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TEXT BOOK  
ON  
BAPTISM.

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INFANT BAPTISM VINDICATED,

AND

DIFFERENT MODES

OF

EQUAL VALIDITY.

BY ROBERT H. CONKLIN.

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## PREFACE.



This volume is offered to the Christian public, not only in compliance with the advice and counsel of many distinguished gospel ministers of different *faith* and *order*; but also from the honest conviction, that, as the subject is presented in a somewhat *new* and *original* light, and peculiarly adapted to every class of readers, it will be useful in the church of Christ as a "TEXT BOOK ON BAPTISM." It goes into the world with the humble prayer of the author, that it *may* be useful—that it may enlighten the ignorant—guide the erring—confirm and establish in truth the doubting—strengthen the weak, and contribute to restore the entire christian church to apostolic faith and practice. It is designed *not* as a substitute for the many *valuable treatises* already in circulation; but as an *auxiliary*—a kindred, fellow laborer "Earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints."

That this volume will experience the common ordeal, to which theological controversy is subjected, is possible: nor does the author plead any "exemption act," in his own behalf, or beg an unmolested passage for his work. He simply claims such Christian courtesy and candor, as a *generous* opponent always bestows: He asks a patient, prayerful examination of the arguments submitted for the consideration of the reader, before rebuke is administered, or condemnation pronounced.

The author has availed himself of standard writers on both sides of the question; and has frequently quoted such authorities. He has endeavored *faithfully* and *impartially* to exhibit authorities, *when* presented, either by quoting the *substance*, or *language*; and if injustice has been done to any, correction will be gratefully acknowledged.

That the work has some defects both in language and style, is altogether probable ; but as the author has discovered none that materially change, or affect the sense, he commends such imperfections to the candor and forbearance of the reader.

THE AUTHOR.

JUNE 18th, 1846.

## PART FIRST.

### CONSTITUTION OF THE ABRAHAMIC CHURCH.

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ROMANS, 15 : 8.

“Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.”

OUR Lord Jesus Christ came into the world both to *fulfill* and *confirm*. Those significant rites and types of the law, that respected his character and mission, as our atoning sacrifice for sin, have been *fulfilled*: while his coming also confirmed the promises made unto the fathers, of spiritual blessings for themselves—their posterity, and all the nations of the earth. Our text contemplates him in his relation to the promises. The truth of God, and the confirmation of these promises, demanded that Jesus Christ should be a minister of the circumcision; not only born in the *lineage* of the circumcision, but also a minister under that *seal* and covenant, which, in the days of Abraham became the visible *charter* and *constitution* of the church of God; and which pledged the truth of God for the confirmation of promises, extending to all the “families and nations of the earth.”

The reader will observe, that the Apostle does not say “Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision . . . to confirm *a* promise; or to confirm *the promise*.” But we find it in the plural, the *promises*. All therefore, of the promises are included; whether they relate to the coming of the Messiah, his person, or consequent blessings. Such were

the arguments addressed to the Gentile world, to prove their interest in the gospel of Jesus Christ, as may be seen in the connection.

Now, if we can find in God's Bible any compact, or covenant, that includes the very promises Jesus Christ came to confirm, then *that* compact or covenant must necessarily be the *constitution* or basis of the church of God ; and the *laws* and *usages* of the *true* church, must in substance, be learned from such covenant or constitution. If this position be not true, then, either the true church has no constitution ; or she has a constitution without spiritual promises ; and therefore without a Saviour ! Such conclusions are too wild, to find serious advocates ; hence we will now proceed to the consideration of the following propositions.

I. Circumcision was the seal of a spiritual covenant, and the initiatory rite into the true visible church of God.

II. Infants were, by Divine authority, brought into covenant relation and constituted members of the church by the same rite that constituted adults members.

These propositions, if maintained, decide questions and principles of great moment to the church of God. They involve the rights and privileges of all believers, and also the covenant relations of their offspring. Let us then in the spirit of enlightened, Christian candor investigate this subject, ambitious to know the truth, and resolved to embrace and practice the truth, however it may affect our creeds, or our standing among men. If we thus "search" after truth, our investigations will lead us *first* to God and his Bible ; and *secondly*, to give impartial weight and justice to the *opinions*, and *arguments* of men. Reader, we ask this, and no more.



I. Circumcision was the seal of a spiritual covenant and the initiatory rite into the true visible church of God.

The great question at issue between our opponents and ourselves upon this point, is, whether the covenant of circumcision was a temporal, worldly covenant; or an evangelical, spiritual covenant, promising gospel blessings. Those denominations, that maintain the Divine right of infant church membership, insist that the covenant of circumcision, was a spiritual covenant, and that its promises and provisions respected spiritual blessings. They admit that the land of Canaan, and other temporal advantages were included, but these were incidental, and among the means to consummate the great design and end of the covenant, which was the conveyance of spiritual blessings, to the seed of Abraham, and all the nations of the earth.

In opposition to these views, our opponents maintain, that the covenant of circumcision was a worldly transaction; the land of Canaan, with certain privileges and temporal advantages embraced the great design of said covenant; while if spiritual blessings were conveyed, they were incidental and did not express the great object of the covenant of circumcision. In fact, our opponents almost unanimously affirm, that God made *another* covenant with Abraham, totally distinct from the covenant of circumcision, and that the former was the charter of spiritual blessings to Abraham, and his seed, and all nations. The rite of circumcision, they maintain was not a spiritual rite, but a mark of carnal descent, and of titleship to the land of Canaan. (See Abram Booth's Views, vol. 2 : p. 250. Debate on Baptism, Campbell and McCalla, p. 174, 175.)

The careful reader will readily perceive that these distinct and totally different views of the covenant of circumcision

are quite essential to the support of *that* system, which denies the right of infant church membership. For in establishing the position, that "circumcision was the seal of a spiritual covenant, and the initiatory rite into the true visible church of God," we sweep from its foundation that system which rejects the doctrine of infant consecration under the Abrahamic covenant. We also prove that the idea of two covenants, is an absurdity, by demonstrating the spiritual character of the covenant of circumcision; because our opponents will not be so inconsistent as to affirm that God made two *spiritual* covenants with Abraham. The reader, therefore will discover the necessity of clearly delineating the character of the covenant of circumcision. But before entering upon this subject, we wish to call the attention of our readers to some general views of the constitution of the church.

#### CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH.

1. To organize society, civil or religious, some compact or constitution is necessary, as the basis of such society. The very word *organization*, involves the idea of some arrangement or agreement, expressed or understood, which constitutes the bond of union, and forms a rule of action for such organization. When men unite for purposes of government, or any other object, a constitution is the preliminary measure—it is laying the corner-stone, or the foundation upon which the whole superstructure must rest. If you would learn the character and design of such society—the conditions of membership, the privileges, duties, and responsibilities of its members, go to the constitution. This position is so obvious, that argument seems unnecessary. Our relations as citizens of America, in every form, illustrate and inculcate this truth. Are you a foreigner, and would you

become a naturalized citizen of this Republic? You must swear to support the constitution. Would you exercise the duties of an officer under our government? You must first swear to support the constitution.

So in the Divine administration. When God organized his church in the family of Abraham, a covenant or constitution was necessary; and God accordingly made an *everlasting covenant* with Abraham and his seed. We say constitution or covenant, not because we mean to affirm that the two words mean precisely the same thing under all circumstances. But the covenant of circumcision, as we shall endeavor to prove, was emphatically the constitution of the Church, since without compliance with the conditions of that covenant not a member of Abraham's family could enjoy the blessings or privileges promised. Yes; God and his people must treat him as an *alien* and *foreigner* because he had not subscribed and sworn to support the constitution of Israel. Hence, God ordained that the "uncircumcised soul should be cut off from his people," as a covenant breaker, or one who would not keep covenant with God. And that covenant, as we shall prove, bound every man, who accepted its conditions, to worship the God of Abraham, and maintain the ordinances of the true religion. In other words, it bound him to obedience, perpetual and perfect.

Again: The constitution or covenant of the Abrahamic church, defined the conditions of membership, the duties and privileges enjoyed and imposed—all clearly set forth and enforced by considerations as imperious and weighty, as the authority of God and endless destiny of man could make them. Will our opponents take the singular position that the church in Abraham's day had no constitution? We think not, unless they maintain the equally absurd sentiment,

that a constitution is not essential to the organization of *any* society.

2. The reader must not *infer* the revision or repeal of the constitution of the church. We should remember, that the revision or repeal of a law, must be as explicit and unequivocal as the enactment. The power that framed the constitution must revoke it, before it ceases to be obligatory. Multitudes are misled and fall into error for the want of information and proper instruction upon this point. They read the New Testament and discover that changes have occurred in the old dispensation, hence infer that the constitution of the church is altogether new, and must bear date from the introduction of the Christian dispensation. Such individuals are guilty of great impropriety, in looking for a new constitution for the church, simply because certain rites and ceremonies, once typical, have been fulfilled, and consequently given place to others. What would be thought of the intelligence of a lawyer who should infer the repeal of the constitution of the State of New York, because in the year 1830 the State published the "Revised Statutes?" A school boy would point such a lawyer to the history of the State, not to look for "Revised Statutes," but to find a public, formal repeal of the constitution. And such a public, formal repeal of the constitution of a State, would be resolving it into the original disorganized elements.

So in the constitution of the church; a change of dispensations may be a simple revision or change, in rites and ceremonies that does not affect the constitution. The apostle Paul, speaking in Heb. 9: 9, 10, of those very rites and ceremonies, declares they were "imposed until the time of reformation." Now reader, mark, a "time of reformation" does not imply destruction; or any fundamental change in a church; but simple improvement and greater purity of

character. The repeal of the constitution of the church would necessarily involve the disorganization of the church. A change of such magnitude—revolutionary, or rather disorganizing the church of God, would not be a private act—a “thing done in a corner.” Where then we inquire, is the public, formal act of repealing the *old* constitution, and ordaining the *new* as the present charter of the church? Let the candid reader be consistent and demand chapter and verse—a “Thus saith the Lord,” before he abandons that constitution or covenant, which God ratified with his ancient Israel. Where is the act recorded?

There is a law maxim, which applies to the subject now under consideration with peculiar force. *Lex stat dum ratio manet*, i. e., The law stands while the reason remains. This law principle is emphatically true not only in its application to human government and laws, but also in the divine administration. We might suppose *men* guilty of the folly of changing constitutions and laws, while the reasons for their adoption originally, still remained; but shall we impute such weakness to Him, who is the “same yesterday, to-day and forever?” Therefore, if our opponents maintain that the original constitution of the church is abolished, let them prove, that the reasons for that constitution no longer exist, and that human society, our relations to God and man, have so materially changed, that the church of God demands a *new* constitution: Or let them furnish unequivocal evidence of a change of her constitution, and we will be satisfied, that in the Divine mind, the reasons for such a change existed. We hold ourselves responsible for the proof, that God gave the Abrahamic church a constitution, defining the conditions, privileges and duties of membership; while the labor of proving the repeal of that constitution, is the task of objectors.

The reader guided by these general principles, which we conceive to be sound and logical, will find the course of investigation simple and easy. He is not on a tour exploring mythologies, and consulting strange oracles, whose mysterious and doubtful language only adds obscurity to darkness. But to understand the laws and usages of the church of God, he goes to her organization and consults her constitution with the honest inquiry, what does *that* teach? What were the conditions of admission *then*? Who were received into covenant relation *then*? What were the rites and duties, the privileges, promises, and responsibilities *then*? Now the reader is prepared to consult the history of the church and see if her constitution has been revised or repealed; and if so, what changes have occurred, and what reasons have existed for such changes. Hence, the reader does not commence the study of inspired history, where inspired history ends. No: the Old Testament—God's earliest and *first* revelation to man; is his *first* lesson; and, instead of beginning, he *ends* with the New Testament—God's last revelation to man.

Commencing with the New Testament, the study of the constitution, and history of the church, is about as wise, and philosophical, as it would be, to commence studying the political history of the United States, by an examination of documents and papers relating to the acts of the 27th Congress. Or seek to know the occasion of the American Revolution by consulting the Articles of Peace ratified after the war. Would you reason intelligently upon this point, read all that God has revealed.

We are now prepared to analyze the constitution or covenant of the church, and ascertain its true character, both in relation to its designs and provisions. This covenant is found in the 17th chap. of Genesis, and is called "the cove-

nant of circumcision," because the rite of circumcision was the appointed sign and seal of God's covenant with his people. But before quoting the language of this covenant, we will state our positions, that the reader may compare them with the proof as we proceed, and judge for himself, of the relevancy and conclusiveness of the testimony or arguments adduced.

Our general proposition affirms that "circumcision was the seal of a spiritual covenant, and the initiatory rite into the true visible church of God." This proposition presents three distinct, leading ideas, which we will consider separately.

1. The covenant of circumcision was a spiritual covenant, and the *only* covenant God ever made with Abraham.

2. Circumcision was a spiritual rite, had a spiritual signification and referred to spiritual blessings.

3. The rite of circumcision, was the rite of initiation into the true visible church of God.

The reader will discover, that we have stated our positions strong and distinct. We can see no sophistry to mislead, or ambiguity to shield us from the attacks of an opponent. We desire to submit our positions to the ordeal of criticism and sound logic. Our object is not victory, but truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. He, therefore, who convinces us of error deserves our warmest gratitude.

#### COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION.

1. The covenant of circumcision, was a spiritual covenant and the *only* covenant God ever made with Abraham.

Gen. 17 : 1—14. "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto

him, I am the Almighty God, walk before me and be thou perfect.

2. 'And I will make my covenant between me and thee and will multiply thee exceedingly.

3, 4. 'And Abram fell on his face : and God talked with him saying, As for me, behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

5. 'Neither shall thy name be any more called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham ; for a father of many nations I have made thee.

6. 'And I will make thee exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

7. 'And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee, in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

8. 'And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger—all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession : and I will be their God.

9. 'And God said unto Abraham, thou shalt keep my covenant, therefore, thou and thy seed after thee in their generations.

10. 'This is my covenant which ye shall keep between me and thee, and thy seed after thee : Every man child among you shall be circumcised.

11. 'And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.

12. 'And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger which is not of thy seed.

13. 'He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money must needs be circumcised ; and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.



14. ‘And the uncircumcised man child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people ; he hath broken my covenant.’”

If the reader has carefully marked the language of this covenant, he has been impressed with the peculiar energy and force of expression. It bears the impression of some legal instrument, drawn by a master hand, and where *technicality* and repetition were essential to prevent mistake and perversion. How beautifully it answers to the language in 2 Sam. 23 : 5. “Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, *ordered* in all things and *sure*.”

God introduced the subject, at this time, to Abraham, in a most solemn and impressive manner : “I am the Almighty God : walk before me and be thou perfect.” The same sentiment is expressed, and in similar language, by our Saviour in his Sermon on the Mount. Math. 5 : 48. “Be ye therefore *perfect* even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”

Now, the great question, and first to be decided, is whether the covenant of circumcision was a spiritual covenant ; or a temporal, worldly transaction. Did it embrace spiritual, gospel blessings, as the great design of the covenant ; or distinguished temporal advantages ? While it included several objects, still there must have been some great leading design in the covenant, unless God acted upon this occasion without any particular design.

1. The design and object of the covenant was to set apart and constitute Abraham and his seed, the people of the living God ; we find this expressly affirmed in the 7th verse. “And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, *to be a God* unto *thee* and to *thy seed* after thee.” Now if establishing a covenant with Abraham and

his seed, to be a God unto him and his seed, did not set them apart, and constitute them, the people of the living God, then human language cannot express that relation.

2. This covenant required perfect obedience—First verse “I am the Almighty God, walk before me and be thou perfect.” The gospel can only say “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” A *new* covenant if given could only say, Walk before me and be thou perfect. The question is not whether Abraham and his seed *were* perfect ; but did the covenant *demand* perfect obedience. So with the gospel. What does it require ? In due time we will give ample proof upon this point.

3. This covenant promised spiritual blessings to Abraham and his seed, and to the nations of the earth, through Abraham. In the 7th verse God promised to be a God unto Abraham and his seed after him : and in the 8th verse, he declares “I will be their God.” Reader, can there be a more comprehensive promise, than “I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee ?” Here, Jehovah, in covenant appropriates himself, with his infinite fullness to his covenanting people. The promise “I will be *your* God,” includes all, both for time and eternity. The reader will observe, that the promise to Abraham’s seed, is in the same unqualified and unlimited sense, that it is to Abraham, himself ; “I will be a god unto *thee* and to *thy seed* after thee.” Now if God, in a covenant sense became the God of Abraham and his seed, then to whom did those “promises made unto the fathers,” relate—promises which Jesus Christ, the minister of the circumcision, came to confirm ? “But where” says the reader “is the promise of spiritual blessings to the nations of the earth ?” Answer : In Gen. 17 : 4, 5. “As for me, behold my covenant is with thee, and *thou shalt be a father of many nations*. Neither shall thy name any

more be called Abram ; but thy name shall be Abraham, for a father of many nations have I made thee." Now this promise we affirm relates to believers, of all nations, and in every age of the world. Let our reader remember this, until we give the proof. If we *fail* of proving it, we promise to abandon the whole argument. But if we *do* prove it ; *then* beyond all controversy the covenant of circumcision included promises of spiritual blessings to all the nations of the earth. On this point we defer proof until we can present it in connection with the objection of our opponents.

4. The covenant of circumcision also promised, to Abraham and his seed, temporal blessings. But as our opponents maintain that temporal advantages were the *chief* blessings of this covenant, proof is wholly unnecessary. We shall show, however, in the progress of this discussion, that so far from being the *chief* blessings of this Covenant ; they were only incidental, and necessary to the accomplishment of those promises that respected spiritual blessings.

5. The blessings of this covenant were conditional. Abraham and his seed, and servants bought with his money, and thus coming under his jurisdiction, must receive the seal of God's covenant, and embrace the true religion. Hence "The uncircumcised soul shall be cut off from his people." God designed to separate from the world, "a *peculiar* people, a *holy* nation ;" therefore Abraham must not keep a servant, unless he would embrace religion, by entering into covenant with God.

Some have supposed, that these servants were circumcised upon the ground of Abraham's faith, and that they were neither voluntary or had any voice in the matter. Our Baptist brethren sometimes flourish a kindred argument or objection with some success. "Why," say they, "do you not baptize your servants or domestics, as well as your children,

if Abraham's covenant, and example is your guide?" But the idea that Abraham's servants were not voluntary, and cordial in receiving the seal of the covenant, is grossly absurd, when viewed in the light of facts.

1. In Gen. 14 : 14, we find that Abraham could arm 318 servants born in his house. Did he *compel* them all to receive the rite of circumcision ? Let the objector believe it, if he can !

2. The objection is an implication of Abraham's character. As if Abraham, the father of the faithful, and friend of God, would so shamefully neglect the religious instruction of his servants that they were ignorant of God and his covenant ! In the very next chapter, 18 : 19, we find God's opinion concerning Abraham : "For I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and *they shall keep the ways of the Lord to do justice and judgment ;* that the Lord may bring upon Abraham, that which he has spoken of him." With such testimonials of character, and such an endorser, who can doubt the existence and practice of the worship of the true God in Abraham's family, and among his servants ; even before the covenant of circumcision was given. It would be strange indeed, if a man so pre-eminently devoted to God, as was Abraham should neglect the religious instruction and souls of his numerous servants. Yes : glowing with zeal for the worship of God, and exhibiting a faith without a parallel in the history of the world, yet leaving multitudes in his employ, and under his jurisdiction, in a state of ignorance and heathenism. No : reader, the illustrious Abraham was guilty of no such barbarous inconsistency. His character is a pledge to the world, that every adult servant was carefully instructed into the nature and design of God's covenant, and then voluntarily received its initiating seal.

There are two instances on record, ever memorable in the history of Abraham, where the covenant is referred to, which deserve some attention. These instances exhibit God's confidence in Abraham, and Abraham's confidence in God. The first refers to the destruction of Sodom. Gen. 18 : 17, 18. "And the Lord said, shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do ; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him."

The other instance is in connection with the offering up of Isaac on Mount Moriah ; an event that signalized the faith and obedience of Abraham and commended him as the example of the world. Gen. 22 : 15, 16, 17, 18. "And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, by myself have I sworn saith the Lord, for, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing, I will bless thee, and in multiplying, I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore, and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemy. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice."

In the latter instance we find the *oath* of God connected with the promise. That the reader may have no doubts in relation to the spiritual character of this covenant, we will now refer him to Paul's opinion. Heb. 6 : 13, 14, 17, 18. "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, surely blessing, I will bless thee, and multiplying, I will multiply thee . . . . Wherein God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath. That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we

might have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."

