thus we see that when parents were admitted into the church, their children were also admitted, and received the same religious rite with themselves.

* The word *ecclesia* here translated church, is the same which is used Acts II. 47 "and the Lord added unto the church (the ecclesia) daily such as should be saved. There can be no doubt that the church in the wilderness was a church of God, and had the best preacher the world ever saw, viz, the Lord Jesus himself, who appeared and spake to them in the form of an angel: Was that a "tumultuous assembly" in which Christ was to sing praises? It might not have been a church in which females were authorised to speak and to rule. I. Cor. XIV. 34, 35. Still however it was a church of God.

But what was the origin and design of circumcision? It was not a part of the law given by Moses; but was instituted as the seal of a remarkable covenant which God made with his church through Abraham. Of this covenant we have an account in two places; first in Gen. XII. 1. 3, when God first called Abraham and promised the blessing of a Saviour. Then in Gen. XVII, 1. 14, thirty years after, when God confirmed his covenant with the addition of some particulars, and appointed circumcision as its seal. After an attentive perusal of those passages you will be prepared for the following remarks.

1st. It included children as well as parents. "I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee" XVII, 7.

2d. It was to be an *everlasting* covenant XVII. 7. It could not be abolished with the law of Moses, from which it was separate and distinct. Gal. III. 17. "This I say that the covenant which was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law which was 430 years after cannot disannul that it should make the promise of none effect."

3. Circumcision was the first seal of this covenant XVII 11. "It shall be a *token* of the covenant betwixt me and you." Rom. IV 11. The covenant however was not dependent on circumcision for its existence; for it was made with Abraham 30 years before that seal was appointed, and consequently the abolition of circumcision far from affecting it, only left room to substitute a less painful and oppressive rite as its seal.

The import of circumcision.

Let us now consider that rite, by which infants of eight days old were recognized as members of the visible church, and see if it did not hold as high a place as baptism now does.

1. Circumcision bound those who were subjects of it, to keep the whole law. Gal. V. 3 "I testify to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law." And does baptism require more of us?

2. Circumcision was a sign of holiness of heart. Rom. II. 29, "Circumcision is that of the heart." Deut. XXX. 6. "And the Lord thy God shall circumcise *thy heart* and the *heart of thy seed*." All agree that baptism is a sign of regeneration.

3. Circumcision being a bloody rite, pointed to the blood of Christ. It was a seal of that covenant which promised the blessings of a Saviour. — Baptism directs our view to the same blood of sprinkling. Heb. X. 22, "Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water"

4. Circumcision was the "seal of the righteousness of faith." So says Paul, Rom. IV, 11. The same is true of baptism. Mark XVI. 16; "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

Such was the nature of the ordinance administered to infants of eight days old; and you cannot but perceive that if the opponents of infant baptism, had lived under the Old Dispensation, with their present views, they would have brought objections against all the regulations respecting them which were established by God himself.

From what has been said, it appears that circumcision under the Old Dispensation and baptism under the New, hold pretty much the same

place, and signified the same things, and this is plainly implied in the language of the Apostle, in Col. II 11, 12, where he brings them together, and represents the change effected by regeneration as expressed by both. Besides; the covenant, as we have shown, is still in existence. If so, it must now have a seal. This is certain if God meant his covenant to continue in force. But circumcision has been abolished, so that if it now have any seal, that seal must be baptism. If baptism be now the seal of the covenant, then it holds the place which circumcision once did. If any object to this account, because only males were circumcised, but both sexes are baptized, I answer that females, under the former dispensation, were admitted into the church by Sacrifice, or by virtue of the admission of the males. For we gather from the law, (Exod XII.) that if the males were circumcised, the females were admitted at once to the passover. But the coming of Christ, instead of abolishing the privileges of the male children, as Baptists say it has done, has only ENLARGED that privilege, by extending the seal to the other sex, so that the distinction made by circumcision is set aside in baptism. Gal. III. 27, 28, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ There is neither Greek nor Jew, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither MALE nor FEMALE for ye are all ONE in Christ Jesus."