The "two immutable things," were the *promise* and *oath* of God, by which the covenant received the strongest possible confirmation. The reader will observe, that while the word "covenant" does not occur in the passage, still the very blessings named and promised in the covenant of circumcision in Gen. 17, are mentioned in connection with the oath and promise of God. Let the reader satisfy himself by turning to those passages of Scripture.

#### COVENANT CONFIRMED WITH ISAAC.

The covenant of circumcision, so important to the seed of Abraham, we find confirmed with Isaac, and afterwards with Jacob. Gen. 26 : 2, 3, 4. "And the Lord appeared unto him (Isaac) and said, go not down into Egypt : dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of. Sojourn in this land ; and I will be with thee, and will bless thee : for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries ; and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father ; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

#### CONFIRMED WITH JACOB.

Gen. 28 : 13, 14. "And behold the Lord stood above it, (the ladder) and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac, the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south, and in thee and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

If the reader wishes further proof, that not only temporal, but also spiritual blessings were included in those promises, we will again refer him for authority to the apostle Paul, Gal. 3: 8. "And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the *gospel* unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed." The promise, therefore, to Abraham, and confirmed to Isaac and Jacob, that in them and in their seed, all the nations, and all the families of the earth should be blessed, included the *gospel* afterwards preached to the heathen world in the days of the apostles. There is no escape from this conclusion without impeaching the testimony of Paul. But I am aware that our opponents have a very plausible method of reasoning upon this point, by which they endeavor to impair and weaken the force of the argument in favor of infant church membership derived from the covenant of circumcision. How far this method is logical and conclusive we will leave for others to decide, after presenting their arguments with our objections.

#### BAPTIST ARGUMENT.

1. Our Baptist brethren admit that God made a spiritual covenant with Abraham, which was the charter of spiritual blessings to all nations of the earth. But then, God made *two* covenants with Abraham, the first promised the Messiah, and consequently all other spiritual blessings; while the *other* was the covenant of circumcision—and was a temporal, or worldly covenant, promising the land of Canaan, a numerous posterity, and other temporal advantages. Circumcision, they maintain, was not the seal of a spiritual covenant, but a mark of national distinction, and titleship to the land of Canaan. Or as Mr. Abram Booth, a distinguished

Baptist, says in vol. 2, p. 250, circumcision was “a sign of carnal descent, a mark of national distinction, and a token of interest in those temporal blessings that were promised to Abraham.” The great Dr. Cox, of England, a learned Baptist writer, remarks, page 137, “I have already shown that the covenant of circumcision included *solely* temporal blessings, and that the rite was instituted to distinguish the Jews from other nations, and to show their title to the land of Canaan.” That all Baptists maintain precisely the same views of these authors, we do not affirm. Some think circumcision inculcated spiritual instruction, and had a spiritual signification. But all reject the doctrine that the covenant of which circumcision was the seal, embraced, as its great design and end, spiritual blessings. The idea, however, of a *worldly* covenant with a *spiritual* seal, is a theological curiosity that we will examine under another position.

Let us now attend to the argument offered in support of these views. Our opponents, in the first place direct us to Gen. 12 : 1, 2, 3. “Now the Lord had said unto Abram, get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house into a land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shall be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee, and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” In the next place, they refer us to Gal. 3 : 17. The covenant that 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.” Now, our opponents reckon back 430 years from the law, which they affirm carries us to Gen. 12 ; while the covenant of circumcision in Gen. 17, is only 406. Hence they maintain, that God made a spiritual covenant with Abraham, which is found in Gen.



12, and that 24 years after this, God made *another* and *distinct* covenant with him, and that the latter was the charter of temporal blessings to Abraham and his posterity.

The reader will see, that the fate of this argument depends very much upon chronology. We will not, however embarrass the argument by dwelling upon the difficulty and uncertainty in settling chronological dates. To save labor we will grant that the 12th chap. of Genesis carries us back precisely 430 years before the law was given on Sinai.

Now, if their chronology is *true*, then, their argument is *false*, because what is related of Abraham in Gen. 12 : 1, 2, 3, is in the *past* tense, and consequently refers to something that had already taken place. Now reader, mark the language of the passage in Gen. 12 : 1, 2, 3. "Now the Lord **HAD** said unto Abram, get thee out of thy country," &c. The text does not read, "Now the Lord said" or did say; but the Lord *had* said, sometime previous. This call to leave his country, we shall show occurred while Abraham was living in Mesopotamia, and before he dwelt in Haran.

But as this argument is vital to *that* system which requires *two* covenants, we will propose another objection in regard to its location. Mr. Alexander Campbell, who has done more than any other man in America to oppose infant baptism; in order to make the 430 years come out right, locates Abraham in Haran, at the time God gave the spiritual covenant. He says, "One (covenant) was made with him (Abram) Gen. 12, when 75 years old in *Haran*; this was 430 years before the covenant of Sinai. This is called by the apostle, Gal. 3 : 17, 'The covenant confirmed, concerning Christ,' as Macknight renders it. This covenant was afterwards confirmed by an oath, Gen. 22, when Abraham offered up his son upon the altar." (See Campbell and McCalla's Debate, p. 183.) This then is the substance of Mr.

Campbell's arguments and those with him in opinion ; God made a spiritual covenant with Abraham in Haran, 430 years before the law : (Proof, Gen. 12.) Now, reader, there is not a particle of evidence to support all this ; but expressly to the contrary. As an off-set we will give the testimony of Stephen, the martyr. Acts 7 : 2, 3, 4. "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia *before* he dwelt in *Charran* (Heb., Haran,) and said unto him, get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee. *Then* came he (after God called him) out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Charran."

That Stephen refers to the same transaction mentioned in Gen. 12 : 1, 2, 3, is certain from the fact that he quotes the very language. We now submit the testimony of Moses and Stephen in reply to the chronological argument of our opponents, based on Gen. 12. We will only remind the reader of the fact, that while our opponents base the spiritual covenant made with Abraham on Gen. 12, the word *covenant* does not occur in the chapter.

We shall now undertake to prove, that the grammatical construction of Gal. 3 : 17, does not require us to believe that God *made any* covenant, strictly speaking, with Abraham 430 years before the giving of the law. Let not the reader start lest we should come in collision with the apostle. The question is not, whether Paul's testimony is true, but whether our opponents understand his testimony. Did Paul mean to say that God made a covenant with Abraham just 430 years before the law ; this is the point at issue. We will now present this passage of Scripture first as it *now* reads ; and secondly, as it *should* read to make good grammar, supplying words understood to complete sentences.

Gal. 3 : 17. "And this I say, that the covenant that 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."

"And I say this, the law which was 430 years after (the promise) cannot disannul the covenant, which was before (the law) confirmed of God in Christ, that it should make the promise of none effect."

1. In support of the above rendering, we will present the excellent remarks of Rev. John Reed, D. D., in reply to Rev. Daniel Merrill, Baptist. Mr. Reed, as a theologian and scholar stood high in the confidence of the Fathers of New England. He says "you have told us 'that the covenant which cannot be made void, was 430 years before the law.' By fixing the date of the covenant at the very time when *the promise* was first made to Abraham, it evidently appears that you must mean the same thing by *the covenant*, which St. Paul meant by *the promise*. And although as we have observed, *the promise* and *the covenant*, were substantially the same ; yet in order to guard against mistakes very carefully, he retains the nominal and circumstantial distinction ; and accordingly speaks of *the covenant, which cannot be disannulled, and of the promise which cannot be made void*. But, neglecting the Scripture language and substituting the word *covenant* in the room of the word *promise*, you have unhappily fallen into that very error, which he endeavored to prevent.

"If the words of the 17th verse in the 3d chapter of Gal. were transposed as they ought to be, and the nominative case placed before, and the objective case after the verb, according to the grammatical order of the English language, they would stand as follows : 'And I say this, the law which was 430 years after (the promise) cannot disannul the covenant

which was before (the law) confirmed of God in Christ, that it should make the promise of none effect.

“Two prepositions are mentioned in this text, but no words expressed in order to be governed by them. It is therefore necessary, if we would make good grammar, and good sense that two words should be understood ; and it is very easy to ascertain these words. The preposition *after*, evidently has reference to the *promise*, because the law was 430 years *after the promise*. The preposition *before*, evidently has reference to *the law* because the covenant was confirmed of God in Christ 406 years *before* the law. It was confirmed as we have observed by changing the name *Abram* to *Abraham*, and by affixing the token of *circumcision* and by the *oath of God*.” (Reed’s Apology, p. 66, 67.)

The promises, therefore, preceded the covenant made with Abraham, yet formed the original elements, or basis of the covenant. Here is where our opponents have erred in relation to two covenants ; they call the promise, the Abrahamic covenant, as is evident from their using Gen. 12, to prove the existence of a spiritual covenant distinct from the covenant of circumcision.

But our Baptist brethren maintain that God made two covenants with Abraham, *one* spiritual ; the *other* temporal, and the latter was made 24 years after the former. They deny that the first covenant recorded in Gen. 12, promised the land of Canaan ; Or that the second covenant in Gen. 17, promised gospel blessings. Now these views are a necessary part of their system : For, if the covenant in Gen. 12, promised temporal blessings, then, there was *no occasion* for another covenant, consequently circumcision was the seal of a spiritual covenant ; or if the covenant of circumcision in Gen. 17, promised the Messiah, and gospel blessings, then the sentiment is exploded, that God made a distinct covenant

with Abraham found in Gen. 12. Now reader, a spiritual and temporal covenant must materially differ in their promises and blessings. We propose to compare the two covenants of our opponents and mark the agreement and disagreement that exists between them. But if an examination should prove that the supposed covenant in Gen. 12, promised substantially the *same* blessings that were promised in Gen. 17; then it must follow that, either these promises all belong to the same covenant; or God made two covenants with Abraham, both embracing the same object. Our opponents may choose their dilemma.

1. In Gen. 12, God promised Abraham, the land of Canaan, for a possession. Of course, our opponents deny this; hence we will submit proof. Now reader "what saith the Lord" in the very first verse in this chapter; "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, *unto a land that I will show thee.*" If the reader has any doubt in relation to the promise of Canaan in this verse, let him turn again to Stephen's testimony, Acts 7 : 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and particularly read the 5th verse: "And he gave him none inheritance in it, no not so much as to set his foot on; Yet he *promised* that he *would* give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child." That Stephen refers to Gen. 12, we have already shown. But we have positive evidence that God promised the land of Canaan to Abraham in the 7th verse of Gen. 12. "And the Lord appeared unto Abram and said, *unto thy seed will I give this land.*"

2. In Gen. 12 : 2, God says, "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great." This implies, that God would multiply and give him a numerous seed.

3. In the 3d verse we find the promise of the Messiah,

or gospel blessings. "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." This is the gospel preached unto Abraham, as Paul reasons in Gal. 3 : 8.

We now invite attention to the covenant of circumcision, denominated by our opponents the temporal or worldly covenant that God made with Abraham.

1. In Gen. 17 : 8, God promised Abraham and his seed the land of Canaan. "And I will give unto thee, and thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession." Both covenants therefore, gave Abraham and his seed the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession.

2. Gen. 17 : 2, 6. God promised Abraham a numerous posterity. "And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and I will multiply thee exceedingly. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee." The reader will understand this promise as equivalent to the language in Gen. 12 : 2. "I will make thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great."

3. Gen. 17 : 4, 5. God promised Abraham a numerous spiritual seal, or that he should be the *father* of believers in every age, and of all nations. "As for me behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham, for a father of many nations have I made thee."

Now reader, our position is this ; the promise, "Thou shalt be a father of many nations," was the promise of a numerous spiritual seed, and consequently included the gospel of Jesus Christ. And if it included the gospel, it was equivalent to the promise in Gen. 12 : 3. "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." It would be strange indeed if God

promised Abraham a numerous spiritual seed *without* the gospel. A covenant with such promises certainly must be a spiritual covenant; and the seal of such a covenant must be a spiritual seal.

We have already shown, that in the covenant of circumcision, God required *perfect obedience*, and promised to be a "*God* unto Abraham and his seed after him." If we now prove that this same covenant promised Abraham a spiritual seed, and constituted him the father of all believers in every age, and of all nations, then our argument will be complete, proving the sameness of the covenant that promised spiritual and temporal blessings.

We now introduce the testimony of Paul. Rom. 4: 16, 17, 18. "Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace, to the end the *promise* might be sure to the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, *who is the father of us all*, (as it is written, Gen. 17: 4, 5, 'I have made thee a father of many nations') before him whom he believed even God who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not, as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, *that he might* become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, so shall thy seed be called."

Paul therefore quotes the passage, "I have made thee a father of many nations," from Gen. 17, to prove that all believers in Jesus Christ are the spiritual seed of Abraham. I ask then, if this promise does not relate to gospel blessings, and to all the nations of the earth? Or did the apostle Paul mistake the design and application of the promise?

We have now conclusively established the position, that the promise to Abraham, "Thou shalt be a father of many nations," related to the gospel, and consequently embraced the promised Messiah. This is evident from the fact, that Paul

quotes this very promise to prove Abraham the spiritual father of all true believers. But, perhaps some one will inquire; Is it absolutely *certain*, that the promise to Abraham of a numerous spiritual seed, was a promise peculiar to the covenant of circumcision? We will answer by quoting the language of Paul upon this very point. Rom. 4: 11. "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised; that he *might* be the father of *all them that believe*." Hence it appears, circumcision was to Abraham the *seal* of a spiritual seed; he is therefore the "father of us all."

It would seem wholly unnecessary to multiply arguments to prove, that the promise in Gen. 17: 4, "Thou shalt be a father of many nations," related to spiritual blessings, and embraced all the nations of the earth. But we wish to carry our *opponents* with us in our conclusions, as well as strengthen and confirm the weak. And to show that we are not peculiar or alone in our views upon this point, we will now call in the testimony of that distinguished man—one of the brightest ornaments of the Baptist denomination, ANDREW FULLER.

Mr. Fuller says, "The first promise in this covenant is, that he shall be the father of many nations; and as a token of it, his name in future is to be called ABRAHAM. He had the name of a *high*, or eminent *father* from the beginning, but now it shall be more comprehensive, indicating a very large progeny. By the exposition given of this promise in the New Testament, (Rom. 4: 16, 17,) we are directed to understand it not only of those who sprang from Abraham's body, though these were many nations, but also of all that should be *of the faith of Abraham*. It went to make him the father of the *church of God in all future ages*. Or as the apostle calls him, *the heir of the world*. In this view he is the father of many, even of a multitude of nations.



All that the Christian world enjoys, or ever will enjoy, it is indebted for, to Abraham and his seed. A high honor this, to be the father of the faithful, the stock from which the Messiah should spring, and on which the church of God should grow. It was this honor that Esau despised when he sold his birth-right; and here lay the profaneness of that act, which involved a contempt of the most sacred of all objects—the Messiah and his everlasting kingdom.” See Expos. of Gen. 17, vol. 1, p. 774.

Mr. Fuller was not a believer in Infant Baptism. But still as a profound reasoner, he had too much discernment to overlook the spiritual character and design of the covenant of circumcision: and happy would it be for the denomination to which he belonged, if they generally entertained the same consistent views. But our Baptist brethren are prone to regard the covenant of circumcision, as a transaction of comparatively little importance to the Christian world. And such indeed it would be, provided their theory of two covenants was true. But with Abraham, the day God ratified this covenant was probably the most important day in the history of his life. And so important in the mind of God, that it was deemed the most proper time to change the name of Abram, and Sarai to more significantly express the extent, and richness of the Divine covenant, with its provisions and promises. On this day God adds the seal to his covenant, and gives the promise “Thou shalt be a father of many nations.” Abram’s name, therefore must be *Abraham*—*high* or *eminent* father, for he shall be the *father of all believers*. Sarai, notwithstanding the darkness of her prospects, shall yet be the *mother of the promised heir*, through whom, Messiah, the Prince of Life, and King of Zion, shall descend; her name, therefore must be *Sarah*, a princess—a meet compan-

ion for the *eminent* father of believers, in every age and nation.

Perhaps it is proper in this connection to offer a single reason why many mistake, or overlook the spiritual character of the promise in Gen. 17. Several reasons *might* be offered, but we will select the most charitable one for our reader. The practice of expressing the *same* sentiment in *different* language, is as ancient as the Bible. Now this is true in relation to the Abrahamic covenant, and its promises; the language is frequently varied while the sentiment is the same. In Gen. 12 : 3, we read, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." But in Gen. 17, God says, "Thou shalt be a father of many nations." Both promises present the idea, that the nations of the earth shall be blessed through Abraham.

We will further illustrate this point by quoting the examples where God repeats the promise to Abraham, of spiritual or gospel blessings. In Gen. 12 : 3, God says, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." But in Gen. 18 : 8, we read, "All the *nations* of the earth shall be blessed in him, i. e., Abraham." While in Gen. 22 : 18, God leaves out Abraham and says, "And in thy *seed* shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Now are we to infer because the language differs in every instance, therefore different blessings were promised? Or shall we conclude that all these repeated promises were so many different Covenants? Every intelligent reader of the Bible, knows that nothing is more common, than for sacred writers to use great liberty in varying the language of Scripture, provided they retain the substance. New Testament writers sometimes quote from the Old, with so little regard to words and even sentences, that it is difficult to find the original text. Even the *Moral Law*, repeated in Deut. 5, is materially changed in its phrase-

ology. But are we hence to infer that God gave Moses *two Moral Laws*? If so, why not call one *temporal*, and the other a spiritual law!

#### BIBLE VIEW.

Abraham was not only the *servant* of God, but also the "*friend of God*," hence on terms of peculiar intimacy with God. Abraham had no Bible to consult in relation to *faith* and *practice*. God was to *him* in one sense, what the Bible is to *us*—the daily *Expositor* of his own will. He therefore visited Abraham frequently to make known duty, and inform him in relation to his own purposes of mercy and grace respecting himself—his seed, and the nations of the earth. As the Bible, for the encouragement and consolation of saints, promises, and repeats the promise on almost every divine page; so God in his interviews with his friend Abraham, not only promised, but renewed and repeated over and over again those promises. Hence we find that the promise of a numerous posterity is made and repeated no less than seven times. See Gen. 12: 2—13: 16—15: 5—17: 2—18: 18—21: 13—22: 17. So the promise of the land of Canaan is made and repeated five times. See Gen. 12: 1, 7—13: 15—15: 7—17: 8. And the promise of spiritual blessings—that in Abraham and his seed all the families and nations of the earth should be blessed, is made and repeated four times. See Gen. 12: 3—17: 4—18: 18—22: 8.

Now are all these promises, made and repeated, so many covenants? There is the same evidence of *seven* covenants that there is of *two*, viz. a repetition of the same blessings, in somewhat different language? Why not, on this principle of interpretation make out a covenant for each particular specified blessing; if it is necessary to have *one* covenant for the temporal, and another for the spiritual? Why not

have a covenant for the promise of a numerous posterity? and another for the promise of a great name? Let consistency answer.

We now invite the attention of our reader to a few simple facts in connection with the history of the Abrahamic covenant, and which will illustrate the Bible view of this whole subject, and the *only* view that harmonizes with Scripture, and is consistent with itself. And this view of the subject presents precisely such a train of events, as we might suppose attendant, in the age of Abraham, and under all the peculiar circumstances, upon the giving of the covenant of circumcision.

1. In Gen. 12 : 1, 2, 3, we find recorded God's *promise* to Abraham in connection with the call to leave his country and go to a land that God would show him. This occurred while Abraham was in Mesopotamia, and before he dwelt in Haran. Nothing however is said about a covenant, nor does the word occur in the chapter. Here then is the PROMISE.

2. In Gen. 15 : 18, we find God's COVENANT with Abraham. "In that same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram." &c. On this occasion God gave Abraham a *sign*, but no *seal* to the covenant. This sign was a symbol of the divine presence passing between the divided sacrifices which Abraham had prepared.

3. In Gen. 17, the SEAL of the covenant was added, which consisted in the rite of circumcision.

4. In Gen. 22 : 16, the covenant is confirmed with an OATH. The offering up of Isaac was the crowning act of obedience in the life of Abraham : God therefore signified his approbation by adding the *oath* to the covenant.

Here then we have the whole transaction before us in the order of Bible history. 1. The *promise*. 2. The cove-

nant *without* the seal. 3. The covenant *with* the seal. 4. The *oath* of confirmation. This view of the subject resembles some business transaction between two men. 1. They meet, talk over the matter, and mutually *promise*. 2. They meet again and draw writings. 3. The contract is signed and sealed. 4. The oath is added if necessary. Now the contract is "ordered in all things and sure." See Jer. 32 : 6—12.