Now there are some will tell you, that "circumcision was only a mark or badge of Jewish descent." But how opposite is this to truth; for that ordinance was by no means confined to Jews Strangers of any nation who embraced the true religion, were admitted to circumcision. Exod. XII, 48, 49. "One law shall be to him that is home-born, and unto the stranger." And if half the world had embraced the religion of Jehovah, they would have been circumcised. Some too, will tell you, that circumcision was a sign of *temporal blessings* only, particularly of a right to the land of Canaan. But was Ishmael and Abraham's servants to possess that land? Yet they were all required to be circumcised. Gen. XVII. 23. Besides look at the promise, (v. 7) "I will be a God unto thee and unto thy seed after thee." Does not this include more than the riches and honors of this world? Others again will say that the covenant only had a reference to Christ, as the seed of Abraham. And it is true it had an important reference to him, as the source of salvation, but it included all Abraham's spiritual seed, whether Gentiles or Jews as being united to Christ the head. See Gal. III. 29. "If ye are Christ's ye are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." And the seal of that covenant was applied to infants of eight days old.*

* It is objected by some, that the Old Testament church was only a typical one. But had they a typical saviour, and a typical gospel? For Paul says, the gospel was preached unto them. Heb. IV. 2. But granting it to have been a typical church, it follows that the type must be fulfilled in the gospel church, and so infants be admitted. Another objection is, that the ancient church could not have been a church of God, because there were so many corrupt members belonging to it. I answer that at the very worst time, there were 7000 that had not forsaken God. Rom. XI. 4, and I Kin. XIX. 18. Besides if this objection has any weight, it will go to destroy the Christian church, for there have been times of most awful corruption in that, as well as in the Jewish church. This however, was not the fault of the constitution which God

Having thus proved, that infants were once by the appointment of God admitted within the pale of his church, I proceed to show

II. *That they have never been excluded by the authority of Christ, or his apostles, and consequently still have the right of membership.**

That they have the same right as formerly, is evident, because the church is essentially the same now, that it was under the Old Dispensation. The rites and ceremonies peculiar to the Jewish dispensation have indeed been set aside; but membership in the church, which was constituted long before, in the time of the Patriarchs, has been left untouched, and consequently the same members are to be admitted as formerly.

Near to the apostolic age, arose a sect who held that the church under the Old Dispensation was *the church of an inferior God*; that the writings of the Old Testament, having been inspired by this inferior deity, were of *no authority* whatever; and that the Jewish dispensation was a *carnal one*. But such impious sentiments cannot be too much discountenanced. The Patriarchal and Jewish churches were essentially the same with the Christian; the church of the same God. They had the same gospel preached to them. Gal. III. 8, "Preached before *the gospel* unto Abraham." And Heb. IV 2, "Unto us was the gospel preached, as well as *unto them*."—They looked by faith to the same Saviour, and their ordinances pointed to the same blood of atonement.

The good Olive tree.

Let us hear the argument of the Apostle on this subject in the XI chapter to the Romans, where he compares the church of the Old Dispensation to a good Olive tree. The Jews, who were the natural branches, were broken off, and the Gentiles were grafted into the same stock, verses 17, 18, 19, "And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou being a wild Olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the Olive tree, boast not against the branches, but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then *the branches were broken off that I might be grafted in*. Verse 21, "If God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he spare not thee." And when the Jews shall be converted to God into what church will they be admitted? According to the Apostle, into their own church, from which they were cast out for their unbelief. Verses 23, 24, "And they also if they abide not in unbelief shall be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the Olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a GOOD Olive tree, how much more shall these, which be the natural branches be grafted into

gave his church, for holiness was as much required of persons circumcised as it is now of persons baptized.

* In saying that infants are entitled to membership in the church, we do not mean that they are to enjoy any privileges of which they are incapable; but that they have a right to the seal of membership, and that they should be placed in the nursery of the church to be trained up for God, and when they come to years of discretion, if they manifest faith and repentance, they are to be admitted to all the distinguishing privileges of Christ's family.

THEIR OWN Olive tree." It follows then, that if there was no church under the Old Dispensation, there is none at this day.

In the XXI chapter of Matth. our Saviour represents the Jewish church under the similitude of a vineyard. See verses 33—43. Our Lord declared in explanation of the parable (v. 43) that "the *kingdom of God* should be taken from the Jews, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." The expression *kingdom of God*, cannot here signify either the kingdom of *grace* or of *glory*, neither of which the unbelieving Jews possessed. It must therefore mean the church, which is his visible kingdom in the world, and the passage shows that we are introduced into the same vineyard, from which the Jews were thrust out; and are admitted into the same church, from which they were ejected.