Now if the reader will take his Bible and turn to Luke 1 : 72, 73, he will find that Zacharias, when filled with God's spirit gave this same view of the covenant. He declares, that God fulfilled what prophets revealed, in sending his Son "To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to remember his *holy covenant*, the *oath* which he sware to our father Abraham."

We find that the inspired writers not only apply the *promise*, *covenant* and *oath* to spiritual blessings as the *fruits* of this covenant, but also to temporal blessings, thus proving that they recognized no such distinction of *two covenants* as is now maintained by our opponents. For example, Ps. 105 : 8, 9, 10, 11, "He hath remembered his *covenant*, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations, which covenant he made with Abraham, and his *oath* unto Isaac, and confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and unto Israel for an everlasting covenant, saying, unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance." That the promise and oath of God pertained to the covenant that embraced the Messiah, our opponents admit. We may then inquire, did God confirm *two covenants* with an oath? Or does the oath apply to one and the same covenant, whether temporal or spiritual blessings be mentioned? The latter is the only consistent view, and as we maintain the Bible view of this subject.

## COVENANTS: PLURAL.

There is one fact of some importance, to which we call attention, before dismissing the position that God made but *one* covenant with Abraham, and that a *spiritual* covenant. When the inspired writers speak of God's covenant with Abraham, it is *always* in the singular number, *covenant*, and *never* *covenants*.

The plural form cannot be found in connection with any thing Abraham ever did. And yet our opponents inform us, that God made two great covenants with Abraham, the first respected the salvation of the world, and the second, the rise, progress, power and glory of the mightiest nation on earth. That such *should* be the fact, and still the word *covenants* never occur in the history of events peculiar to the life of Abraham, certainly must be a phenomenon in history.

But our opponents inform us that the plural, "covenants," is found in the New Testament connected with the history of "*the fathers*," and probably alludes to the *two* covenants which God made with Abraham. True, the word *covenants* occurs three times in the New Testament; but that it refers to two covenants made with *Abraham*, is what *we* deny; and as our opponents assume this point, the labor of proof properly belongs to them. But lest the reader's mind should be in suspense, waiting for the evidence, we propose an examination of those passages. Before looking at those passages, we wish to call attention to two or three facts in relation to covenants made with Israel as a nation.

God gave the nation two important covenants. The first was the Abrahamic covenant; and the other was the Sinaic covenant, some 400 years after. The first was the constitution and charter of the church and nation, and by it Abraham and his seed entered into covenant relation with

God. While the other embraced the legal dispensation, and was added when the nation had become sufficiently powerful and numerous to possess Canaan, and maintain those rites and ceremonies, which in an important sense constituted the means of grace in the church, previous to the Messiah's coming.

These two covenants were public, formal transactions, embracing the posterity of Abraham, with servants and proselytes—all who were included in the nation. The reader will not understand us as denying that other things are called covenants, for example, the Sabbath, Ex. 31 : 16 ; but as maintaining that these were the two great covenants of the nation.

We are now prepared to examine those passages of Scripture in the New Testament which speaks of *covenants*, plural, and which our opponents employ to prove that God made two covenants with Abraham.

1. Gal. 4 : 24, "Which things are an allegory : for these are the two *covenants* ; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar." Here then, the view we have just given in relation to two covenants, is abundantly confirmed by the apostle. First : there were *two covenants*. Mark the language of the apostle, "These are *the two covenants*," as if there were *but two* covenants peculiar to the nation. Second : "One from the Mount Sinai," therefore could not have been made with Abraham, because he had been dead more than 300 years. The other covenant was made with Abraham, as the connection clearly proves, and was the charter of spiritual blessings to all the nations of the earth. The covenant "from Mount Sinai gendereth to bondage;" by which the Apostle means to represent, that the rites and ceremonies, the sacrifices, offerings and oblations of the legal dispensation, all pointing

to purity, and typical of spiritual blessings, constituted a "yoke heavy to be borne."

The covenant on *Sinai* received its fulfillment in the coming, suffering, and death of Jesus Christ; hence ceased to be obligatory. While the *Abrahamic* covenant, on which the church was founded, and which promised blessings to all nations, must continue in force until the promise is realized by all concerned or contemplated. With these facts, let the candid reader decide whether both covenants related to Abraham.

2. In the next place, we invite attention to Rom. 9: 4, "Who are Israelites to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises."

Now, reader, does Paul mean to inform us in this place, that God made two covenants with Abraham? No: he simply states that the adoption, glory, covenants, giving of the law, service of God, and promises, pertains or belonged to his brethren and kinsmen, who were Israelites. A small foundation indeed, for a weighty argument. We might leave our opponents to *prove* what they *assume*, were we disposed to ease the labor of our own hands. But in this case, we prefer exposing the groundlessness of their assumption.

(1.) We have already shown, that God gave the Israelites the Sinaic as well as Abrahamic covenant. In the language of the apostle then, we might say, "These are the two covenants, one from the Mount Sinai." Let our opponents disapprove it.

(2.) This argument proves too much. It assumes that the covenants pertaining to Israel, were all made with Abraham. This is contrary to acknowledged facts.

(3.) It must be evident to the careful reader, that the apostle is speaking in this connection of *spiritual* blessings and



privileges. But our opponents maintain that *one* of the covenants with Abraham, was a temporal, or worldly covenant. If so, would the apostle place it in the list of spiritual blessings?

But it is unnecessary to multiply arguments in opposition to mere assumptions. Minds confirmed by the latter, will not appreciate the former, however conclusive.

3. The last passage occurs in Eph. 2: 12, "That at that time ye (Gentiles) were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise." It will be remembered, that while our opponents maintain that God made two covenants with Abraham, they also argue that one was a temporal covenant. Now if the apostle in this text refers to covenants made with Abraham, then he must include the worldly covenant. But what had the Ephesians to do with this worldly covenant? Did embracing Jesus Christ interest them in the land of Canaan? Now if the language of the apostle means any thing, it implies that by embracing the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Ephesians had become personally interested in the "covenants of promise" which were peculiar to the Israelites, and to which the Ephesians once were strangers. Now from the reasoning of the apostle, one of two things *must* be true: Either the Ephesians by faith in Christ, were constituted fellow-heirs with the Israelites to their covenanted temporal blessings; or Paul had no allusion to more than one covenant made with Abraham. If our opponents say the former was true, then the temporal covenant made with Abraham required gospel faith, as the condition of an interest in the land of Canaan, therefore the covenant of circumcision included the Messiah. Either position is fatal to the argument which our opponents endeavor to build upon this text, in favor of two covenants made with Abraham: And in kindness

we would add, the effort to prove two covenants from this passage of Scripture, indicates an extreme famine of materials for argument!

### TEMPORAL BLESSINGS.

But why is the covenant of circumcision denominated a temporal covenant? The reader cannot fail to discover, that if this is the *only* covenant God gave the Abrahamic church, then the covenant relation of children is an established fact. Hence the toil to set aside the spiritual character of this covenant.

We will now pay some attention to the promise of the land of Canaan, and see if this promise is so fatal to the spiritual character of this covenant. 1. If the promise of Canaan, or temporal blessings, is evidence that the covenant is temporal, and not spiritual, then the same argument proves that the gospel is a mere temporal system, because it promises temporal blessings. That the gospel promises temporal blessings, is susceptible of the clearest proof. Matt. 6: 33. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." The things to be added, are the temporal blessings, which the Gentiles seek after. But take another passage, 1 Tim. 4: 8, "But godliness is profitable unto all things *having* the *promise* of the *life that now is*, and of that which is to come." Here then the promises of the gospel extend to both time and eternity.

Mark 10: 29, 30. "There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or *lands*, for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred-fold *now* in this time, houses, and

brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and *lands*, with persecution; and in the world to come, eternal life."

Here then, the disciple who makes sacrifice for Christ and the gospel, enjoys the promise of an hundred-fold in this world. Does this promise of temporal blessings vitiate the spiritual character of the gospel? It is absurd to talk of any covenant with the church, which makes no promises or provisions, touching the temporal circumstances and wants of God's people! That man's moral vision is truly obscure, who sees no promise in the word of God upon which to rest, when he approaches the mercy-seat with his temporal wants and circumstances.

2. But there was a peculiar urgency and necessity for the promise of Canaan to Abraham and his seed—a necessity that can be overlooked, only by the superficial. Abraham and his seed were ordained to be a "chosen generation—a peculiar people—a holy nation." How could this be accomplished without separating them from corruption and idolatry, common to all the nations of the earth! How could the service of the *Temple*, the rites and sacrifices of their religion be maintained without constituting them a distinct and separate nation; and as a nation they must have a country; God therefore gave them Canaan, the lot of their inheritance, for an everlasting possession. Even in our day, and after the gospel has reduced our system of worship to the most beautiful simplicity, separate church organization is indispensable to the maintenance of even the form of godliness. Yet some do not seem to understand the necessity for the temporal promises and provisions in God's holy covenant; hence demand *two* covenants because one promised the land of Canaan!!

3. We have already observed that the temporal blessings covenanted to Abraham and his posterity, were essential to

the fulfillment of the spiritual promise. Hence the seed of Abraham were not permitted to dwell in Canaan, until they were sufficiently numerous and powerful to conquer and possess the land and maintain that system of worship which God instituted after they left Egypt. To suppose that God gave them the land of Canaan simply to better their temporal circumstances, or to distinguish them for national power and greatness, is both inconsistent with reason, and derogatory to the character of God. When and where has God manifested so much concern for man's temporal interest as to ordain a covenant to advance or secure his worldly interest!

But that God should call in the temporal to subserve and advance the spiritual, looks wise and benevolent, and is honorable to the Divine administration. This in fact, is the great design and end of temporal blessings.

But reader, we are not left to speculation upon this subject. No: Revelation sheds its light upon our position. God brought his ancient Israel into the land of Canaan, that he *might* fulfill, or consummate his holy covenant made with his servants. This is our position. Deut. 7: 6, 7, 8, "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God. The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you because ye were more in numbers than any people, (for ye were the fewest of all people,) but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt." Here, in language most conclusive, it is affirmed that God chose the nation of Israel for himself, to be a holy people. The land of Canaan was

to the Israelites an earthly sanctuary, where they might maintain the ordinances of their religion unmolested, and in their greatest purity. Hence, after the giving of the moral, ceremonial and judicial codes, we find the nation addressed repeatedly in relation to their enlarged duties and responsibilities when in possession of the promised inheritance. For example, Deut. 6: 1, "Now these are the commandments, (moral law) the statutes, (ceremonial law) and the judgments, (judicial law) which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them *in the land* whither ye go to possess it." In the 8th chap. 18th verse, we read, "But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God; for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers as it is this day." We repeat the remark, the possession of the land of Canaan, was God's own method of separating the seed of Abraham from the idolatry and corruption common to all the nations of the earth, and of maintaining their national distinction, that they might be a chosen people, a holy nation.

But were the Scriptures silent upon this point, one fact alone should convince the most skeptical that our view is the Bible view. *Obedience* to God was the *tenure* by which Israel *held* possession of the promised land. In fact the disobedience and unbelief of the generation that left Egypt, forever excluded them from Canaan. For disobedience God sent famine, pestilence and war; they were subjected by their enemies, and sent into captivity. These are Bible facts, too numerous to need proof or admit of discussion.

We have now passed over the general argument in support of our position, that "the covenant of circumcision was a spiritual covenant, and the *only* covenant God ever made with Abraham." We cheerfully submit the evidence, and

only ask an impartial verdict. We now invite attention to our next position.

### CIRCUMCISION.

Circumcision was a spiritual rite, had a spiritual signification, and referred to spiritual blessings.

The seal of the covenant must accord with the design of the covenant itself. That the covenant should embrace one thing and its seal contemplate something else, would be indeed, a strange mixture of design in the same general transaction. The argument therefore, to prove the spiritual character and design of the covenant, must also go to establish the spiritual character and design of its seal. The two are inseparable and must contemplate substantially the same great end, as really so, as the seal of a legal instrument confirms the design of the instrument itself.

### SIGNIFICANCY OF CIRCUMCISION.

Men frequently render Divine ordinances insignificant and even contemptible, by mistaken and perverted views of such ordinances. This has been emphatically true in relation to the rite of circumcision. Hence its application and design has been not unfrequently, a matter of speculation and even ridicule with the ignorant. And is it strange that multitudes should fail to discover wisdom and significancy in the application of this seal of God's covenant, when such men as Messrs. Booth, Cox, and others, teach that circumcision was "A sign of carnal descent, a mark of national distinction, and a token of interest in those *temporal blessings* that were promised." Reader, is this all God intended by this bloody rite?

Viewed in its true Scriptural design, circumcision was richly significant and instructive ; and expressed sentiments vastly important to the church of God, previous to the coming of Messiah.

1. Its application pointed to Christ, as the *seed* of Abraham. "As concerning the flesh," Christ descended from Abraham, thus fulfilling the Divine promise, "In thy *seed* shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." There is no earthly reason why *circumcision* should be a mark of descent, of national distinction, and of interest in Canaan. God could have given a sign embracing *these* objects less delicate and more obvious. But nothing could more significantly refer to Messiah as the *seed* of Abraham, than the rite of circumcision. The covenant of God with Abraham promised the Messiah, and the seal of that covenant was a standing memorial that the promise in due time should be fulfilled.

2. As a *bloody* rite, circumcision pointed to the remission of sins through Jesus Christ, and consequently taught the necessity of a moral change, or change of heart. Hence we read of the circumcision of the *heart* ; Deut. 30 : 6, "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thy *heart*, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with *all* thy heart, and soul, that thou mayest live." What was this circumcision of heart, but regeneration, and consequent obedience to God.

3. That circumcision was a spiritual rite, had a spiritual signification, and referred to spiritual blessings, must be evident from the fact, that without obedience to God, circumcision was a nullity—or useless. Rom. 2 : 25, "For circumcision verily profiteth if thou keep the law ; but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision."

By keeping the law, the apostle certainly did *not* mean that perfect legal obedience was necessary to secure the ben-

efits of circumcision : for that would imply that all who had been profited by circumcision were perfect ; or none had ever been profited. But he *did* mean, that to be profited by circumcision, men must experience in their hearts and exemplify in their lives the thing intended and signified by circumcision : And to show the utter fallacy of all hopes based upon the mere outward rite of circumcision, he declares that without such obedience circumcision is a nullity—uncircumcision.

4. The apostle expressly declares that circumcision is a spiritual rite, and refers to a work of grace in the heart. Rom. 2 : 28, 29, “ For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly ; neither is that circumcision which is outwardly in the *flesh*. But he is a Jew which is one *inwardly* ; and circumcision is that of the *heart*, in the *spirit*, and *not* in the letter ; whose praise is not of men, but of God.”

I know not how the apostle could have more fully expressed the spiritual character and design of the rite of circumcision. He affirms that the mere outward act, in the flesh, does not constitute circumcision, i. e., does not answer what is signified, and is of no avail without circumcision of heart ; and that even a Jew, who has received the mere outward rite, without experiencing inwardly the thing signified, is not a Jew in the proper sense, because he does not live out his covenant relations.

Now reader, did the apostle believe that circumcision was a sign of carnal descent, a mark of national distinction, and a token of interest in the temporal blessings that God promised to Abraham ? Would not circumcision outwardly, in the flesh be a sign of carnal descent, and a mark of national distinction, and token of interest in temporal blessings ? How utterly at variance are such speculations with the teachings of God’s spirit.



5. We prove the spiritual character and design of circumcision by showing the spiritual benefits and blessings that it conferred upon those that received the rite. Rom. 3 : 1, 2, "What advantage then hath the Jew, or what profit is there of circumcision. Much every way ; chiefly because unto them were committed the oracles of God."

Here then we have a question, that brings out the apostle to speak of the benefits of circumcision. The reader will observe that the profit of circumcision is equivalent to the advantage of the Jew. The reason is obvious ; the covenant of circumcision was the charter of all that distinguished Israel, as God's covenant people. Hence when the apostle speaks of the distinguished privileges of his countrymen, the Jews, he mentions those privileges as synonymous with the blessings of circumcision.

But let us attend to the question before us, with the answer of the apostle. "What advantage then hath the Jew, and what profit is there of circumcision ? Answer : *Much* every way ; *chiefly* because unto them (Jews) were committed the ORACLES of God ;" i. e., the sacred, inspired writings—the Old Testament. Hence the "Law and the prophets," the knowledge and worship of the true God, was the chief blessing of circumcision. A richer gift, God never bestowed on any people, Jews or Gentiles, than to give his Bible with the religion it inculcates, as *their* religion.

But what say our opponents to the question, "What profit is there of circumcision ?" Why, the chief profit of the covenant of circumcision was the land of Canaan. Extreme liberality could only give temporal blessings as the chief benefit of a worldly covenant.

6. Another argument in support of our position, that "circumcision was a spiritual rite, had a spiritual signification, and referred to spiritual blessings," we derive from the fact,

circumcision was to Abraham a seal or pledge of spiritual blessings. Rom. 4: 11, "And he (Abraham) received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised."

Now if Abraham received the sign of circumcision, that he *might* be the father of all believers, then circumcision was to Abraham, the seal of a *spiritual seed*, as well as the seal of the righteousness of faith; could the character and design of circumcision be temporal, while it sealed such blessings to the father of believers? Or was it the seal of a mere worldly covenant, that did not embrace evangelical religion?

Before dismissing this branch of our subject we wish to call attention to a few *facts* and *reasons*, confirming our position in relation to the spiritual character and design of the covenant of circumcision, which we could not so conveniently introduce in the connected chain of Scriptural argument we have endeavored to present. We leave our reader to decide upon their relevancy, and give them just weight and measure.

#### FACTS AND REASONS.

In the discussion of any subject, few things are more essential, than to keep prominently before the mind the real points at issue. This we have endeavored to do, by repeatedly giving the substance of our proposition, and the opposing views of our opponents. Our general proposition now under discussion affirms, that "circumcision was the seal of a spiritual covenant, and the initiatory rite into the true visible church of God." Our opponents maintain in opposition to this, that the covenant of circumcision was a temporal, worldly cove-

nant ; and that the great design and end of the covenant, was the conveyance of temporal blessings to Abraham and his natural posterity. The rite of circumcision was a sign of carnal descent, a mark of national distinction, and a token of interest in the temporal blessings promised to Abraham. Of course those among our opponents who dissent from these views, we claim as allies, just so far as they agree with us. We have already considered to some extent the spiritual character and design of the covenant and rite of circumcision. We now submit our *facts* and *reasons*.

1. We would now ask the candid, did the covenant of circumcision require obedience to God, in *all* things, or only in *one* thing, i. e., circumcision ? If in *all* things, then no covenant could require more ; therefore no other covenant was necessary or admissible. But if this covenant required obedience simply in *one* thing—circumcision, then the vilest wretch could fulfill all the conditions of the covenant, and consequently, have as strong and just claims to the promised blessings, as the most devout and humble worshipper of God !

But the spirit of God has decided, that circumcision without obedience was a nullity. Rom. 2 : 25, “ For circumcision verily profiteth *if thou keep the law* ; but if thou be a *breaker of the law* thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.” Reader, did the covenant of circumcision bind Abraham and his seed to love and serve the true God ?

2. Would the sincere, truth-loving God make a temporal or worldly covenant with a people, wherein mere external obedience was required as the condition of blessings ? Obedience with the heart, is all God ever required of any people. But mere external conformity, without the heart, God never accepted from any one—it is hypocrisy. Reader, think of the gross inconsistency ! The pure God, ordaining, a

worldly covenant, promising temporal blessings, and all conditional upon compliance with an external rite.

3. It was almost 500 years after God made the covenant with Abraham, before the seed of Abraham possessed Canaan ; tens of thousands, who had received the seal of the covenant never saw Canaan. One whole generation perished in the wilderness, as a punishment for their unbelief. And yet our opponents inform us, that the land of Canaan was one of the chief blessings of this covenant—yes, circumcision was a token of interest in Canaan ! We leave those most interested to reconcile these facts with their position.

4. The Jews made proselytes from other nations. They were exceedingly zealous in making proselytes, as our Saviour shows, when he declares that they would “Compass sea and land to make *one* proselyte.” Circumcision was indispensable, and there could be no male proselyte without submitting to the rite. Now we would ask, did the Jews make proselytes to their land, and temporal blessings : or to their religion ? Did each proselyte take upon himself the vows of God, and bind himself to the worship and service of God forever ? Let reason answer.

Again ; whenever a Jew bought a male servant, he must be circumcised. But did that constitute him an heir to the land of Canaan ? Glorious bondage ! worthy of patriarchal days ; a subjection that elevated the servant to an equality with the original heir of the soil. But reader, the simple fact that Abraham and his seed were set apart as a holy nation, and therefore every servant must enter into covenant with God, explains this matter infinitely better, than that hazy speculation that ascribes to God’s covenant a character it never bore, and a design it never contemplated.