But a perusal of the II chapter to the Ephesians, will decide this point. They had been heathens, (vs. 11, 12) But having been now brought into the church of God, they were "fellow citizens of the saints, and of the household of God, and were *built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets*, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." vs. 19, 20, not of the Apostles only but of the Apostles and PROPHETS. Could any thing be more clear as to the sameness of the Jewish and Christian churches.* See also v. 14.

We have no right to exclude infants.

This point being proved, it follows, that infants having been originally admitted into the visible church, cannot now be excluded without Divine authority for that purpose. But where in all the Scriptures, can we find such authority. Where, in his word, does the great Jehovah, tell us that though he once admitted infants to his church, to be trained up in his nurture and admonition, they shall now be admitted no more? Where I say do we find the least shadow of an authority for excluding them?—There is none either in the Old or New Testament. And what are we that we should assume to ourselves the right of dictating, as to who should, or who should not, receive the seal of his covenant? Who are we, that we should banish from the visible church those whom the God of heaven has admitted into it, on whom he has set his seal, for whom Jesus has shed his blood:—should cast them out, because according to our views, they ought never to have been received; because we happen to think that it can do no good to baptize them? What arrogance of senseless dust and ashes! Neither the Lord Jesus nor his apostles, ever excluded little children, but did the very reverse, as we shall hereafter show.

I am aware that some have urged, that the law by which infants were admitted to the church, is so old as to be out of date. But is the authority of the laws of God to cease when they become old? Is it right for a man now to marry his own sister, because the law prohibiting such mar-

* The objection that infant membership rests on the same foundation with tithes, &c. displays great ignorance. For infant membership was established by the covenant made with Abraham 400 years before the political constitution which Moses gave the Jews, and was entirely a distinct thing, as the Apostle argues in Gal. III. 17.

riage is 3,500 years old? And will the authority of the New Testament be set aside when it becomes old? No brethren The laws of God are not in the least degree impaired by their antiquity. It requires the same authority to set them aside that first enacted them. Such as have not been repealed by the Lord himself, must continue in force while the church exists. And here we may at once perceive the reason why it was not necessary that the Lord Jesus should give the Apostles an express command to baptize infants. For as he made no change as to membership of the church, they perfectly understood that no change in that respect was to be made by them. The church being the same under the *new* dispensation as under the *old*, and baptism being substituted for circumcision as the seal of the covenant, it followed as a matter of course, that infants being still members of the church, were to be baptized. And an express command from our Saviour to that effect, would have been as needless as an express command to admit females to the Lord's table. Neither the one nor the other was at all necessary, for those who being Jews as the Apostles were, knew well, of whom the visible church was composed. And hence when the Apostles and elders at Jerusalem in full assembly, decided that the seal of circumcision was set aside, (Acts XV. 23—29) instead of making any change in respect of infant membership, they left it untouched, a striking proof that they intended it to remain.

And yet we hear persons say "show us in the New Testament an express command to baptize infants. No matter what the Old Testament says about infant membership if we cannot find a *Thus saith the Lord* for it in the New, they must be excluded. The folly of this reasoning is easily exposed. Let us suppose that a lawyer, in endeavoring to deprive children of the right of inheritance, should present the following argument to the court. "It is true that children were once permitted by the laws of this commonwealth, to inherit the estates of their parents. But those laws were enacted many years since. Show us that such laws were passed during the last session of the legislature. If there is no law in so many words among the acts of the last session, children are to be excluded, and are no more to inherit from their parents." Could any thing be more perfectly ridiculous than such an argument? Yet it is as good as the argument of those who plead for the exclusion of children from the church, because there is no command in so many words, in the New Testament to baptize them.

Besides; this kind of reasoning will exclude females from the Lord's supper. There is no express command, in all the New Testament, to admit females to that ordinance. You may search from the beginning to the end and you will find none.* Their right to the communion is undoubted, but how do we prove it. We show that by the command of God they were formerly admitted to the Passover, and that the church of God is ever co-

* Some Baptist writers think that they can find an "explicit warrant" for female communion in 1 Cor. XI. 28. "Let a man examine himself." For the Greek word *anthropos*, say they, being of the common gender, denotes both men and women. But Mr. Edwards has produced nineteen instances in which *anthropos* denotes the male, in distinction from the female sex, as Mark X. 7, "For this cause shall a man [*anthropos*] leave father and mother and cleave unto his WIFE," so that their *explicit warrant* vanishes into air.

essentially the same; and as the Lord's supper now holds the place in the church which the Passover did, no one has a right to exclude them from that ordinance. And we have precisely the same kind of proof for infant baptism. So that if a person should rise up and debar all females from the Lord's table, because no express command can be found in the New Testament for their admission, he would stand just on as good ground as those who, for the same reason exclude, children from the visible church.

LETTER IV,

Infant Baptism Continued.

The arguments from the New Testament.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN:

We would not have you suppose that there is no evidence for infant baptism in the New Testament, for there is enough; as much as might be expected. But even if there were none, that circumstance would not authorize us to exclude infants from the seal of membership. For I have shown in my last letter that God once admitted them to his visible church, and that their right of membership has never been since taken away; and of course it remains the same under the new as under the old dispensation. But if infants now have the right of membership they must be baptized. But let us proceed to the New Testament, and see if it does not furnish evidence of the right of infants to baptism.

Little children belong to the kingdom of God.

I shall first refer you to Mark X. 13—16, "And **THEY BROUGHT young children** to him that he should touch them, and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it he was much displeased, and said, suffer the **LITTLE CHILDREN** to come unto me and forbid them not, for **OF SUCH** is the kingdom of God."

Here let me remark, that our Saviour speaks of children too young to come to him of themselves, for these were brought to him. And "Jesus took them up in his arms" (verse 16) And the parents must have been believers in Christ, or they would not have brought their children to him for his blessing.

"But why," it is asked, "is it not said that Christ baptized them." I answer for two good reasons. First, because Christ never baptized any himself, either adults or infants. Secondly, because Christ had not yet instituted his baptism. The Gospel dispensation was not fully opened until af-

ter his death. It was not till after his resurrection from the dead that he gave the command to baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Until the death of Christ circumcision was the seal of the covenant, and these children had doubtless received that seal and had been thus dedicated to God by their parents.—These are ample reasons why it was not said that Christ baptized them.*

Observe the action of our Lord on this occasion, "he put his hands on them and *blessed them*." You often hear the question "what good can it do to bring infants to Christ?" The Lord Jesus as if to stop all cavilling on the subject, pronounces his blessing upon them. And would he have blessed those who were *incapable* of a blessing?

Observe too, the declaration he makes respecting them. "Suffer them to come unto me and forbid them not." The disciples had opposed the parents when bringing their children to him. But we are told Jesus was displeased, much displeased with them for such conduct; as he is, doubtless, with all those who would forbid pious parents to present their children to him.

"Suffer them to come unto me" says Christ "for OF SUCH is the KINGDOM OF GOD." He does not say for *adults like unto such* belong to the kingdom of God. And it would be strange if our Saviour had said *suffer little children to come to me, for that adults belong to the kingdom*. Our Saviour surely did not reason in such a way. But he says, OF SUCH is the kingdom of God. The expression *kingdom of God*, must here signify either the kingdom of glory, or the visible church. If it mean the kingdom of glory, then it follows that infants are admitted into heaven, and if so, why should we exclude them from the church on earth?—Shall we attempt to be more pure than God? If he receives them into his heavenly kingdom, shall we reject them? But if the expression mean the visible church, then it proves at once, that infants are a part of that church; the kingdom of God being composed in part at least OF SUCH, that is of little children. But if they are entitled to membership, it is evident that they are proper subjects of baptism.†

The promise to you and your children.. Acts II. 38, 39.

If the Apostles had intended to abolish the promise of the covenant, made to believers and their children the day of Pentecost would have been the very time to carry into effect their purpose; for the gospel dispensation was then fully opened. But did they do so? No, on the contrary Peter spoke to the Jews in this language, Acts II 38, 39, "Repent and

* I am clearly of opinion that the Apostles and 120 Disciples never received Christian baptism at all; and for this reason. They were admitted into the church of God by circumcision. And when the unbelieving part of the Jews, were by a Judicial stroke, cast out of the church, they remained in it and constituted the church to which the 3000 were added on the day of Pentecost. Christian baptism having been instituted after the death of Christ and consequently after the unbelieving Jews were cut off; to have administered that ordinance to the disciples would have implied that they had also been cast out of the church.