6. From Acts 21 : 20, 21, it is certain that multitudes of the believing Jews continued, for a time, to circumcise their

children, and also insisted that the believing Gentiles should circumcise their children. Now, did the believing Jews urge circumcision as a *religious* rite? Or as necessary to constitute the Gentiles fellow-heirs with themselves to the land of Canaan?

Did they consider circumcision, a sign of carnal descent, a mark of national distinction, and a token of interest in certain temporal blessings, and still urge the Gentiles to practice it? Did embracing the Lord Jesus Christ, involve, in their opinion, the duty of coming under this temporal covenant? But on the ground that the Jews considered the covenant of circumcision the charter of their spiritual blessings, it is very easy to understand, why they should insist, that Gentiles believing in their Messiah, and sharing their spiritual blessings, must also receive the seal of their covenant.

7. One of the most popular and common arguments of our opponents is, that circumcision was "identified with the law of Moses," and was a part of the ceremonial dispensation, therefore was done away by the coming of Christ." Hence they argue, that God gave the church a "new covenant," under the gospel dispensation.

Now reader, this argument is fatal to all their efforts to prove the covenant of circumcision, a temporal covenant; unless they can also prove, that the law of Moses, and consequently the whole ceremonial dispensation was temporal in its character and design; and even then, there are difficulties insuperable, and fatal to their theory.

1. How could the coming of Christ affect a worldly covenant when it had no relation to him? Did the coming of Christ render null and void, the divine contract, which gave Israel the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession? Did the coming of Christ abolish the mark of national distinction, and the sign of carnal descent; so that the seed of

Abraham were no longer to be a separate nation, or the natural descendants of their illustrious sire, God's ancient friend ? Strange indeed !

2. But how happened it, that the bloody rite of circumcision, the seal of a temporal covenant, found a place among the bloody rites and sacrifices of that ceremonial, which had its fulfillment in the suffering and death of that Saviour, who was God's Lamb—slain a sacrifice for sin ? - If we take the position of our opponents, that the covenant of circumcision, was a temporal covenant, mystery and darkness multiply as we advance with this important train of reflections, and no solution is even plausible or probable. Must we embrace such a system ? No.

But reader, the views we have presented in relation to the covenant of circumcision, when applied to this same subject, are harmonious, and consonant with reason and Scripture. We maintain that the covenant of circumcision was a spiritual covenant, and the rite of circumcision, by its application showed that "as concerning the flesh Christ" should be of the seed of Abraham, and as a *bloody* rite, it pointed to the remission of sins, through Jesus Christ, as did also the bloody rites and sacrifices of the ceremonial law.

Hence, when Jesus Christ, the promised seed came, and offered himself, the sacrifice for sin, bloody rites, that had long typified this event, were fulfilled and consequently ceased to be obligatory. Circumcision therefore had its fulfillment in the coming of Christ, both with respect to the seed of Abraham and the shedding of blood.

But a serious defect in the reasoning of our opponents is discovered in this fact ; They conclude that the *covenant* is done away, because the *seal* is fulfilled. Reader, must not the covenant itself be fulfilled, before it is done away ? It promised, that Abraham should be the father of all believers,

and in him and his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Has this been all fulfilled? The argument of our opponents under this head, goes to charge upon God a violation of compact, i. e., of doing away his covenant before his promise has been performed. That covenant was not only sealed, but also confirmed by the *oath* of God.

The altering or changing of the seal does not necessarily change in substance, or do away the constitution of the church, any more than changing the seal of the State of New York, would change or do away the constitution and laws of the State. The object of the *seal* and *oath* is to *confirm* the promise, and not to *create* the promise. The seal of circumcision added no new promises to the covenant, although beautifully significant of blessings promised. When therefore the Son of God came, and by the sacrifice of himself fulfilled the bloody ritual, the blessings of God's covenant continued to flow in the direction of the Divine promise, and new memorials sealed and signified what had been signified by blood, before the great atonement.

This view of the covenant of circumcision not only explains why the rite of circumcision should cease when the ceremonial law was fulfilled, but also answers some labored objections against the spiritual character of circumcision, because Paul declares it necessary to keep the law if circumcised. Gal. 5 : 2, 3, "Behold I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law." But what law does the Apostle refer to? If the *moral* law, then the covenant of circumcision required sinless obedience. Did God promise Abraham and his seed blessings upon this condition? But if the Apostle refers to the *ceremonial* law, then he understood the covenant and rite of circumcision as we do, as referring to Christ and

gospel blessings ; hence to rely upon bloody rites, that pointed out a Saviour to come, would be a virtual denial that he had come. If therefore the Galatians insisted upon circumcision, which referred to Christ, yet to come, they must go back to the ceremonial law, for they were debtors to that law until Christ actually came.

But this argument also reflects fatally upon the theory of our opponents : If circumcision belonged with the ritual law, then it as certainly referred to Christ, as did any victim on Jewish alters slain. Let our opponents avoid the conclusion.

Perhaps it is due, to make a remark in relation to the connection of circumcision with the ceremonial law. Some seem to reason as if circumcision was instituted at the same time, and constituted a part of the ceremonial law. Against this mistake the Saviour carefully guarded his hearers. John 7 : 22, " Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers) and ye on the Sabbath day circumcise a man." Now circumcision was not of Moses, it was instituted more than 400 years before the ceremonial law, when Abraham and his seed were set apart to the service of God. It was never recorded as a part of the ceremonial law. It was a bloody rite administered but once upon the same subject ; requiring *human* blood gave it more solemn importance than any other bloody rite. True, it found a place among Jewish rituals, as it necessarily must, being obligatory upon the nation.

We have now presented our Scripture argument, and our *facts* and *reasons* in support of the Scriptural character and design of the covenant and rite of circumcision. We have many more things to say, but it must be introduced in the progress of our argument as collateral, while we now invite attention to our third position, under the first head.



## INITIATION OF MEMBERS.

3. The rite of circumcision, was the rite of initiation into the true visible church of God.

Little need be said upon this point. If God made a covenant with Abraham and his seed, which required holiness of heart and life; and promised all the spiritual blessings enjoyed by the people of God, then all who embraced that covenant, possessed the true religion, and became members of the visible church. This was true of Abraham and his seed; they formally entered into covenant with God, and were thus set apart and constitute the *people of God*. We do not introduce a train of arguments to prove that the entire nation of Israel embraced the covenant of circumcision, and that every male servant and proselyte also received this rite. He that is ignorant of this fact, needs the Bible instead of arguments.

Now reader, if calling a people out from the idolatry and corruption of the world; entering into solemn covenant with them; and binding them to love and serve God with a perfect heart; choosing them for a peculiar, holy nation; and giving them the ordinances and services of the only true religion; I repeat, if all this did not constitute them the true church of God; then God never had a church; for more could not be promised or required.

But will our opponents maintain that God had a church *in* the nation, including a *select* portion of the nation, but not the nation itself? If so, let them point us to the distinct covenant of that church, and the distinct rites and forms and worship of that church, in which the nation of Israel did *not* engage. Let them inform us when that church was organized, and who were its members in distinction from the nation.

That circumcision was the rite of initiation into the true visible church, must be evident from the following considerations :

1. The same day that God made his covenant with Abraham, he ordained that the uncircumcised soul should be cut off from his people as a covenant breaker, Gen. 17 : 14, "And the uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people ; he hath broken my covenant."

2. God excluded the uncircumcised person from the ordinances of the church, Ex. 12 : 48, "For no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof," i. e., of the passover.

3. God excluded the uncircumcised from his sanctuary, Ez. 44 : 9, "Thus saith the Lord God ; No stranger uncircumcised in *heart*, nor uncircumcised in *flesh* shall enter into my sanctuary," &c.

The first reason proves conclusively that circumcision was a condition of church membership, and the rite of initiation.

How could an Israelite be a member of the church, if cut off from the people of God ? The text does not teach that the uncircumcised soul should be excommunicated or turned out of the church ; but cut off from his people. He could not belong to the nation, God had chosen for himself, without entering into covenant with God, and becoming a member of the visible church : and as the neglecting sinner is now considered a rejector of the gospel, so for a descendant of Abraham to neglect circumcision, was equivalent to covenant breaking.

By circumcision, therefore, persons were admitted into covenant with God and his people, and in that relation enjoyed the blessings promised in God's holy covenant. We do not assume that no other qualification but outward circumcision was necessary to entitle them to the ordinances of re-

ligion ; but this was indispensable. In another place we shall speak of the discipline of the church, and of offences for which individuals were excluded from church ordinances and privileges.

It is sometimes objected that multitudes in the nation were destitute even of the form of piety, and that the grossest abominations were frequently practiced. The question is not whether the nation or a part of the nation *exemplified* religion, but whether they *professed* it, and were in covenant relation with God. Who does not know that it is common in our day, for professors of religion to outrage every principle of Christianity ? But what would be thought of that candor, or intelligence which should reason against the existence of an evangelical church, because certain covenanting professors were delinquent ?

Perhaps it is due in this connection to offer some reasons for the opinion that the entire nation of Israel were constituted the church of God. Various views have been entertained upon this subject, by our opponents. Mr. Carson admits that the "church of Israel was the nation of Israel," but then it was a kind of church that admitted the vile as well as the good, and moral character was not a condition of membership, and circumcision was the only qualification necessary to entitle its members to all its ordinances. Mr. Carson maintains that the church of Israel "Was the church into which its members were born," and that it "admitted any stranger to its passover without *any condition* of faith or character, merely on complying with a certain regulation that gave circumcision to their males without any condition of faith or character."—Carson on Bap. p. 373—4. Perhaps it did not occur to Mr. Carson, that one clause in the constitution or covenant of the church expressly declared that "The uncircumcised man-child whose flesh of his foreskin is not cir-

cumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant." Gen. 17 : 14.

Strange indeed, that he should be cut off from his people for uncircumcision, and still be born into the church, and therefore constituted a member without circumcision! And stranger still that the ordinances of the church might not be enjoyed by the regular members of the church until they complied with a certain rite which did not even require faith or character as a condition!! Mr. Carson occupies about two pages with such wholesale, random assertions. We will endeavor to do him justice when we come to consider the identity of the Old and New Testament church, and its covenant.

Mr. A. Campbell maintains that God never organized the seed of Abraham into a church, until the giving of the law at Sinai, and "That the infant seed of Abraham were born members of this Jewish church." (Campbell and McCalla's Debate, p. 175, 194.) Of course, the old patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, never belonged to the visible church!

Mr. A. Booth argues that the Jewish church "Was an ecclesiastico-political constitution," and that "an obedient subject of their civil government, and a complete member of their church state, were the same thing." Vol. 2, p. 25-12. By Edwards, p. 51.

But the more discriminating Mr. A. Fuller affirms "Through them (Abraham and his posterity) we have a Bible, a Saviour, and a gospel. They are the *stock* on which the *Christian church* is grafted." Vol. 1, p. 761.

If the reader will take the trouble to consult authors, he will find a variety of opinions among our opponents relative to the real character of the Old Testament church. Indeed, it has been apparently an extremely difficult subject to man-

age. Some have even denied the existence of a church previous to the coming of our Saviour. This was the position of a Baptist minister in a recent public discussion with the author. This last position which denies the existence of a church previous to the New Testament dispensation, may appear bold and startling to some, but still it is vastly more consistent and honorable to God, than to make him the author and patron of a political, worldly organization, called church, where a mixture of the good and ungodly unite by Divine authority and sanction, for the maintenance of a semi-religious system of rites and forms "without any condition of faith or character." The apostle assures us, that "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin," and "without faith it is impossible to please God;" and yet our opponents point us to rites and ordinances, instituted by God himself, to which faithless sinners might come, without condition or restraint; provided they had been circumcised, and even circumcision imposed no conditions of faith or character! Reader, did the God of Abraham, who said, the day he established his covenant with Abraham and his seed, "I am the Almighty God; walk before me and be thou perfect;" ordain and approve such a system?

But what can our opponents do with the argument in favor of infant church membership, based upon the Abrahamic covenant? If the covenant of circumcision was the constitution of the true visible church of God, and infants were by Divine authority put *in* the church by *that* covenant, how can they be put *out* of the church? That infants *were* members is so obvious, that our opponents claim that the seed of Abraham "were *born* into the Jewish church." But, alas! the church was a kind of political, worldly organization, and God was not so strict with its members, as to require faith or character as a condition of privilege or blessing!! Yes;

impeach the spiritual character of both covenant and church, and yet make God the author and proprietor of both !

This mode of reasoning would appear less singular from any other class of objectors. But after our opponents have made God the author of a church, into which its members were born, and which gave its ordinances to impenitent sinners, provided they complied with the simple condition of submitting to the rite of circumcision, which rite did not even require faith or any moral exercise ; presently they inform us of *another* church, organized by the same God in gospel days, and so exclusive in its character that *none* were born into it," and even the seed of God's own beloved children were *cast out* of it ! Under one dispensation it was consistent and right, as our opponents reason, for God to create a political, worldly church, into which the vilest entered and were proper members ; while under another dispensation, it corrupts and vitiates the whole church, if but the seed of believers are brought into covenant relation.

Our opponents, as we have already shown, maintain, that God made two covenants with Abraham ; the *first* a spiritual covenant, which promised the Messiah ; and the *other* a temporal covenant which gave Abraham and his posterity the land of Canaan, and other worldly advantages. Now we would ask our opponents, under which of those covenants the Old Testament church was organized ? Or was the church without a covenant ? It would seem logical to infer that the church followed out the design of her covenant : Hence if the character and design of her covenant was temporal, the church embraced no higher object ; but if her covenant was spiritual, then the church was spiritual, and her temporal blessings merely incidental to her spiritual character and design. If our opponents decide upon the temporal covenant, as the constitution of the church, then they

have a church without spiritual blessings. But we have already shown that God made but *one* covenant with Abraham, and that was a *spiritual* covenant, and the constitution of the church.

#### OLD TESTAMENT CHURCH.

That every objection may be fully met, and every argument duly weighed, we will now consider both the *existence* and *character* of the Old Testament church. We do this the more cheerfully, that we may vindicate God's church from some of the common imputations of error and ignorance. Nothing is more common than to hear representations respecting the church of Israel, and Old Testament religion and morality, which, if true, would rank God's ancient covenant people with barbarous tribes and savage nations. We do not charge all this to the account of our Baptist brethren : Still we ask if such representations do not receive confirmation from arguments which go to prove the Old Testament church an "ecclesiastico-political constitution," which admitted and fellowshipped the ungodly and vile of every sort, "without condition of faith or character, provided they were circumcised. What must the intelligent skeptic think of such a church, and the God who constituted it, and claimed its members as his chosen people ?

1. The spirit of God speaking by the martyr Stephen, says, Acts 7 : 38, "This is he that was in the *church* in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sinai, and with our fathers ; who received the lively oracles to give unto us."

Here we find the church of God in the wilderness receiving the oracles of God, or sacred Scriptures, that she might transmit them to Jews and Gentiles in apostolic times. A

more solemn and sacred trust, God never confided to any people, than the keeping of his holy word; and we might add, no people ever guarded the sacred Scriptures with such vigilance, as did ancient Israel. This act of confidence on God's part, is an endorsement of the character of the church, and proves her something more than a worldly organization.

The word "*church*" in the connection, is in the Greek "*ekklesia*, from *ek* out of, and *kaleo* to call, i. e., to call out. The word expresses what was true of Abraham and his seed, God called them *out*, and set them apart as a holy nation. So of the church now, she is *called out* from the world, and set apart, and consecrated to the service of God. The word *ekklesia* is of common occurrence in the Old Testament, but is usually translated congregation, and assembly. For examples see Deut, 9: 10—18: 16—Judges 21: 5, 8—2 Chron. 29: 28, 32—Josh. 8: 35—Compare Heb. 2: 12 with Ps. 22: 22—40: 9, 10. Scores of quotations might be added if necessary. We do not maintain that the word *ekklesia* always denotes a religious body, or Christian assembly. The same word however, translated *assembly* and *congregation* in the Old Testament is rendered *church* in the New, and means substantially the same thing in both. The Rev. James Eells says, page 29, "The whole nation or commonwealth of Israel was often denominated '*Pasa ekklesia Israel*,' i. e., the whole church of Israel."

The word in Heb. which is rendered in our English Bibles assembly, congregation &c., when applied to the people of Israel is *ekklesia* by the Septuagint, which is translated church in the New Testament. "I know not (says Dr. Campbell) for what reason our English translators have never admitted the word church into the Old Testament, notwith-



standing the frequent use which they have made of it in their translation of the New.”

The argument to prove that *ekklesia* does not indicate a people in covenant relation and obligation with God, because it is sometimes applied to other than religious assemblies, is just as specious and honest as the argument to prove that the word *ouranos*, heaven, does not mean a place of happiness, because it sometimes indicates the aerial regions ; Or *hades*, hell, does not mean a place of punishment, because it is sometimes used to denote the grave.

#### SACRED SCRIPTURES.

God's ancient people Israel, had the sacred Scriptures—God's revealed will for their rule of faith and practice. Rom. 3 : 2, “What advantage then, hath the Jew? and what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way, chiefly because unto them were committed the oracles of God.” The oracles of God committed to the Jews, embraced the substance of the gospel. Hence Paul affirms that the gospel preached to believers *after* Christ came, was preached also to Old Testament saints. Heb. 4 : 2, “For unto *us* was the gospel preached, as well as unto *them* : (Israelites) but the word preached did not profit, not being mixed with *faith* in them that heard it.” The Israelites, therefore enjoyed gospel preaching, and were required to exercise saving or justifying faith as the condition of the Divine favor.

More than this cannot be said of the church under the gospel dispensation. The church may enjoy a greater measure of light, still, gospel preaching and justifying faith, is the substance, and will be, while the economy of grace endures : And it is equally true, when the word preached does not profit, it is for the want of faith in them that hear it.

## WORSHIP OF GOD.

The Jews as a nation maintained the true worship of God, both in fact and in form ; and we might add, no nation ever maintained the worship of God at greater expense and sacrifice.

1. By the authority of God, one whole tribe was consecrated and set apart to the duties of religion. This tribe constituted the priesthood—the ministry of Israel.

2. The Jews enjoyed the day and means of grace. God gave them the holy Sabbath, and an earthly sanctuary. Days of fasting and prayer were ordained ; and also days of thanksgiving and praise. Three times during each year every male in the nation came together for a “ holy convocation,” Deut. 16 : 16.

3. All the bloody rites and sacrifices—offerings and ablutions, observed by the nation, were means of grace, pointing to the *way* and *necessity* of moral purity. See Heb. 9th, 10th chap.

4. They were in the constant, regular habit of meeting for the public worship of God, to hear the Scriptures expounded and unite in other solemn religious services.

Now reader, to consecrate the priesthood, observe Sabbaths, and other days of “ holy convocation,” to offer sacrifices, practice ceremonial purifications and ablutions, and yet not *profess* the *true* and *only* Bible religion, would altogether constitute the greatest *farce* ever exhibited. And that God should require all this, as the condition of worldly prosperity, and from a people *out* of the true visible church, is the climax of absurdity.

## COVENANT.

As an illustration of what God required, and the nation of

Israel professed, we will refer to their solemn, formal covenant, to which the entire nation subscribed. This covenant may be considered as the exposition of the acknowledged relation between God and his people, Israel. Deut. 26 : 17, 18, 19, "Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be *thy God*, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voice. And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he has promised thee, and that thou shouldst keep all his commandments. And to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honor; and that thou mayest be a *holy people unto the Lord thy God* as he hath spoken." Will the reader also consult Deut. 29 : 10—13. Josh. 24 : 14—25. 2 Kings 23 : 3; and then decide whether the nation of Israel professed the true religion, and were members of God's own church, or were only an "ecclesiastico-political constitution?"

To such as represent the pure God as entering into covenant with an unholy nation—a nation not even professing true godliness, we recommend Ps. 50 : 16, "But unto the wicked God saith, what hast thou to do, to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my *covenant* in thy mouth?"

#### PEOPLE OF GOD.

We have frequently adverted to the fact, that the Jews as a nation, were the chosen people of God. By this we mean that they were the people of God in the same sense that the visible church now may be considered the people of God. They professed the true religion, and covenanted to walk in all the ordinances of the Lord blameless: and by such profession and covenant were distinguished from all other nations, as the church is now distinguished from the world by

her professions. That they were the people of God in this peculiar sense, we will now undertake to prove.

Lev. 26 : 12, "And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people." Compare with 2 Cor. 6 : 16, "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols ; for ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." See Ex. 29 : 45. 46.