† Luke IX. 47, 48, is also a strong proof that infants are fit subjects of baptism.

be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, *for the promise is unto you and to YOUR CHILDREN.*" The promise here mentioned, does not refer to the prophecy of Joel, far back in the chapter, for that was a promise of miraculous gifts, and we are not to suppose that the whole 3000 were to receive those gifts. At any rate it was a promise urged by Peter as a reason why the Jews and their children should be baptized. "Repent" says he "and be baptized every one of you"—"for the promise is unto you and your children."

But if we refer to Gal. III. 29, when the Apostle says "If ye are Christ's ye are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise;" if we consider that they were Jews to whom Peter spake; that they laid peculiar stress upon the promise of the covenant "I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee;" that this promise was always in their minds and on their tongues; we may at once perceive what they would understand by "THE PROMISE." They would naturally refer to the Abrahamic covenant. From the time of Abraham they had been admitted into the church together with their children, and they were too tenacious on this point to give it up. And when Peter urged them to be baptized and become members of the gospel church; we may easily imagine what a struggle would be occasioned by their parental feeling. And if they had expressed them in words, they would say, "What? Shall we abandon the covenant of our God and the promise to our children? Shall we become members of the church ourselves, and leave our children with outcasts and heathens?" No, says Peter, *for under the new dispensation which is now commenced, 'the promise is unto you and to YOUR CHILDREN.' Nor is it confined to you Jews, for it is now to be extended to the Gentiles 'To all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.' The promise is so wide as to include parents and their children, and it is so long as to reach to the ends of the earth, 'to all whom the Lord shall call.' Therefore, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you.'*

Now upon the supposition that Peter meant to exclude infants from baptism, we make him argue thus—"The promise is to you, O ye Jews; therefore be baptized. The promise is also to your children, but they are not to be baptized. Or, though the promise was once to your children, it is now revoked." Surely Peter did not argue thus.*

In 1 Cor. VII. 14, Paul says, "The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife by the husband; else were your children unclean, now they are HOLY." How are the children of believers holy, unless in this sense that they are included in the covenant and are by dedication *holy to the Lord*. Those who render the passage "else were your children *illegitimate*, now they are *legitimate*" make the apostle reason most absurdly; for they make him to say, that if neither parent is a believer, the children are illegitimate!!

Household baptism.

Out of six or seven baptisms of which we have a circumstantial ac-

* I consider the assertion of some writers, that Peter meant only *full grown* children, because that small children are not capable of the blessings of the spirit, as to ridiculous to deserve a refutation.

count in the book of Acts, as occurring under the gospel dispensation, there are at least three instances in which the whole household were baptized. And this is as large a proportion as could be expected, as some of them certainly had no families. It is said of Lydia, Acts XVI. 15, "She was baptized and her *household*." Some Baptists have indeed supposed that her family must have consisted entirely of adult believers because Paul and Silas are said to have *comforted the brethren* at her house, (v. 40) But this is a great mistake. And if you look at the 3d. and 4th. verses, you will find that Timothy accompanied the apostles to Philippi; & if you read v.s. 10, 11, 12 you will see that Luke, the writer of the account, joined them at Troas; for he speaks in the first person, "loosing from Troas, WE came to Samothracia,—and thence to Philippi" From the fifteenth verse you will also learn that Luke was one of those whom Lydia constrained to abide at her house, "and she constrained US" So then it was not Lydia's children but their ministerial brethren, that Paul and Silas comforted at her house after their liberation from prison. At any rate Lydia appears to have been the only believer in the family.— It is said of her alone, "whose heart the Lord opened that *she* attended to the things spoken by Paul" (v. 14) and again "she besought us saying, 'if ye have judged ME to be faithful come into my house.'" She does not say "if ye have judged US to be faithful as though there were other believers in the family, but "If ye have judged ME to be faithful." &c.

It is remarked by Greek scholars that the word *oikos*, translated "household," in more than fifty places in the Septuagint signifies *one's children*, and that when servants and lodgers are designated, the word used is *oikia*. Now the word used to express the family of Lydia is *oikos*, and would be understood by every Jew who read Greek, to mean *her children*. And indeed the Syriac translation of the New Testament, made near the times of the Apostles, says "and when she [Lydia] was baptized and the CHILDREN OF HER HOUSE." Now if the sacred writer did not mean to intimate that her children were baptized, why did he employ a word which every Greek scholar in those days would take to mean children. It is also worthy of notice, that this same word is used in 1 Cor. I. 16, where Paul says "I baptized the (*oikos*) household of Stephanus," which means that he baptized Stephanus' children. I know that some have argued that the household of Stephanus must have been all adult believers, because we read (1 Cor. XVI, 15) that his HOUSE "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." But here the Greek word used is not *oikos*, *children*, but *oikia*, *servants*, and these, not the children are said to have ministered to the saints. So in the account of the baptism of the Jailor's family the word used is *oikos*, and it is added that "he was baptized, he and ALL HIS straightway"* Acts XVI, 33. Nor do we meet with a single instance

* It is said "that the apostles spake the word to all in the Jailor's house" but this is no more than may be said of any one who addresses a congregation in which notwithstanding there may be many infants. Nor does the 34 verse in which we are told, that "he rejoiced believing in God with all his house," prove his family to have been all believers, for the Greek word *pepisteutos*, *believing*, is in the singular number denoting that the Jailor believed himself and nothing more. "He believing in God rejoiced in or with all his house" is the true meaning.

of a person born of Christian parents, being baptized himself in adult years.

Thus you see that the New Testament furnishes sufficient evidence that children are to be baptized; and if the sacred writers had employed any other language on the subject than they did, I do not think it would satisfy our Baptist friends. If for instance, the scriptures had said that "*little children*" belong to the church, they would have argued that adult believers are sometimes called little children. If we had been told in the word, that *children have a right to baptism* they would have explained the expression of "*full grown children.*" If it had been said that *the Apostles took up little children in their arms and blessed them*, they would have contended that they must have been children of at least 10 or 12 years old -- It is not difficult to evade the force of a passage if it contain a sentiment repugnant to our feelings.

I have room only to answer a few objections.

1. It is objected that infants ought not to be bound to serve God before they can give their consent. I answer, why did God require that little children should be bound by circumcision to obey his law? Children in all countries are bound by the laws of the country before they have consented to them; why then should they not be required to obey God?

2. The question is asked "*What good can it do to baptize infants?*" In reply, I ask "*What good can it do to baptize adults?*" If it be said that adults can understand the obligation laid on them in baptism. I answer, so can parents understand their duty when they dedicate their children to God; and so can children at an early age be made to understand something of their privileges and their duty. The Apostle asks the question in Rom. III. 1 "*What profit is there of circumcision?*" And he answers the question "**MUCH EVERY WAY.**" So we reply to those who ask, what profit there is of infant baptism, **MUCH EVERY WAY,**" at least as much as there was in infant circumcision. If parents are only faithful to their children, the blessing of the covenant will descend upon them, Isa. XLIV, 3. Gen. XVII, 7. Prov. XXII. 6.

But says one, "*Why cannot I bring up my children as well without having them baptized?*" But you might as well say "*Why cannot I serve God myself without going to the Lord's table or attending to any of God's ordinances?*" One reply to all this is sufficient, "*Who art thou O man that repliest against God?*"

3. It is objected that infants cannot have faith and repentance and therefore ought not to be baptized. I answer, neither does God require faith and repentance of infants. But says the objector, "*the scriptures say 'believe and be baptized.'*" No; the exact words of the scriptures are "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.*" Mark XVI. 16. If we apply any part of this passage to infants we must apply the whole to them, and if we argue from it that they cannot be baptized for want of faith to be consistent we shall have to say that they must be damned for want of faith. But if a want of faith will not exclude them from salvation why should it exclude them from baptism. So again the scriptures say, "*If any would not work neither should he eat.*" Are we to apply this passage to infants.

and forbid them to eat because they cannot work? Neither then should we apply the other passage to the case of infants.

Circumcision, says Paul, was "a seal of the righteousness of faith."— But did Abraham object to applying that seal to his children? Did he say "Lord why should I apply the seal of FAITH to my child. Let me wait till he has faith?" No; the holy patriarch cheerfully submitted to the direction of the Lord. Let us imitate his example.