Heb. 11 : 24, 25, 26, "By faith, Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the *people of God*, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the *reproach of Christ* greater riches than the treasures in Egypt : for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." Here then we find Moses suffering affliction with the people of God, and esteeming the reproach of *Christ* greater riches than the treasures of Egypt ; and still Mr. A. Campbell informs us, that Israel were never constituted a church until the giving of the law on Sinai, and then it was a church, which did not respect moral character, as a qualification or condition of membership.

1 Cor. 10 : 1, 2, 3, 4, "Moreover brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that *all* our fathers were under the cloud, and *all* passed through the sea : and were all baptised unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea ; and did all eat of the same spiritual meat ; and did all drink the same spiritual drink, (for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ.)" Comment is unnecessary.

#### DISCIPLINE.

The discipline of the church under the Old Testament, dis-

dispensation claims some attention. Discipline was far less discretionary with the church, than under the gospel dispensation, since God himself gave direction in relation to the disposition of individual transgressors. But the reader will find many immoralities and irregularities specified, and on record, which subjected the offender to discipline and excommunication. For example, individuals were cut off from the people of God for idolatry, Ex. 22 : 20. For profanity, Lev. 24 : 15, 16. For licentiousness, Lev. 18 : 29. Disobedience to parents, Ex. 21 : 15, 16. For Sabbath breaking, Ex. 31 : 14, 15. For neglect of Divine ordinances, Lev. 23 : 29, 30.

That God rebuked and punished the Israelites for such sins as oppression, unbelief, backsliding, &c., is too notorious to require proof. In fact, multitudes of professors of religion *now* in good standing in the church, would have been excommunicated in Old Testament times.

Perhaps our opponents may argue, that some of the above sins were punished with death, as offenses against civil government. We would simply ask the objector, whether crimes punishable by death under civil law, were disciplinable offenses in the church? The very argument of our opponents goes to demonstrate more fully our own position in relation to the Jewish nation; that God constituted the nation, his true visible church, hence immoral persons were cut off from the church and nation.

### RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

No people since the world began, ever surpassed the Jews in their reverence for the oracles of God, and their diligence in communicating religious instruction. As an illustration of what God required, examine Deut. 6 : 4—9, "Here O Israel; The Lord thy God is one Lord; And thou shalt

love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thine house, and on thy gates."

That the Jews did thus instruct their children in the law, and write it upon their door posts and gates, and bind it between their eyes is sufficiently evident. According to our Saviour's testimony, Matt. 23 : 5, in some respects they even transcended the letter of the command by making "broad their phylacteries," that they might make a greater display.

#### MORALITY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT CHURCH.

Much has been said in regard to the *morality* of the Old Testament church, or Jewish religion. Infidels have represented their religion as a system of "semi-barbarism" almost destitute of morality. Many professors of religion seem to regard it now, as a mixed system of twilight and darkness tolerated on account of the half savage state of the world ; but destitute of the sound morality inculcated under the gospel dispensation. Some persons, instead of the Divine precept, take example and practice of delinquent professors, as an exposition of their system ; hence all the crimes and abominations practiced by wicked Jews, is put to the account of their religion.

Now we take the position, that the morality of the Old Testament is as *pure* as the morality of the New, and in-

volves the same fundamental principles. Our witness is the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Matt. 22: 35—40, “Then one of them which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. *On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*” See Deut. 6: 5. Lev. 19: 18.

Reader, does the New Testament furnish a higher, holier, or different standard of morality than love supreme to God and to our neighbor as ourselves? This was the standard of “all the law and the prophets”—the oracles of God committed to the Jews. Will our opponents assume that “all the law and the prophets” were not a rule of faith and practice for the Old Testament church?

2. Matt. 7: 12, “Therefore all things, whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.” This text, by way of pre-eminence, is frequently called the “Golden Rule,” because it furnishes a convenient rule, by which we may regulate our mutual intercourse. It enters into the very spirit of the command, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Now the Saviour declares, that “The law and the prophets” teach the same sentiment, viz: “All things whatsoever ye would, that men should do unto you, do ye even so them.” Reader, did God excuse the Jewish church and nation from observing or obeying those precepts? If so, give us the evidence.

We have nothing to do with the fact that there were bad members in the church, or that members did not practice

according to these principles. Objections of this character are against the *practice*, and not the *precept*. It would be just as candid and honest to argue, from the immorality and irregularity of professed Christians, against the truth of Divine revelation. What did the law and the prophets require of Old Testament church members? is the question at issue; and to this question the Saviour replies, "Love God supremely, and thy neighbor as thyself; for on these *two* commands hang *all* the law and the prophets."

We consider it unnecessary to say more in confirmation of our position. We might speak of the benevolence of the church for religious purposes; such as the support of the ministry or priesthood, Num. 18: 21, 24. Religious offerings, Deut. 14: 22. Appropriations for the poor, Deut. 14: 28, 29. The cost of sacrifices and temple services alone, would constitute an alarming sum, were professors of religion now called to foot the bill. We might illustrate the benevolence of Old Testament religion, by reference to their treatment of servants, the release of lands, law against usury, hospitality to strangers, and a multitude of kindred subjects.

But feeling confident that we have abundantly sustained our proposition, which affirms that "circumcision was the seal of a spiritual covenant and the initiatory rite into the true visible church of God," we now submit the case to the candid and impartial. If, with the argument and evidence before him, the reader decides that God made *two* covenants with Abraham, a *temporal* covenant, and *spiritual* covenant; that circumcision was a *sign* of carnal descent; a *mark* of national distinction, and a token of interest in the temporal blessings that God promised to Abraham; and that the church of Israel was a mere ecclesiastico-political constitution; then we judge him not; but simply say, our views and faith upon



this interesting subject, have no affinity with such sentiments.

II. Infants were, by Divine authority, brought into covenant relation and constituted members of the church, by the same rite that constituted adults members.

Little need be said upon this proposition. Our opponents, in their zeal to prove the Old Testament church a mere "ecclesiastico-political constitution—a kind of semi-religious organization—have insisted that the seed of Abraham were *born* into the Jewish church. So they were *in* the church, and members *of* the church, according to the reasoning of our opponents.

Singular, indeed, that they should be *born* members of the church and yet entitled to *none* of the privileges or ordinances of the church until circumcised. We have been in the habit of supposing that the regular members of *any* society were entitled to the privileges of such society. What a blank relation, to be a member of the church, and yet membership confer no church privileges! Perhaps our opponents will say, that the seed of Abraham, born into the Jewish church, had a right to circumcision. We answer, so had a heathen, a right to circumcision, when he became a proselyte; and he had also a Divine right to circumcise his male children, and thus bring them into the church. According to this argument, none but proselytes were ever admitted into the church under the Old Testament dispensation, unless national birth was an admission.

But there is another difficulty which our opponents must remove before we can embrace the sentiment that the seed of Abraham were born into the church. Circumcision was the *seal* and *condition* of covenant relation, therefore none entered into covenant with God, *without* circumcision. But the argument of our opponents, makes individuals, members

of the church *before* they enter into covenant, i. e., they are *out* of God's covenant, but *in* God's church, because born into the latter. If the reader can comprehend the advantages of such church relation, then he must be gifted in solving dark sayings.

The view we have presented is simple, harmonious, and and intelligible. The covenant of circumcision was the constitution of the true visible church; and circumcision as the seal was necessarily the rite of initiation, both for Jews and Gentiles, proselytes, and servants. When God made his covenant with Abraham, circumcision was as necessary to bring his seed into covenant relation, as himself. Let the reader carefully consult Gen. 17, and Ex. 12: 48, 49, and he will find that whether born in the land, a descendant of Abraham, or a stranger, there was one law, and one condition; circumcision was the rite or seal, by which individuals entered into covenant with God, and without circumcision even the natural seed of Abraham, were cut off from the people of God. We again ask the candid reader, if all this could be true, and still the individual be a birth-right member of the church? Men may think and speak lightly of the covenant and rite of circumcision, but an Israelite, could not. It was the charter of *his* blessings, and the spiritual inheritance of his children, because it contained the promise sealed with blood, "I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee."

## PART SECOND.

### THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH.

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MATTHEW, 21: 43.

“Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”

WE have already conclusively shown, that the covenant of circumcision was a spiritual covenant; and that it was the basis or constitution of the true visible church of God under the Old Testament dispensation. We have also established the position, that infants were, by Divine authority, brought into covenant and church relation, by the same rite of initiation, that constituted adults members of the visible church. We now invite attention to the second division of our subject.

I. We shall now undertake to prove that the Old and New Testament church is one and the same church under different dispensations.

II. The covenant of the true visible church of God is the same under both Old and New Testament dispensations.

Now reader, if we shall prove that God has had but *one* visible church since the days of Abraham, based upon *one* and the *same* covenant, and *that* the Abrahamic covenant; then it must follow that the covenant and church relations of

believers and their children now, are substantially the same as under the Old Testament dispensation. The original constitution of the church must be our guide, while that remains unrepealed.

1. We shall now undertake to prove that the Old and New Testament church is *one* and the *same* church under different dispensations.

There may be changes in a church without destroying the identity, or changing the constitution of said church. Some things are fundamental to the existence of a church, while other things are merely incidental to a church. For example, there can be no constitutional church of God, without the proper members of the church. But the *rites* and *forms* of a church may change—her mode of worship vary, and accommodate itself to outward circumstances, and still be the same church. It may even be true that the church may backslide from God, and lose the life and power of godliness, become corrupt in doctrine and practice, and still remain the only true visible church. Let our opponents *deny* this and they are driven to the extreme, that God's visible church never backslides—never departs from Bible truth, in faith, in form, or spirit; therefore exhortations to duty, to sound doctrine and correct practice, have no application to the *true* church!!

But the members of a church are necessary to the *existence* and *identity* of the church; because they are the constituent parts or elements of the church. Now the visible church of God, as we have shown, originally embraced adults, professing the true religion, and their children; hence Christian organizations that *exclude* the seed of believers from covenant and church relation, are not Bible-

constitutional churches, i. e., are not based upon the original Bible constitution, because *that* included the children of God's people, as among the constituent parts of the church. In due time we shall endeavor to establish this position, and show that God never had a church which denied the right and obligation of infant church membership.

We will now attend to our first proposition, which affirms that the "Old and New Testament church, is *one* and the *same* church under different dispensations." Now if this proposition be not true, then there must have been *two* militant churches. Either the "gates of hell prevailed against the first church, or God dissolved the Old Testament church, and organized another upon a different foundation. How far such conclusions are consistent, and honorable to the wise and immutable God, we leave for the decision of our reader.

But "to the law and the testimony." "Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

1. What does the Saviour mean by the phrase "Kingdom of God?" This phrase is of frequent occurrence in the New Testament, and denotes the spiritual administration or reign of God; whether in the heart of the believer, in the church militant, or in the kingdom of glory; hence, it points out the sovereign, the dominion, and the subject. That the kingdom of glory is frequently intended, few will deny. And that the reign of grace in the soul of the believer, is also expressed in the phrase "Kingdom of God," can be easily shown. Rom. 14: 17, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost." Again, Luke 17: 21, "For behold the kingdom of God is *within* you."

That the same phrase is sometimes used to denote the vis-

ible church, is equally certain. Let the reader carefully consult Matt. 25: 1-12; also, 13: 24-32, 47-50. Is it true of the kingdom of glory, that some are wise, and some foolish—that first the kingdom of glory is small like a grain of mustard seed—that wheat and tares grow together in the kingdom of glory—and will the angels of God, gather out of the kingdom of glory, all things that offend, and them which do iniquity? These things may be applicable to the kingdom of God on earth; but it would be little short of blasphemy to refer them to the kingdom of glory above.

2. Did the Jewish church, or nation, in any sense ever possess the kingdom of God? How could the kingdom of God be taken from them, if they never possessed it? Ex. 19: 6, "And ye shall be unto me a *kingdom* of priests, and an holy nation." Hence, as early as the days of Moses, in one sense Israel was the "kingdom of God."

3. But does the language "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof," imply that the Old Testament, or Jewish church is the same "kingdom of God," or church as that into which Gentiles were received under the gospel dispensation? In Isaiah 5: 1-7, the prophet of God speaks of the church under the similitude of a vineyard, in a very fruitful country, carefully cultivated, and securely guarded, but alas! instead of *good* fruit, it "brought forth *wild* grapes." The Saviour, in connection with the text employs the same figure to illustrate the condition, and prospects of the Jews, as God's professed people. Matt. 21: 33-45, "Hear another parable; there was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard and hedged it round about, and digged a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandman took his servants and beat one, and killed another, and stoned

another. And he sent other servants more than the first ; and they did unto them likewise.

But last of all, he sent unto them his son, saying, they will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son they said among themselves, this is the heir ; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard and slew him. When therefore the lord of the vineyard cometh what will he do unto those husbandmen. They say unto him, he will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their season."

Now the next verse shows what the Saviour meant by this parable ; " Jesus saith unto them (chief priests and elders) did ye never read in the Scriptures (Ps. 118 : 22) the stone which the builders rejected, the same has become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doings, and it is marvelous in our eyes." Then follows our text, " Therefore say I unto you ; the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given unto a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." In the 45th verse it is added " And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard this parable, they perceived that he spake of them." See Mark 12 : 1-11. Luke 20 : 9-13.

Now, if our Saviour did not misapply this parable, then the same moral vineyard which originally belonged to the Jewish nation, was given to the Gentiles. This is obvious for two reasons :

1. He quotes in immediate connection with the parable, Ps. 118 : 22, " The stone which the builders refused, is become the head stone of the corner," to prove, that the things signified by this parable, when fulfilled, would be only the fulfillment of their own Scriptures, which predicted the re-

jection of the Messiah by Jewish builders, but the acceptance of him by Gentiles. Hence the moral vineyard or church is intended ?

2. The word "Therefore" in our text, shows that the legitimate, or proper conclusion from the parable is this. "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." If our opponents maintain that the parable refers to the *temporal* privileges and blessings of the Jewish nation ; then we simply ask, to what nation did God give their temporal blessings and privileges, and what were "the fruits thereof."

#### REFORMATION.

1. Paul affirms Heb. 9 : 10, that the coming of Christ to fulfill the Jewish ceremonial dispensation, would be a time of reformation in the church. "Which stood only in meats and drinks and divers washings, and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the *time of reformation.*" But our opponents maintain, that the coming of Christ to fulfill Jewish rituals, was a time of *destruction*, i. e., the Old Testament church was abolished, Reader, does *reformation* imply *destruction* ?

2. Old Testament prophets when speaking of the change in the church consequent to the coming of Christ, represent that change as simply a reformation in the church, and so they are understood and explained by New Testament writers.

Mal. 3 : 1, 2, 3, "Behold I will send my messenger and he shall prepare the way before me : and the Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in : behold he shall come saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of his



coming ? and who shall stand when he appeareth ? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap : and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver," &c. Matt. 3 : 12, " Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor." Here then we find purification, and cleansing, but not destruction. John the Baptist declares that he "came to prepare the way of the Lord and make his paths straight." " Suddenly" the Messiah appeared, whose preaching was indeed like fire and soap to purify and cleanse the church, which had become exceedingly corrupt. Yet there were some who "waited for the consolation of Israel." Luke 2 : 25.

3. That Christ came to purify and reform the Old Testament church, and not to do away or abolish, is certain from Acts 15 : It appears some of the Jews insisted, that Gentile converts "must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses." The apostles therefore, and elders came together for counsel. Peter, Paul and Barnabas gave a history of their labor among the Gentiles. James then addressed the council as follows ; " Men and brethren, hearken unto me. Simeon hath declared how God at the first, did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets ; as it is written (Amos 9 : 11) " After this I will return and will build *again* the tabernacle of David which is fallen down, and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up : That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."

Now if James correctly interprets and applies this prophecy, then instead of organizing a *new* church when our Saviour came, the Old Testament church was purified and opened for the reception of the Gentiles ; and this constitu-

ted the rebuilding of the tabernacle of David, which had fallen down. Yes, reader, God built *again* the ruins thereof; and set it up, even the old tabernacle of David—enlarged, beautified and suited to the gospel dispensation.

There is one point to which we invite particular attention. When Daniel expounded the dream of Nebuchadnezzar concerning the image, he declared, that “In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven SET UP a kingdom which shall never be destroyed.” (See Dan. 2 : 44.) But in Amos 9 : 11 we read, “In that day will I RAISE UP the tabernacle of David that is fallen,” &c. And James quoting the prophesy of Amos, says, God “will SET IT UP,” i. e., the tabernacle. Dr. Rice remarks, (*Campbell and Rice’s Discussion*, p. 416.) “It is worthy of remark, that the Hebrew word used by Amos, in the passage quoted by James, the Chaldaic word used by Daniel, and the Septuagint translation, all have the same meaning, viz.; *to cause to stand.*”

Daniel and Amos, therefore prophesied, that, notwithstanding the degeneracy and corruption of God’s professed people, the day was coming when God would visit Zion, revive, purify and *cause her to stand again*; and the Apostle James, in public councils, shows the fulfillment of the prophesy of Amos, in the conversion of the Gentiles.

### OLIVE TREE.

Paul seems to have anticipated the error of modern days, in regard to the identity or sameness of the Old and New Testament church: Hence he introduces the figure of the Olive Tree, an emblem of peace, and a beautiful figure to represent the visible church. The reader will find the argument of the apostle in Rom. 11. From the first to the 16th verse is occupied, with some general remarks in relation to

the sin of Israel, and the calling of the Gentiles : He then goes on to prove, that believing Gentiles *now* occupy the place in God's church, *once* enjoyed by the Jews, but from which they were excluded for unbelief.

Verse 16. "For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy ; and if the root be holy, so are the branches.

17. "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 :

18. "Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

19. "Thou wilt say then, the branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

20. "Well ; because of unbelief they were broken off, — and thou standest by faith. Be not high minded, but fear.

21. "For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

22. "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God : on them which fell, severity ; but towards thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness : otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

23. "And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief shall be grafted in : for God is able to graff them in again.

24. "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 their own olive-tree."

In Jer. 11 : 16, the church is called "A green olive-tree." The prophet Hosea also, (14 : 6) speaking of the prosperity and enlargement of the church says, "His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the *olive-tree*, and his smell as Lebanon." Professor Stuart in his commentary on Rom. 11 : 17, says "The *wild olive* was often grafted

into the fruitful one, when it began to decay, and thus not only brought forth fruit, but caused the decaying olive to revive and flourish. The image which the apostle here employs, is therefore, a vivid one. The Gentiles had been grafted in upon the Jewish church, and had caused this decayed tree to revive and flourish."

The 11th chap. of Romans, has seriously embarrassed our opponents in their labor to dispose of the arguments which go to establish the sameness of the Old and New Testament church. All manner of interpretations have been offered, without giving satisfaction, or solving the problem. The reason is obvious ; if the olive-tree represents the true visible church ; then the Old and New Testament church is one and the same ; and all the authority of *precept* and *example* derived from Old Testament times, in favor of infant church membership, come down to the gospel dispensation.

1. That the olive-tree does not represent the land of Canaan, is very certain ; for then some Jews and Gentiles, by faith continued still to inherit it. Did Paul mean to say, that the Roman Christians were grafted into Canaan ?

2. That the olive-tree does not represent the *spiritual body* of Christ, is equally certain ; for then the Jews who were broken off, fell from grace. This, Calvinistic Baptists dare not admit. Yes : and those that were broken off, were the *natural* branches of Christ's spiritual body !

3. But the great argument relied upon, is, that Christ is the olive-tree, and his *professed* people are the branches. If Christ is the olive-tree, then the Jews were either broken off from Christ, or from a profession of Christ. But did the Jews embrace the gospel, or reject it as a nation ? Now, as the Gentiles were grafted *in*, where the Jews were broken *off*, it necessarily follows, that *either the Jews who were broken off for unbelief DID profess the true religion, and consequent-*

ly were members of the true church ; or, the Gentiles who by faith were grafted in where the Jews were broken off, DID NOT profess the true religion, and WERE NOT members of the true church ; because the latter took the place of the former. There is no escape from this conclusion.

4. Some have maintained that Jews and Gentiles were organized into a *new* church after our Saviour came. But were the broken off branches, “ the *natural* branches ” of the new church ? Was the new church “ their *own* olive-tree ? ” i. e., the Jewish olive-tree. When were the Jews broken off from the new church for unbelief ? and in what sense were the Gentiles grafted into the new church where the Jews were broken off ?