4. It is slanderously affirmed that *infant baptism is a device of Popery and was not practised by the ancient churches.** I trust however that I have shown that it was practised by the apostles; and a slight examination of history will show that it was universally practised in the succeeding ages of the church. Some Baptist writers indeed sensible that the testimony of history is against them, slander the ancient Fathers as though they were not competent witnesses in the case. But if they committed some errors in point of doctrine this would not disqualify them for testifying to facts. They could surely make no mistake as to the fact whether infant baptism was practised in their day or not; and what do they say?

Justin Martyr, who wrote forty years after the apostles, and was put to death for the gospel, says, *We have not received the carnal but spiritual circumcision by baptism, and it is enjoined on all persons to receive it in the same manner.* Here baptism is distinctly recognized as holding the place of circumcision, and as applicable to the same subjects. The same writer says that many were living in his day "who were disciplined unto Christ when they were LITTLE CHILDREN." Now infants are called disciples, Acts XV. 10, and these could have been made such only by baptism.

Tiencus who was born before the death of the apostle John, and often sat under the preaching of Polycarp, John's disciple, affords the most satisfactory proof, in his writings, of the prevalence of infant baptism, in his time.

Tertullian, who flourished about an hundred years after the apostles speaking of the celebrated passage in 1 Cor. VII. 14. "The unbelieving husband," says in explanation of it, "Neither of the parents were Christian, the children were enrolled in Christ by early baptism."

Origen, who was born eighty five years after the apostles and who was celebrated for his learning and piety, declares that "*The church had a command from the apostles to baptize infants.*" And he brings forward the practice of infant baptism in support of the doctrine of human depravity. His words are, "*Infants are baptized for the remission of sins; when if there were nothing in infant; which needed forgiveness the grace of baptism would be needless to them.*"

Cyprian, 153 years after the apostles, mentions that a question arose in his day, whether infants should be baptized on the 8th day; or whether

* Those who say that infant baptism, on the mode by sprinkling, originated from Popery cannot produce a particle of authentic history to support their assertion. The truth is, that all those sects which never submitted to the Pope's authority, but even contended against him, do now, and always did practice infant baptism. Witness the Greek or eastern church; the Syrian church and several others.

any other day would be suitable. This question was submitted to a council of 63 bishops, assembled at Carthage from different parts of the church. The decision of the council is preserved at length in the writings of Cyprian, and it is remarkable that not one of the bishops present, intimated a doubt of the propriety of infant baptism.

Passing by the testimonies of Ambrose, Chrysostom, Jerome and others we come to that of Augustine, the great extent of whose learning entitles him to credit in matters of history. He says, "*That he had never heard of any Christian, Catholic, or sectary who denied infant baptism.*" And again, "*That no Christian denied it to be useful or necessary.*"

Pelagius lived about 280 years after the Apostles and carried on a controversy with Augustine on original sin. Augustine asked him why infants were baptized if they had no sin? Pelagius did not answer this argument. At last some one charged him with denying infant baptism, as a supposed consequence of his tenet. Pelagius replied, "*That men slandered him as though he denied the sacrament of baptism to infants, and that he had never heard of any one, not even the most IMPIOUS HERETIC, that would say such a thing of infants.*"

Dr. Wall, who was a Baptist in respect to the mode, and who studied the history of infant baptism many years, thus sums up the evidence on both sides. "For the first 400 years after Christ, there appears only one man (Tertullian) who advised the delay of infant baptism *in some cases*, and one Gregory who did *perhaps* practise such delay in the case of his own children, but NO SOCIETY of men, so thinking or practising, or any one man saying it was *unlawful* to baptize infants. So in the next 700 years, there is not so much as one man to be found, who either spoke for or practised such delay, but all the contrary. And when in the year 1130, one sect among the Waldenses, or Albigenses declared against the baptizing of infants as being *incapable of salvation*, the main body of that people rejected their opinion and they of them who held it, quickly disappeared, there being no more persons heard of holding that tenet until the rising of the German antipedobaptists in 1522.

For an account of the origin of the first Baptist churches, see Mosheim's Eccl: Hist: Cent. XVI. Sect. III. Chap. III.