#### THE TRUE EXPOSITION.

The *olive-tree* represents the true visible church. The Jews by covenant relation were constituted the natural members of the visible church, God was *their* God, and they became God’s chosen people—a holy nation. Hence the Jews are called “ The *first fruit*—the *root*—the *natural branches*,” and the olive tree was “ *their own* olive-tree.” In the fullness of time Christ came “ as a purifier and refiner ” to purge and cleanse the church and “ raise up the tabernacle of David which had fallen down.”

It was a time of reformation ; hence unbelievers in the church were broken off ; and Gentile converts were grafted into the Jewish church, among those believing Jews, that embraced the Messiah, and with them “ partake of the richness and fatness of the olive-tree.”

The apostle exhorts the Gentiles to humility in view of the fact, that they are neither the *root* nor *natural* branches of the olive-tree ; therefore if unbelieving will also be cut off,

since God showed such "severity" towards the natural branches.

But the 23d and 24th verses, must forever settle this question in the judgment of the impartial. "And *they* (Jews) also if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: For God is able to graff them in AGAIN. For if thou were 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 THEIR OWN OLIVE-TREE.*"

Reader, the olive-tree, or church of the Old Testament is by no means destroyed. Only *some* of the *branches* are broken off: The trunk of the tree remains—a holy root, yielding the richness and fatness of the good olive-tree, to all the branches, whether Jews or Gentiles; and in that same old stock, if a member of the true visible church of God, thou art grafted, that the "blessings of Abraham might come on thee, through Jesus Christ."

#### FELLOW-CITIZENS.

Almost every variety and form of figure and speech, are employed by the inspired writers to express the sameness, or identity of the Old and New Testament church. We have considered this doctrine under the heads "Kingdom of God, Tabernacle of David, the olive-tree;" and we now invite attention to another form of expressing this same sentiment.

Eph. 2: 11, 12, 13. "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past, Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands: That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope

and without God in the world. But now, in Christ Jesus, ye, who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Compare with 19th, 20th verses, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but *fellow-citizens* with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone."

Therefore, *without* Christ, the Ephesians were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise;" but *with* Christ, i. e., by embracing Christ, they become members of the Jewish commonwealth or church, and were no longer strangers from the covenants of promise. If embracing Christ *did not* constitute them members of the commonwealth of Israel; then they were *aliens still*, and there is no sense in Paul's remark "at *that* time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel."

But why should the believing Gentiles be represented as becoming "fellow-citizens"—"fellow-heirs," (3 : 6) and members of the commonwealth of Israel, if a new church was organized under the gospel dispensation?

In the 14th verse, the apostle informs us, that Christ had "broken down the middle wall of partition" between Jews and Gentiles, so that both were one. Our Saviour, also declares, John 10 : 16, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

Now, the fair inference is, that *when* those other sheep of Christ's were brought, they were received into the same fold. Or did the Lord Jesus Christ destroy that fold, and build a new one?

And when he broke down the "middle wall of partition" did he destroy the fold? Or enlarge and improve it for the accommodation of a more numerous flock.

## INSPIRED NAMES.

The church and people of God bear the same inspired names, both in the Old and New Testament. The Rev. James Eels in his "conversation on Baptism," p. 29, 30, gives the following list of names and proof texts. "*The church*," Acts 7 : 38, with 8 : 1. God's *heritage*, Jer. 12 : 7-9, with 1 Pet. 5 : 3. His *portion*, Deut. 32 : 9, with Zech. 2 : 12. The *people of God*, Heb. 11 : 25, with 1 Pet. 2 : 10—Rom. 9 : 25. God's *peculiar people*, Deut. 14 : 2, with Titus 2 : 14. His *chosen people*, 1 Chron. 14 : 1, and Ex. 19 : 5, 6, with 1 Pet. 2 : 9. *Children of God*, Deut. 14 : 1, with Rom. 9 : 26. *Sons of God*, Ex. 4 : 22, 23, with 1 John 3 : 1. *Saints*, Ps. 148 : 13, and 149 : 1, 2, with Phil. 1 : 1." &c. Let the reader diligently compare, and then decide whether the Old and New Testament church were *one*, or distinct bodies.

## FACTS AND REASONS.

1. If a new church was organized when Christ came, or under the gospel dispensation, where is the history of the fact ?

Would inspired writers pass over so important an event without recording the fact ?

2. We have unequivocal evidence that there was a church in existence during the ministry of our Saviour. Matt. 18 : 17, "And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the *church* : But if he neglect to hear the *church*, let him be unto thee as a heathen man, and a publican." The reader will remember that the ceremonial dispensation continued until the death of Christ : hence the Saviour and his disciples observed the Old Testament Sabbath—the passover, and fes-



tivals peculiar to the Jewish nation. Yet here we find a *church* under the Old Testament dispensation, the authority of which is acknowledged by the Saviour himself, who also gives instruction to the members, how to proceed in the discipline of an offending member of said church.

Now, either the Lord Jesus Christ had organized a new church under the Old Testament dispensation ; or the church alluded to in Matt. 18 : 17 was the Old Testament church, and the *only* true church of God on earth.

3. Zachariah and Elizabeth, the father and mother of John the Baptist ; Joseph, the reputed father, and Mary the mother of Jesus ; Good old Simeon, and Anna the prophetess, were all members of the Old Testament church. Zachariah was a regular and acknowledged priest of that church. Even the Lord Jesus Christ, John the Baptist, and the twelve apostles were members of the *same* church, received the rite of circumcision, and “ kept the law of Moses.” When did they leave the *old* church, and unite with the *new* ? Will our opponents inform us *when* and *where* they changed their church relations ?

4. The oracles of God, or sacred Scriptures, were committed to the Old Testament church ; and it was more than twenty years after the crucifixion of our Saviour before any of the books of the New Testament were written. Now if a new church was organised under the gospel dispensation, and had an inspired rule of faith, and practice ; then the Scriptures of the Old Testament church must have been that rule ; therefore *both* churches had the *same* inspired rule of *faith* and *practice*. Reader, did God organise a *new* church under the old constitution ; or without *any* constitution. Did the Old and New churches essentially differ, while both received and adopted the same rule of faith and practice ?

5. If a *new* church was organised during the time of our

Saviour, what were the rites, sacraments and ordinances of the new church? The Lord's Supper, and baptism in the name of the Trinity, were not practiced until the close of the Saviour's ministry; and the first day of the week was not ordained the Christian Sabbath, until after the resurrection of our Lord. Did the *new* church adopt the ordinances of the *old*; such as circumcision, the passover, Jewish festivals and rituals? That Christ and his apostles observed these, is certain.

We might multiply facts and reasons to much greater extent, but we deem it unnecessary. With what we have presented under this head, let the reader decide whether "The Old and New Testament church is one and the same church under different dispensations;" or two totally distinct churches. Let him decide *when* and *where* so important a change occurred, before concluding or inferring that such a change *has* taken place.

II. The covenant of the true visible church of God is the same under both Old and New Testament dispensations.

We read in 1 Chron. 16: 15, 16, 17, "Be ye mindful always of his covenant: the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac: And hath confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant." God said to Abraham, Gen. 17: 7, "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations for an *everlasting* covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee." This covenant therefore was to be an everlasting covenant to a thousand generations.

Now we do not insist, that by everlasting in the text *end-*

*less duration* is intended ; or that we must understand by a "thousand generations" just *one* thousand. But does "a thousand generations," mean *only forty-two* generations—the number from Abraham to Christ, according to Matt. 1 : 17 ? Were the inspired writers guilty of such wild, random declarations, asserting a thing in round numbers when they did not in fact mean the *twentieth part* of that sum ? The Rev. Isaac Clinton in his treatise observes, p. 19, 20, "When a thousand is used for an indefinite number, it means as many as there be. Job 9 : 3, "He cannot answer him one of a thousand." The meaning is, one of all that he hath. Ps. 50 : 10, "The cattle upon the thousand hills are mine." The meaning is, all the hills over all the world. So in these passages where the covenant of Abraham is said to be commanded for a thousand generations, the meaning is (either) an exact thousand ; or else all the generations from that time afterwards, to the end of the world."

The word *everlasting* certainly denotes the largest possible period, of which the circumstances will admit. Now, as the covenant with Abraham promised blessings to "*all the nations of the earth*," the longest possible period is, to the end of time ; or to the end of all the nations of the earth. This conclusion seems inevitable.

One thing is certain, this covenant with the promise, seal and oath of God, to make it sure, will continue in force until it is fulfilled in every part. Our opponents must admit this, or implicate the character of God. Now what did this covenant promise, and has it all been fulfilled, is the question at issue. Will our opponents maintain that Abraham has *already* been the father of all believers ; and that all the nations and families of the earth have *already* been blessed in him ? If not, then God's everlasting covenant, to a thousand generations is still the covenant of the church ; and the

spiritual blessings enjoyed by the nations of the earth, are but the fulfillment of the promise God made to Abraham when he gave him his holy covenant.

Perhaps our opponents will argue, that the land of Canaan was promised Israel for an "everlasting possession" but that Israel long since lost possession, and other nations now possess Canaan: hence the word everlasting is limited to the duration of the Jewish dispensation.

But let our opponents first prove, that the seed of Abraham will never return and re-occupy their ancient Canaan, before they risk too much upon this argument. The fact that the Jews have been driven from their ancient inheritance, for their wickedness, by no means proves the expiration of God's charter to Abraham, and his seed. We might as well argue that Israel's title to Canaan expired with their captivity, because they were carried from their country, and an enemy possessed the land.

Now we affirm that the New Testament church was organized under this same covenant—the covenant that promised spiritual blessings to all nations: And if the Old Testament church was *not* based upon this spiritual covenant, then it must have been a church *without* spiritual blessings, and without a Saviour. God never made but *one* covenant with man that promised the Messiah, and that was the covenant with Abraham—the everlasting covenant, of which circumcision was the appointed seal during the dispensation of bloody rites.

#### NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH COVENANT.

1. New Testament saints recognized the Abrahamic covenant as the *grand charter* of all the spiritual blessings enjoyed by the church under the gospel dispensation.

Luke 1 : 72, 73, Zachariah speaking by the spirit of God, declares that Jesus Christ "came to perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to remember his *holy covenant*, the *oath* which he swore to our father Abraham." God's holy covenant, therefore promised Jesus Christ, and must have been consequently the covenant of the New Testament church.

2. The apostle Paul expressly declares that the Gentiles were interested in the Abrahamic covenant, and that its promises and provisions respected all the finally redeemed.

Gal. 3 : 13. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us ; for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.

14. "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ ; that we might receive the promise of the spirit through faith.

15. "Brethren, I speak after the manner of men ; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed no man disannulleth or addeth thereto.

16. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made : He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed which is Christ."

Now if the apostle means anything, he certainly means that the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant came upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ ; and that instead of *doing away*, the Saviour actually *confirmed* and *established* the covenant ; so that it cannot be disannulled, but remains the covenant of the true visible church, and will, until the consummation of the promise "In thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

3. Let the reader compare Rom. 4 : 11, with Gal. 3 : 7, 8. "And he received the *sign* of circumcision, a *seal* of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncir-

circumcised, that he *might* be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised ; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, "In thee shall all nations be blessed."

Now, according to the argument of Paul, Gentile Christians under the gospel dispensation, were the spiritual children of Abraham by virtue of God's covenant with Abraham: hence the apostle adds in connection with the above, (verse 29) "If ye be Christ's, *then* are ye Abraham's seed and *heirs* according to the *promise*." The reader has only to consult the covenant of circumcision and he will find the promise, "Thou shalt be a father of many nations:" And in Rom. 4 : 16, 17, Paul decides that *this* promise related to a *spiritual seed*. Now to suppose that Gentiles enjoyed blessings promised in the Abrahamic covenant, and yet were under a *totally distinct* covenant, is certainly a singular conclusion. It would seem most reasonable to infer that the covenant which conferred spiritual blessings was the covenant of the church ; and that since the covenant of circumcision embraced the Messiah, and constituted Abraham the father of all believers, it would therefore remain the constitution of the church in every age of the world. But according to the objector, the old obsolete Jewish constitution, still blesses the nations of the earth !

4. The sameness of the Old and New Testament church covenant is conclusively shown in the argument of the apostle concerning the Jewish olive-tree. Rom. 11 : 17, "If *some* of the branches (Jewish church members) be broken off, and thou (Gentile) being a wild olive-tree wert grafted in *among them*, and with them partakest of the root and fat-

ness of the olive-tree," (v. 18.) "Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee." Now if believing Gentiles were grafted into the Jewish stock or root, then they were under the *same* covenant, and in the *same* church, unless this be true, there is no point or force in the apostle's argument. Why should he argue the point, that *some* of the *natural branches* were broken off for unbelief—that believing Gentiles were grafted in *among* the branches that remained—that Gentiles were *not* the *root* or stock—and that the Jews should be grafted into THEIR OWN olive-tree *again*, should they not abide in unbelief, if both Jew and Gentile were under a *new* covenant ?

5. Paul argues the identity or sameness of the Old and New Testament church covenant in his *allegory* of the two covenants. Gal. 4 : 22, 23, 24. "For it is written that Abraham had two sons ; the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free-woman. But he who was of the bond-woman was born after the *flesh* ; but he of the free-woman was by *promise*. Which things are an allegory : for these are the two covenants ; the one from the mount Sinai which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar." Now reader, the Sinaiic covenant could not be the Abrahamic covenant, because the latter was made more than 400 years before the covenant at Sinai ; or as the apostle reasons, Gal. 3 : 17, The Law was 430 years after the Abrahamic covenant. As one covenant therefore was from "the mount Sinai," the other must be the Abrahamic. Of this there can be no doubt, for the apostle immediately adds, v. 28, "Now we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise," i. e., the children of the covenant made with Abraham, and which not only promised the Messiah, but also that Abraham should be "a father of many nations," or of all believers in every age and nation.

That we do not mistake the meaning of the apostle or pervert the allegory, is certain from the following considerations: 1. The design of the apostle, is to cut off all legal dependence, and show the impossibility of justification by the law. Hence he asks in the 21st verse, "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?" 22nd verse, "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons:" &c. The apostle now goes on to draw a contrast between the Abrahamic and Sinaic covenants.

The Sinaic covenant was a *heavy yoke*, a sort of *bondage*, and Jerusalem and her children were still in bondage, because the Jews as a nation rejected Jesus Christ, and insisted upon the law with all its burdensome rituals. The bond-woman was therefore a fit type of earthly Jerusalem, maintaining a costly, laborious ritual dispensation, which had been "imposed until the time of reformation."

But Paul immediately marks the distinction between the children of the legal, Sinaic covenant, in bondage; and the children of promise, i. e., of the Abrahamic covenant, which promised the Messiah and consequent spiritual blessings. They were under the same covenant with Isaac, hence were the "children of promise," as Isaac was; and consequently belonged to, or were the heirs of, "Jerusalem which is above, which, says the apostle, is mother of us all." The 31st verse is triumphant and conclusive, "So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free;" we are not under the Sinaic covenant which is fulfilled, and no longer obligatory; but under the Abrahamic covenant—the everlasting covenant—to a thousand generations, and which embraced all the nations of the earth.

2. The apostle speaks of *two* covenants—"the one from Mount Sinai," and affirms that Gentile believers are *not* under the Sinaic covenant. Now if our opponents object to



our exposition, then let them show what covenant the apostle Paul alludes to, in the contrast, which *did* embrace Gentile believers, if the Abrahamic covenant does not. But if the Abrahamic covenant *did* embrace the Gentiles in its promises and provisions, then the Old and New Testament church covenant is *one* and the *same* covenant under both dispensations.

Now we affirm that neither the giving, or doing away of the Sinaic law, or covenant, could change in substance or effect the Abrahamic covenant, since the latter had no *necessary* connection with the former. Hence, Paul argues Gal. 3: "And this I say, that the covenant that 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." The law therefore was *no part* of the Abrahamic covenant, but a totally distinct transaction. There would be no force or propriety in the apostle's allegory, or in saying "these are the two covenants, the one from the Mount Sinai;" if the Abrahamic and Sinaic were one in any sense. To argue that the Abrahamic covenant is done away, or no longer obligatory because the Sinaic has received its fulfillment, is about as much in point, as it would be to argue that the constitution of the state of New-York is done away, because some act or provision of the "Revised Statutes" had passed away by limitation. There is no escape from the conclusion, that if, by "two covenants," the apostle intends to include the Abrahamic as one of them; then the church under the gospel dispensation is based upon the Abrahamic covenant; and thus Gentiles receive, or enjoy "the blessings of Abraham through Jesus Christ."

6. We prove the sameness of the Old and New Testament church covenant, from the sameness of the Old and New Testament religion. That the religion should be the same

under both dispensations, and the church *covenant* distinct, is an absurdity upon the face of the subject. It would be, in effect, arguing that the church covenant had no particular connection with the religion of the church. Yet this must be substantially the position of our opponents, unless they maintain that the religion of the Old and New Testament is *not* the same.

But was not the "gospel preached unto Abraham?" Gal. 3: 8. And does not Paul declare that the gospel was preached to the Israelites in the wilderness? Heb. 4: 2. Were not Old Testament saints saved by the same system of salvation, that gave redemption to the New Testament saints? That the Old Testament inculcates the same doctrines, and the same system of salvation with the New, is absolutely certain, unless God has erred, and set one part of revelation at variance with the other! We have already shewn that every Israelite was bound by the command of Jehovah to "love God with *all* his heart, soul, mind and strength; and his neighbor as himself." Let our opponents shew that God now requires something different—or something that involves *more* than supreme love to God. We have also shown that the "golden rule," Matt. 7: 12, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them," was God's appointed rule for Old Testament saints; yea, the whole nation of Israel were bound by this stern moral precept. Will our opponents inform us where the New Testament inculcates higher and holier principles?

We therefore repeat the question, If the religion of the Old and New Testament is substantially the same, then where is the occasion for a new church covenant? Where is the necessity for a new constitution for the same church, and the same religion? The very idea of such a change is grossly absurd.

Perhaps our opponents will endeavor to break the force of this argument by assuming that the Sinaic covenant embraced the substance of the religion of the Old Testament church, and was therefore, the covenant of the church.

But we deny that the Sinaic covenant was ever given, or designed of God to be the basis of the Old Testament church, or her religion. Had Old Testament saints no church—no religion previous to the giving of the law? The simple facts are these: When God gave the Old Testament church the ceremonial dispensation, he ordained the Sinaic covenant, which embraced that dispensation; and when the ceremonial dispensation was fulfilled, and ceased to be obligatory; then the Sinaic covenant also passed away, because fulfilled. God gave this covenant *to* the church, but not as the basis of the church; as the apostle expressly informs us “it was imposed until the time of reformation.” But will our opponents maintain that the religion of Old Testament saints was essentially changed by the giving of the Sinaic covenant? If not, how could the doing away of that covenant essentially change it? Does a change in heaven-appointed rites and forms change the essential character of religion?

Let our opponents assume that the essential character of religion depends upon the rites and ceremonies of the church, and they at once disrobe Christianity of its chief glory, its inherent moral excellency; and reduce it to a name—a mere shell, liable to become a system of graceless externals, to which the vilest may conform! Rites and ceremonies are but symbols—forms of worship, or means of grace, and essential because ordained of God; but “vain oblations,” and unavailing without a religion deeper toned than mere externals. It reflects little honor upon the Divine character to make him the author of a worldly covenant, which exacts

the "anise, mint, and cummin" in externals, but dispenses with the heart.

While speaking of the Sinaic covenant, we are in the neighborhood of an argument frequently employed by our opponents to set aside the covenant of the Old Testament church, and prove that a new covenant was given to the church under the gospel; to which we now call attention. We are referred to Heb. 8: 7, 8, "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah."

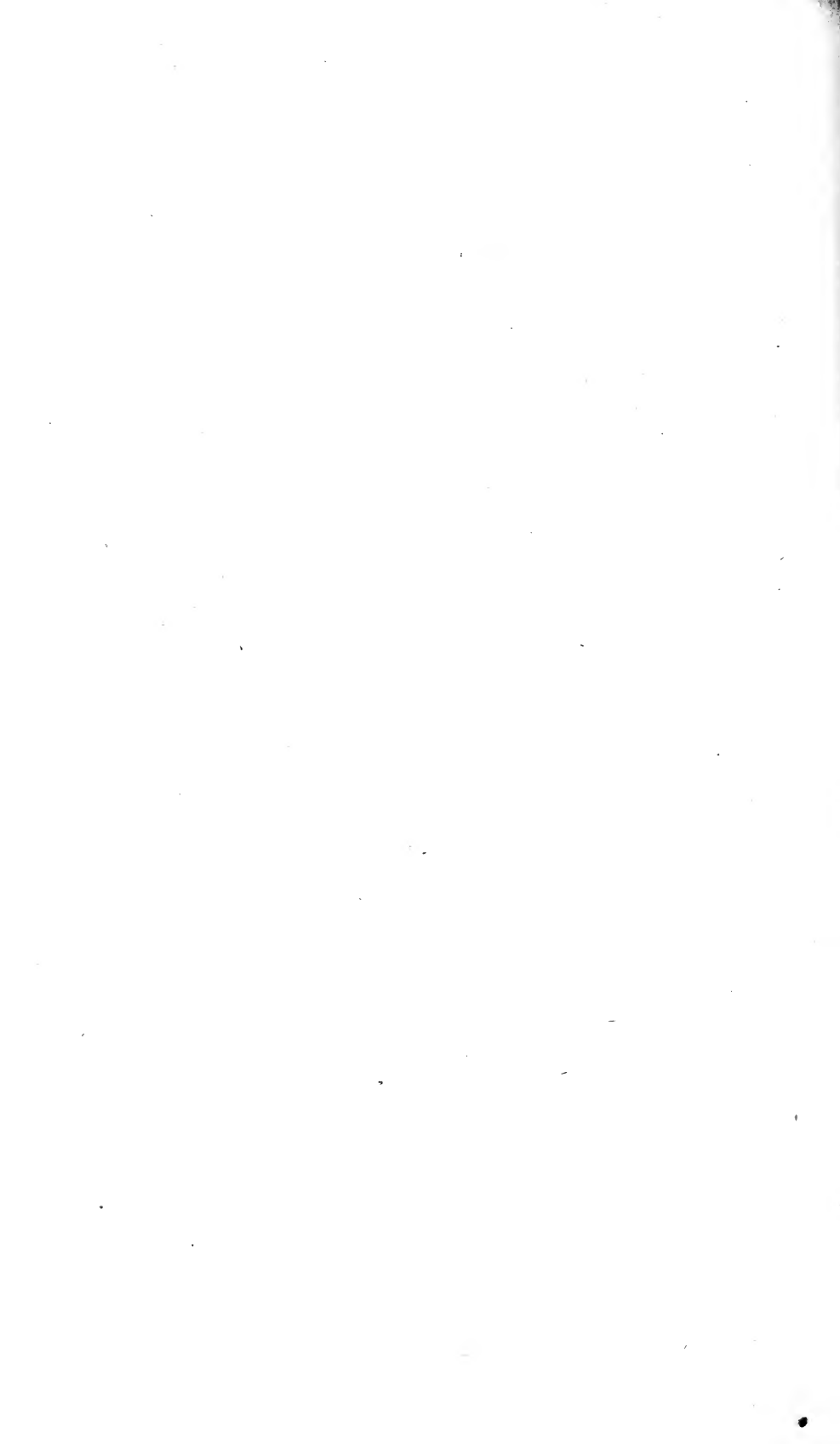
This, our opponents consider unequivocal, and conclusive, in favor of a "new church covenant." But alas! the very next verse, 9th, ruins the whole argument, for the apostle adds, "Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, *in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt.*" So then this *first* covenant which gave place to the *second*, and *new* covenant was simply the Sinaic covenant, made, *not* with Abraham, but with Israel and Judea, *more than 400 years after the Abrahamic covenant!!* If there is the remnant of a doubt in the reader's mind, in relation to our explanation and application of this passage, we ask him to read the chapter, and also the next, where the same subject is continued.

Now we argue from this same passage that the Abrahamic covenant was received and acknowledged as the covenant of the New Testament church in the days of the apostles. Why should the apostle Paul particularly specify the Sinaic covenant, if *both* were done away? Why should "the house of *Israel* and *Judah*" be named in this connection, if *both* Jew and Gentile under the gospel dispensation, were under

a *new* and *distinct* covenant from the Abrahamic? The real design of Paul is obvious, God's ancient covenant people had the promise of the Messiah, and of a change in their ritual dispensation; hence the apostle immediately adds verse 10, "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." This verse is quoted from Ex. 31: 33, and proves that in the fulfillment and removal of the ceremonial dispensation, or Sinaiic covenant, and in giving the gospel, God confirmed his promise to his covenant people.

There is a single point to which we advert before leaving this branch of our subject. Many do not distinguish between the *fulfillment*, and *abrogation* or repeal of a law. Jesus Christ carefully informed his hearers that he came to *fulfill*, and not to abolish, or abrogate the law, or Sinaiic covenant: Matt. 5: 17, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." The Sinaiic covenant, or law was therefore fulfilled, and of course a new covenant or dispensation was admissible. But while Jesus Christ *fulfilled* the *Sinaiic* covenant, he *confirmed* the *promise*, or *Abrahamic* covenant, which promised the Messiah. He was therefore the minister of the circumcision, for the truth of God to confirm the promises made unto the fathers."

Now let our opponents show, that the "covenant that was *confirmed* before of God in Christ," and which embraced all nations, is fulfilled and, therefore, no longer obligatory. Such proof alone can justify the reader in rejecting the Abrahamic covenant, as the constitution of the present church.



TEXT BOOK  
ON  
BAPTISM.

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INFANT BAPTISM VINDICATED,  
AND  
DIFFERENT MODES  
OF  
EQUAL VALIDITY.

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BY ROBERT H. CONKLIN.

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## PREFACE.

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THIS volume is offered to the Christian public, not only in compliance with the advice and counsel of many distinguished gospel ministers of different *faith* and *order* ; but also from the honest conviction, that, as the subject is presented in a somewhat *new* and *original* light, and peculiarly adapted to every class of readers, it will be useful in the church of Christ as a “TEXT BOOK ON BAPTISM.” It goes into the world with the humble prayer of the author, that it *may* be useful—that it may enlighten the ignorant—guide the erring—confirm and establish in truth the doubting—strengthen the weak, and contribute to restore the entire christian church to apostolic faith and practice. It is designed *not* as a substitute for the many *valuable treatises* already in circulation ; but as an *auxiliary*—a kindred, fellow laborer “Earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints.”

That this volume will experience the common ordeal to which theological controversy is subjected, is possible ; nor does the author plead any “exemption act,” in his own behalf, or beg an unmolested passage for his work. He simply claims such Christian courtesy and candor, as a *generous* opponent always bestows ; he asks a patient, prayerful examination of the arguments submitted for the consideration of the reader, before rebuke is administered, or condemnation pronounced.

The author has availed himself of standard writers on both sides of the question ; and has frequently quoted such authorities. He has endeavored *faithfully* and *impartially* to exhibit authorities *when* presented, either by quoting the *substance* or *language* ; and if injustice has been done to any, correction will be gratefully acknowledged.

That the work has some defects both in language and style, is altogether probable ; but as the author has discovered none that materially change, or affect the sense, he commends such imperfections to the candor and forbearance of the reader.

THE AUTHOR.

MARCH 24th, 1847.



MBH 15 Ap 35

## PART SECOND.

# INFANT BAPTISM.

### NEW TESTAMENT ARGUMENT.

MATTHEW, 28 : 19.

“Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

In presenting the New Testament argument in favor of infant church membership, and consequently infant baptism, we are usually met at the door of the discussion with the emphatic question “*Where is a ‘Thus saith the Lord’ for infant baptism—a Divine warrant?*” As if a command, or duty originating in the *Old Testament*, must be repeated in the *New*, before it could be obligatory! We believe, that this question is the result of entire mistaken views, relative to the “*Constitution of the Church;*” we consider it, therefore, important to refresh the mind of our reader, with our remarks upon that subject. PART FIRST p. 10—14.

1. To organize society, civil or religious, some compact or constitution is necessary, as the basis of such society. The very word *organization*, involves the idea of some arrangement or agreement, expressed or understood, which constitutes the bond of union, and forms a rule of action for such organization. When men unite for purposes of government, or any other object, a constitution is the preliminary measure—it is laying the corner-stone, or the foundation

upon which the whole superstructure must rest. If you would learn the character and design of such society—the conditions of membership, the privileges, duties, and responsibilities of its members, go to the constitution. This position is so obvious, that argument seems unnecessary. Our relations as citizens of America, in every form, illustrate and inculcate this truth. Are you a foreigner, and would you become a naturalized citizen of this Republic? You must swear to support the constitution. Would you exercise the duties of an officer under our government? You must first swear to support the constitution.

So in the Divine administration. When God organized his church in the family of Abraham, a covenant or constitution was necessary; and God accordingly made an *everlasting covenant* with Abraham and his seed. We say constitution or covenant, not because we mean to affirm that the two words mean precisely the same thing under all circumstances. But the covenant of circumcision, as we shall endeavor to prove, was emphatically the constitution of the Church, since without compliance with the conditions of that covenant not a member of Abraham's family could enjoy the blessings or privileges promised. Yes; God and his people must treat him as an *alien* and *foreigner* because he had not subscribed and sworn to support the constitution of Israel. Hence, God ordained that the "uncircumcised soul should be cut off from his people;" as a covenant breaker, or one who would not keep covenant with God. And *that* covenant, as we shall prove, bound every man, who accepted its conditions, to worship the God of Abraham, and maintain the ordinances of the true religion. In other words, it bound him to obedience, perpetual and perfect.

Again: The constitution or covenant of the Abrahamic church, defined the conditions of membership, the duties and privileges enjoyed and imposed—all clearly set forth and enforced by considerations as imperious and weighty, as the authority of God and endless destiny of man could make them. Will our opponents take the singular position that the church in Abraham's day had no constitution? We think not, unless they maintain the equally absurd sentiment, that a constitution is not essential to the organization of *any* society.

2. The reader must not *infer* the revision or repeal of the constitution of the church. We should remember, that the revision or repeal of a law, must be as explicit and unequivocal as the enactment. The power that framed the constitution must revoke it, before it

ceases to be obligatory. Multitudes are misled and fall into error for the want of information and proper instruction upon this point. They read the New Testament and discover that changes have occurred in the old dispensation, hence infer that the constitution of the church is altogether new, and must bear date from the introduction of the Christian dispensation. Such individuals are guilty of great impropriety, in looking for a new constitution for the church, simply because certain rites and ceremonies, once typical, have been fulfilled, and consequently given place to others. What would be thought of the intelligence of a lawyer who should infer the repeal of the constitution of the State of New York, because in the year 1830 the State published the "Revised Statutes?" A school boy would point such a lawyer to the history of the State, not to look for "Revised Statutes," but to find a public, formal repeal of the constitution. And such a public, formal repeal of the constitution of a State, would be resolving it into the original disorganized elements.

So in the constitution of the church; a change of dispensations may be a simple revision or change, in rites and ceremonies that does not affect the constitution. The apostle Paul, speaking in Heb. 9; 9, 10, of those very rites and ceremonies, declares they were "imposed until the time of reformation." Now reader, mark, a "time of reformation" does not imply destruction; or any fundamental change in a church; but simple improvement and greater purity of character. The repeal of the constitution of the church would necessarily involve the disorganization of the church. A change of such magnitude—revolutionary, or rather disorganizing the church of God, would not be a private act—a "thing done in a corner." Where then we inquire, is the public, formal act of repealing the *old* constitution, and ordaining the *new* as the present charter of the church? Let the candid reader be consistent and demand chapter and verse—a "Thus saith the Lord," before he abandons that constitution or covenant, which God ratified with his ancient Israel. Where is the act recorded?

There is a law maxim, which applies to the subject now under consideration with peculiar force. *Lex stat dum ratio manet*, i. e., The law stands while the reason remains. This law principle is emphatically true not only in its application to human government and laws, but also in the divine administration. We might suppose *men*

guilty of the folly of changing constitutions and laws, while the reasons for their adoption originally, still remained; but shall we impute such weakness to Him, who is the "same yesterday, to-day and forever?" Therefore, if our opponents maintain that the original constitution of the church is abolished, let them prove, that the reasons for that constitution no longer exist, and that human society, our relations to God and man, have so materially changed, that the church of God demands a *new* constitution: or let them furnish unequivocal evidence of a change of her constitution, and we will be satisfied, that in the Divine mind, the reasons for such a change existed. We hold ourselves responsible for the proof, that God gave the Abrahamic church a constitution, defining the conditions, privileges and duties of membership; while the labor of proving the repeal of that constitution, is the task of objectors.

The reader guided by these general principles, which we conceive to be sound and logical, will find the course of investigation simple and easy. He is not on a tour exploring mythologies, and consulting strange oracles, whose mysterious and doubtful language only adds obscurity to darkness. But to understand the laws and usages of the church of God, he goes to her organization and consults her constitution with the honest inquiry, what does *that* teach? What were the conditions of admission *then*? Who were received into covenant relation *then*? What were the rites and duties, the privileges, promises, and responsibilities *then*? Now the reader is prepared to consult the history of the church and see if her constitution has been revised or repealed; and if so, what changes have occurred, and what reasons have existed for such changes. Hence, the reader does not commence the study of inspired history, where inspired history ends. No: the Old Testament—God's earliest and *first* revelation to man; is his *first* lesson; and, instead of beginning, he *ends* with the New Testament—God's last revelation to man.

Commencing with the New Testament, the study of the constitution, and history of the church, is about as wise, and philosophical, as it would be, to commence studying the political history of the United States, by an examination of documents and papers relating to the acts of the 27th Congress. Or seek to know the occasion of the American Revolution by consulting the Articles of Peace ratified after the war. Would you reason intelligently upon this point, read all that God has revealed.

The examination of the Old Testament Scriptures, with reference to this subject, has led us to the following conclusions; nor do we see how our opponents can possibly avoid these same conclusions, with even a *plausible* argument.

First: we have shown, that the Old Testament church, organized under the covenant of circumcision, was the true visible church of God; and that infants were divinely constituted members of the church by the same religious rite that constituted adults members.

Secondly: we have shown that the Old and New Testament church is *one* and the *same* church, under different dispensations; but based upon the *same* covenant, viz. the covenant of circumcision.

We are now prepared, intelligently to enter upon the examination of this subject in the New Testament, and inquire whether there has been any change in the policy; or alteration of the constitution of the church, calculated materially to affect the relation and standing of the children of believers, and cast them out of the church. Has the coming of Jesus Christ cut them off from public, visible covenant relation with the church, so that the initiating rite is denied them? Do they sustain no other visible covenant relation than the offspring of unbelievers? Or does "God's everlasting covenant" *still* confer all the privileges enjoyed by Jewish parents; and promise all the blessings set forth by the declaration, "I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee?" May believing parents *still* enter publicly into covenant with God, and bring their children with them as being also included in the covenant? That the latter is true, we will now undertake to establish in the following order.

I. The children of God's believing people sustain sub-

stantially the same relation to the true visible church now, that they did before Christ came, and consequently should be baptized.

II. The true visible church has practiced Infant Baptism since the days of the Apostles.

I. The children of God's believing people sustain substantially the same relation to the true visible church now, that they did before Christ came, and consequently should be baptized.

Testimony may be of two kinds—direct, and indirect : or positive and circumstantial. This remark is as true in its application to Scripture doctrine ; as in civil transactions. There is this difference however : in civil transactions the truth of the remark is never denied, while in religious controversy, it is very convenient to challenge conclusions, when hard pressed with arguments drawn from collateral reasoning, or from indirect and circumstantial evidence, and demand an explicit “ Thus saith the Lord ; ” an incontrovertible command. Such a mode of reasoning, if admitted, would divest theology of settled doctrines, and scarcely leave us with the existence of a God ! Who does not know, that even the “ Ten Commandments ” specify but a small part of what is really inculcated, and that many conclusions, admitted and acted upon, by the christian world, are but inferences ? Who will pretend that there is an express law for observing the “ First day of the week ” as the christian sabbath ? Do we not *infer* it, after gleaning from scripture and history the circumstantial evidence that the apostles and primitive christians were divinely instructed to remember the “ First day of the week ” as the “ Lord's day ? ” Where is the command ; or the example in the New Testament for *female communion* ? Were females

present when the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was originally instituted? Does the apostle say "Let a *woman* examine herself and so let her eat of that bread, and drink of that cup?" No: neither command, nor example can be found on the inspired record; but we *infer* from the nature and design of the sacrament, that females have a divine right to unite in celebrating the supper of our common Lord. The same might be said in relation to many other things, wherein the christian world unite in receiving indirect, or circumstantial evidence, as the *only* evidence going to establish certain great principles, by which christian duty may be inferred. Hence to insist upon an unequivocal, direct *command* for *each* duty, would legitimately lead to the abandonment and rejection of most of the outward forms of christianity: it would be in effect, substituting knowledge for belief, and reducing all matters of faith and practice to a moral demonstration!

Now we might reasonably suppose that the same mode of argumentation which leads us to *infer* duty in regard to the christian sabbath, female communion, &c. would be equally satisfactory in support of infant church membership: that if the visible covenant relation of children tended to impress obligation upon believing parents, and consequently secured a greater measure of fidelity in "bringing them up in the nature and admonition of the Lord," then we might *infer* duty on the ground of utility. But "no" say our opponents in their objections to infant baptism, "Give us a 'Thus saith the Lord' for your practice." *Again*: we might suppose, that if it could be shown, that God provided, in the constitution of the church, for infant church membership; and that scripture is silent, as to any change or repeal, materially affecting the covenant relation of children, then the *inference* would necessarily

follow "The children of God's people are still in covenant relation with the church." But no: our opponents must have a "Thus saith the Lord" from the *New Testament*; or apostolic examples so clear that every lingering doubt gives way; or the seed of Abraham's children must be cast out of the visible church; although no repeal of the ancient charter can be found on the inspired record.

But let not our reader suppose that we design to base infant church membership upon mere inferences. We have, in this place simply anticipated the nature and form of the *main* objection; that our reader, throughout the length and breadth of our New Testament argument, may the better judge of the relative strength of each position, and the soundness of our conclusions.

We shall endeavor to prove to the satisfaction of our reader, that infant church membership is not an innovation, or novel institution—a corruption of christianity; but is founded on the express *law* and *constitution* of the church of God; that it fully accords with the *precepts*, and with the *practice* of the apostolic church: that it is sanctioned by *reason* and christian experience—urged by the consideration of its utility: and finally, that through every age and period of christianity, *Ecclesiastical History* traces it as a standing *Order* and *Institution* of the true visible church of God.

#### LAW AND TESTIMONY.

When Abraham entered into covenant with God, it was with the understanding, and upon the express condition that all of the male members of his household should also receive the seal of the *same* covenant and consequently become members of the *same* church, and profess the *same*



religion. Had Abraham refused, or neglected to place the rite of circumcision upon his offspring, God would have excluded him from the rights and privileges of that same covenant; and that circumcision *did* constitute the seed of Abraham members of the true visible church, is absolutely certain from the fact, 1. That the uncircumcised soul was cut off from the people of God. 2. The uncircumcised person was excluded from the ordinances of the church. 3. God excluded the uncircumcised from his sanctuary. Gen. 17; 14. Ex. 12; 48. Ez. 44; 9. How could an Israelite be a member of the visible church, if "cut off from the people of God," and excluded from the sanctuary of God, and from the ordinances of the church? And what greater privileges would church members enjoy, so far as the worship of the "Living and true God" is concerned, than to be numbered with God's people, have a place in his sanctuary, and access to the ordinances of the true religion? But it seems unnecessary to argue this point, since our opponents very generally admit that children were constituted members of the Jewish church, and were under the covenant of circumcision. See Part I, p. 59, 60.

But then the question recurs again; If God put the children of his people *in* the church, how do our opponents get them *out* of the church? By what authority do they act in excluding from covenant and church relation the seed of Abraham's children? Where is a "Thus saith the Lord," for this departure from the original constitution and usage of God's visible church—this innovation upon the rights and privileges of parents professing godliness? If the "amending or repealing act," casting the children of believers *out* of the church, is on record, then let our opponents produce that "act;" or incontrovertible evidence of such "act;" but not ask us to *infer* a change of the con-

stitution of the church, from certain controverted positions of their own ! God, by solemn, formal covenant transaction “has joined together” in church relation, his professing people and their infant offspring ; and “let not man put asunder” until the Divine Law-giver shall revoke his own Constitution, and dissolve the long cherished covenant relation of children. Let no mere *inference* ; or doubtful interpretation of Scripture, be a substitute in the mind of our reader for the “Law of Repeal.” Do our opponents plead the “*silence* of the New Testament” touching infant church membership, and consequently infant baptism ?— Silence is no evidence of change. But silence *is* evidence that the Constitution of the church is *unchanged*, and that the *rejection* of infant church membership, is upon *mere human responsibility*, and in opposition to the original charter.

Our opponents are sensible of the strength of this position, and in various ways endeavor to escape the dilemma : *First* ; by denying the spiritual character of the covenant of circumcision : *Second* ; by denying the *oneness*, or identity of the Old and New Testament church ; and *Third*, by introducing certain New Testament passages of Scripture to prove that infants are incapable of complying with the conditions of baptism and church membership. Upon their *first* and *second* positions, we deem it unnecessary to say more ; but simply refer our reader to *Part First*. And their *third* position shall receive attention in due time, and in proper order.

#### CHILDREN INCLUDED.

God never made a covenant with his people, which did not extend to their children ; and in some form secure to

them its blessings and its privileges. God said to Noah, Gen. 9: 9, "And I, behold I establish my covenant with you, and with your *seed* after you." To Abraham God said, Gen. 17: 7, "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy *seed* after thee, in their generations for an everlasting covenant." In Deut. 29: 10—13, when the Israelites stood up and entered into covenant with God, it is expressly stated, that their "little ones"—children, were also included in the covenant and enjoyed its provisions and promises. The same idea is carried through New Testament transactions. Hence, when Zaccheus is converted, the Lord Jesus Christ is careful to observe, Luke 19: 9, "This day is salvation come to this *house*, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham." When the multitude on the day of Pentecost, "were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter urges them to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, and in the very next verse adds, Acts 2: 39, "For the *promise* is unto *you* and to your *children*." Again: when Peter explains the circumstances connected with the conversion of Cornelius, the same truth is brought to view, Acts 11: 14, "Who shall tell thee words whereby thou and all thy *house* shall be saved." And when Paul answers the inquiry of the trembling jailer, it is in language that conveys the same sentiment. Acts 16: 31, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy *house*."

These examples are sufficient to prove that it is not peculiar to the Old Testament to promise blessings to believers and their offspring. The reader will also remember that the language quoted from the New Testament, comes from Jews by birth and education—men, who

had been initiated into the true visible church in infancy, and were familiar with the promise “ I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee, in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto *thee* and to thy *seed* after thee.” Can it be possible then, that when these same Jews preach salvation to believers and their *households*, and declare that the “ promise is to them and to their *children*,” that they have no allusion to God’s covenant with his people and their children? Or do they recognize the standing order of the visible church; and on the strength and promise of “ God’s everlasting covenant” assure believing parents, that *their* children are included, as were the seed of “ faithful Abraham?” For instance, how would Jewish hearers, and Jewish converts to christianity understand Peter—their own countryman, when he declares in language peculiar to their own nation and religion, “ For the promise is unto you and to your children?” Would they infer that the children of God’s people must now be cast out of the church, and cut off from the covenant which says “ I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee?” Or would they necessarily infer, that the rights, privileges and relations of their children under the gospel dispensation, were substantially the same as under the original, unrepealed constitution of the church; and that “ the promise” brought to view by the apostle Peter was peculiarly Abrahamic in its character and design? To what “ promise” does Peter refer, if not to the promise in the Abrahamic covenant—the covenant that provides for infant church membership?

Since writing the above, we have taken up Peter Edwards’ “ Candid Reasons;” and his remarks upon the text “ For the promise is unto you and to your children,” are so much in point that we give them at length, without apolo-

gy. Our reader will remember that Mr. Edwards was for many years a distinguished baptist minister ; hence understood “ the crooks and turns ” in the system. See Edwards, page 71—83, inclusive.

Acts ii. 38, 39. “ Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”

As this passage is only brought forward to show, that infants are spoken of in the New Testament, as church-members, agreeable to the ancient dispensation of God ; I shall confine myself to these three conclusions :

I. That the phrase, “ to you and to your children,” intends adults and infants.

II. That this promise must comprehend adults and infants, wherever it comes, even as long as God shall continue his word to us.

III. That infants are placed in the same relation to baptism, as they were of old to circumcision.

These I shall now proceed to evince ; and in the first place I affirm,

I. That the phrase, To you and to your children, intends adults and infants. This may be proved by considering,

1. The resemblance between this promise, and that in Gen. xvii. 7. “ To be a God unto thee, and unto thy seed after thee.” The resemblance between these two lies in two things ; 1. Each stands connected with an ordinance, by which persons were to be admitted into church-fellowship ; the one by circumcision, the other by baptism.

Both agree in phraseology ; the one is, “ to thee, and to thy seed ; ” the other is, “ to you, and to your children.” Now every one knows that the word seed means children ; and that children means seed ; and that they are precisely the same. From these two strongly resembling features, *viz.* their connexion with a similar ordinance, and the sameness of the phraseology, I infer, that the subjects expressed in each, are the very same. And as it is certain that parents and in

fants were intended by the one ; it must be equally certain that both are intended by the other.

2. The sense, in which the speaker must have understood the sentence in question. The promise is, to you and to your children.

In order to know this, we must consider who the speaker was, and from what source he received his religious knowledge. The Apostle, it is evident, was a Jew, and brought up in the Jewish church. He knew the practice of that church, with respect to those who were admitted to be its members. He knew, that he himself had been admitted in infancy, and that it was the ordinary practice of the church to admit infants to membership. And he likewise knew, that in this they acted on the authority of that place, where God promises to Abraham, "to be a God unto him, and to his seed." Now if the Apostle knew all this ; in what sense could he understand the term children, as distinguished from their parents? I have said, that *tekna*, children, and *sperma*, seed, mean the same thing. And as the Apostle well knew, that the term seed intended infants, though not mere infants only ; and that infants were circumcised, and received into the church, as being the seed ; what else could he understand, by the term children, when mentioned with their parents? Those who will have the Apostle to mean, by the term children, adult posterity only, have this infelicity attending them, that they understand the term differently from all other men ; and this absurdity, that they attribute to the Apostle a sense of the word, which to him must have been the most unfamiliar and forced. And, therefore, that sense of the word for which they contend, is the most unlikely of all to be the true one, because it is utterly improbable that a person should use a word in that sense which to him, and to all the world beside, was altogether unfamiliar.

3. In what sense his hearers must have understood him, when he said, "The promise is to you, and to your children."

The context informs us, that many of St. Peter's hearers, as he himself was, were Jews. They had been accustomed for many hundred years to receive infants, by circumcision, into the church ; and this they did, as before observed, because God had promised to be a God to Abraham, and to his seed. They had understood this promise, to mean parents and their infant offspring ; and this idea was become familiar by the practice of many centuries. What then must have been their views, when one of their own community says to them, "The promise is to you, and to your children?" If their

practice of receiving infants was founded on a promise exactly similar, as it certainly was; how could they possibly understand him, but as meaning the same thing, since he himself used the same mode of speech? This must have been the case, unless we admit this absurdity, that they understood him in a sense to which they had never been accustomed.

How idle a thing it is, in a Baptist, to come with a lexicon in his hand, and a criticism in his head, to inform us that *tekna*, children, means posterity! Certainly it does, and so means the youngest infants. The verb *tikto*, from which it comes, signifies, to bring forth, *i. e.* the offspring. And are not infants of that number? But the Baptists will have it that *tekna*, children, in this place, means only adult posterity. And, if so, the Jews to whom he spoke, unless they understood him in a way in which it was morally impossible they should, would infallibly have understood him wrong. Certainly all men, when acting freely, will understand words in that way which is most familiar to them; and nothing could be more familiar to the Jews, than to understand such a speech, as Peter's, to mean adults and infants. So that if the Jews, the awakened Jews, had apprehended the Apostle to mean only adults, when he said, "To you and your children;" they must have had an understanding of such a peculiar construction, as to make that sense of a word, which to them was totally unnatural and forced, to become familiar and easy.

We should more certainly come at the truth, if, instead of idly criticising, we could fancy ourselves Jews, and in the habit of circumcising infants, and receiving them into the church. And then, could we imagine one of our own nation and religion, to address us in the very language of Peter in this text, "The promise is to you and your children;" let us ask ourselves, as in the sight of God, whether we could ever suppose him to mean adult posterity only? Or if, instead of putting ourselves in the situation of Jews, we should suppose the Apostle to address the members of the establishment, in the same phraseology, as he did the Jews, can any person doubt, whether they would understand him to mean adults and infants?—It is certainly impossible. And why? Because they have been for ages in the habit of receiving infants into the church. Just so it was with the Jews when the Apostle addressed them; and therefore, they could no more have understood him, as meaning to exclude in-

fants, than the members of the establishment would by the use of the same phrase.

I have been endeavoring to prove that both Peter, who spoke, and the Jews, who were his hearers, must have understood the promise in the text to mean adults and infants; because such a meaning would be to them the most natural and obvious, both from their own habit and practice, and from its exact resemblance to that promise on which their practice was founded, and by which their habit was formed. But since Mr. Booth and all the Baptists will have it to mean no such thing, I shall only say, as Mr. B. does in his answer to Dr. Williams, page 274, "Then Dr. Samuel Johnson might well say, though a man accustomed to satisfy himself with the obvious and natural meaning of a sentence, does not easily shake off his habit, yet a true-bred lawyer never contents himself with this sense when there is another to be found. My opponent, says Mr. B. to Dr. W. seems to have imbibed the spirit of Dr. Johnson's true-bred lawyer; for he cannot be at all content with the obvious and natural meaning, &c." *Mutato nomine, &c.* This is true of Mr. Booth.—I am to prove in the next place,

II. That this promise must comprehend adults and infants wherever it comes, let it come wherever it may.

The Apostle, in applying this promise, distinguishes those to whom it is to apply into present and absent. The first class were his hearers; the second he describes two ways—all that are afar off,—as many as the Lord our God shall call. To each of these classes, *viz.* those who were present, and those who were absent, he applies the promise in the text. To those who were present the promise is, to you and to your children;—to those afar off, and the promise is to you and to your children;—to as many as the Lord our God shall call, the promise is to you and to your children. Let the promise come to what persons soever it may, it must come to them and to their children; because the promise must be the same wherever God shall send it. I have already proved that the words [you and children] mean adults and infants; and both being in the promise, it must therefore belong to each: to you adults and to your infants, who are present; to you adults, who are afar off, and to your infants; to as many adults as the Lord our God shall call, and their infants. That this is true may be proved by considering the essence or nature of the promise.

There are two things which enter into the essence of a promise:



It must contain some good—it must be made to some person or persons. That these two belong to the essence of a promise appears by this, that if either be taken away, there can be no promise—*e. g.*—I will be a God to thee and to thy seed; the good in this promise is God himself—the persons were Abraham and his seed. If the good be taken away, it will then be no promise, I will—to thee and to thy seed. The case will be the same if the persons are taken away; I will be a God—in either case it is no promise. So when a promise is made to different persons, one person is as essential to the promise as the other—*e. g.* I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed; the promise is as much to the seed as to Abraham, and as much to Abraham as to the seed; because both are essential to the promise.

Now the Apostle, expressing the essence or nature of the promise in the text, as it respects the objects, says, “The promise is to you and to your children.” Both parts, therefore, belong to the promise; it is essential to the promise that it be—to you;—it is likewise essential to it that it be to your children. And the case being so, we cannot take away either part without violating the essence of the promise. We have no more right to say, The promise is to you, but not to your children, than the promise is to your children, but not to you; for as it was the design of God that the promise should be to both, it was his design that it should be to their children as truly as to themselves. And so the promise must be to Peter’s hearers and their children—to all that are afar off, and to their children—to as many as the Lord our God shall call, and to their children; and the reason is, both enter into the essence of the promise. So when God said, “I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed,” it would apply, in the same form, “to thee and to thy seed,” to every man and every generation of men of the offspring of Abraham, as long as the promise was in force.

Mr. Booth objects to this, in vol. ii. p. 355, and says, “These words [as many as the Lord our God shall call] are, as plainly as possible, a limiting clause, and extend a restrictive force to the term, children, as much as to the pronoun, you, or to that descriptive language, all that are afar off.” To this I reply, that the Apostle himself did not make use of that limit which Mr. B. says is so plain; for the Apostle actually spoke to those who, in Mr. B.’s sense, were already awakened and called; and then, as plainly as possible, distinguishes between them and their children. Now if the Apostle

addressed those who were already called, and extended the promise beyond them, even to their children, then the promise was not limited to the called. But this the Apostle actually did as plainly as words could express it; for he spoke to those who were pricked in their heart, and said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" To these he said, "The promise is unto you"—and, instead of confining it to them only, he extends it to their children also; and so passes over that limit which Mr. B. is pleased to lay down. And as the Apostle extends the promise beyond the called in the first clause, we must follow his example, and extend it beyond the called in the last clause—thus the promise is to as many as the Lord our God shall call, and to their children: and then Mr. B.'s limiting clause will be nothing more than a very lame evasion.

Notwithstanding this, there is some truth in Mr. B.'s idea respecting the limiting clause, though he himself, by misapplication, has done violence to that truth. That clause, "to as many as the Lord our God shall call," is really a limiting clause, but not in that way Mr. B. supposes. This, like every other promise, has two limits, and these two are fixed by two limiting clauses. One limit determines how wide the promise shall extend; the other how far it is to run—the one is a limit of latitude, the other of longitude. The limit of latitude extends to parents and children—that of longitude reaches down "to as many as the Lord our God shall call." And as there is a perfect harmony between these two, there is no need to destroy the one in order to preserve the other; for both limits being settled and fixed, that of latitude, which extends to parents and children, must continue firm, till, through successive ages, it comes down to that of longitude, which reaches to as many as the Lord our God shall call; that is, as long as God shall continue to call, the promise shall pertain to parents and children.

Mr. B. therefore, was very right in making this a limiting clause, for so it really is; but he was very wrong when, instead of preserving both, he set one limit to destroy the other. And as it often falls out that those who do violence to the spirit of a text, are led to utter some rash expression against the letter of it, just so it has fallen out in Mr. B.'s case. He has violated one limit in the text, and has so expressed himself as to exceed all limits of truth. In vol. ii. p. 354, he has said, "There is nothing said about the promise respecting any besides those who were then awakened." Those, who were awakened, are distinguished by the pronoun "you;" and it is

certain something is said about the promise respecting them. But, says Mr. B. "there is nothing said about the promise respecting any besides." Mr. B. should not have said this with the text before his eyes. He should first have erased that clause of it, "and to your children," and not have let it stand to stare him in the face, and convict him of falsehood. As something was said about the promise respecting those who were awakened, and their children both, he might as well have denied it respecting the awakened, as to deny it respecting their children: but it is often the fate of those who oppose truth to lose truth and modesty together.

When any dispute happens on a place of Scripture, and it cannot be settled from the context, the best way is to pass to a similar place, and observe (if there be any plain indications) in what manner that was understood, and what practice took place upon it. That passage, to which the text bears the strongest resemblance, is Genesis xvii. 7. "I will establish my covenant—to be a God unto thee and to thy seed." There is no place in Scripture so like the text as this; they are both worded in the same way—"to thee and to thy seed"—to you and to your children: They are both connected with a religious ordinance. By seed, which is the same as children, was meant an infant of eight days old and upwards; and because a promise is made to the seed, an infant becomes the subject of a religious ordinance. Now, if the language of the text be similar, and if it be connected with a religious ordinance as that was, what better comment can be made upon it than what that passage suggests! Why should not the ideas be alike, if the language and circumstances be so? The reason why a comparing of Scripture with Scripture assists the understanding, is this: When God uses the same kind of language in two places of Scripture, and the circumstances are alike, it is plain he means to be understood as intending similar things. This is so sure a rule of interpretation, that we are not afraid of venturing our everlasting interests upon it. And, by adopting it in this instance, the result will be clearly this: That the Holy Ghost, by the phrase, "you and your children," meant adults and infants; that these are placed together in the same promise, and that the promise, thus made to adults and infants, is connected with baptism. And from hence it may be proved,

III. That infants are placed in the same relation to baptism, as they were of old to circumcision.

Let any one compare the two places together, *viz.* Gen. xvii. 7, 9,

10, and this now before us, and he will see that parents and children are united, in each promise, in the same way—there the promise is, “to thee and to thy seed”—here it is, “to you and to your children;”—that the promise, in each place, is connected with a religious ordinance. In Genesis it is connected with circumcision—in this text with baptism;—that, in both places, the ordinance is made to result from the promise—the one is set down as a reason for the other; Gen. xvii. 9. “Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore;” that is, because God had given a promise. So here, “Repent, and let every one of you, of your’s, be baptized, for (*gar*, because) the promise is to you and to your children:” Infants, therefore, in this passage, are placed in the same relation to baptism as they were anciently to circumcision. This being so, I reason thus:

When a positive institute is connected with a promise, all who are contained in the promise, have a right to the institute. I think any one may be compelled to grant this, as it is certainly an undeniable truth; for if parents must, therefore, be circumcised because they are included in the promise, then, as infants are also included in the promise, they too must be circumcised. All this is evinced by the history of circumcision, and is indeed a self-evident case; because if a promise give a right to an institute, the institute must belong to all who are interested in the promise. And, therefore, we may reason thus: If parents must be baptized because the promise belongs to them, then must their infants be baptized, because the promise is to them also. This mode of reasoning is the more certain, as it is confirmed, beyond all doubt, by the divine procedure; for if you ask, Who were to be circumcised? the reply is, Those to whom the promise was made. If you inquire again, To whom was the promise made; we answer, to adults and infants. Again, if you ask, Who are to be baptized? the answer is, Those to whom the promise is made. But to whom is it made? The Apostle says, “To you and to your children.” Now what proof more direct can be made or desired for infant baptism?

From these premises the result is plainly this: That as infants stand, in this text, in the same relation to baptism as they did to circumcision, their right to the one must be the same as it was to the other. The case, in both instances, stands fairly thus: The promise connects itself with the ordinance; that with circumcision—this with baptism. It also connects two parties together, infants and parents, and unites them both to that ordinance with which it-

self is connected. It is by virtue of the union of the promise with the ordinance that those who have an interest in the one have a right to the other ; and when two parties, parents and children, are interested in the same promise, and that promise gives a right to the ordinance, it gives the same right to both the parties who are interested in it. And hence, as parents and children are interested in the promise, the right of the children to the ordinance is the same as that of parents.

Acts 2 : 38, 39, " Then Peter said unto them, Repent," &c. See also Rev. Isaac Clinton's Treatise, page 29—39.

We have now shown, that by the authority and command of God, children were originally in covenant relation with the true visible church ; and that so far from any material change, or repeal of the ancient constitution of the church, New Testament ministers assure their Jewish hearers, that they " are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham 'And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed,' " Acts 3 : 24. They assure them that " The promise is unto them, and to their children ; and to all that are afar off," i. e. Gentiles. To the Gentiles they preach, Gal. 3 : 29, " If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise," and " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house : " hence both Jew and Gentile meet, and mutually enjoy the privileges and promises of God's everlasting covenant with his people and their children.

We are now prepared to examine the command which heads our New Testament argument : "*Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*"

Let the reader bear in mind, that " as concerning the flesh " Christ was a descendant of Abraham—a Jew,

circumcised on the eighth day, and educated in the observance of the rites, ceremonies and ordinances of the Jewish church. The same may be said of all the Apostles, they were Jews by birth and education: Hence, both the law-giver, and they who received the "commission" were familiar with infant church membership, as a divine institution. The reader will also remember, that previous to the command "Go ye therefore and teach all nations," &c. few Gentiles had been proselyted to the true religion. That the Saviour confined *his* labor to the Jewish nation, needs no proof: and it is equally certain that during his mission on earth, his disciples labored with their own countrymen. "Go not into the way of the Gentiles . . . . but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel;" was the express instruction of Jesus Christ. Matt. 10: 5, 6. But after his resurrection from the dead, when, "All power was given unto him in heaven and in earth," the way being now prepared for the enlargement of the church, by accessions from the Gentile world, the Lord Jesus Christ now gives the command, "Go ye therefore and teach *all* nations."

The careful reader will observe that in this commission the words "*teach*" and "*teaching*" occur in the same connection, and are evidently employed to express the main duty involved in the commission. Baptism seems to be rather *incidental*, or consequent to what is inculcated by the word "teach" as used in the first instance; and therefore less important. Hence, the apostle Paul could declare, 1 Cor. 1: 17 "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel," i e. preaching was the main duty. But, what are we to understand by the language, "Go ye, therefore, teach all nations, baptizing them . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have

commanded you?" Did the Saviour intend to repeat precisely the same sentiment over and over, saying "go teach all nations . . . teaching them," &c. ; or did he mean to define the order to be observed in the execution of the command? That the latter was the real design of Christ, we shall now undertake to prove.

The Greek word for "teach" used in the first instance, is *matheteusate*, and, correctly translated would read—"Go ye therefore and make disciples, or proselytes of all nations, baptizing them," &c. But the Greek word for "teaching," used immediately after, is *didaskontes*, and properly signifies to *teach*, or to give instruction. Hence, the commission presents us three distinct points, viz.

1. Go and make disciples, or proselytes.
2. Baptize them.
3. Teach, or instruct them.

That the Greek word for "teach," used in the first instance, more properly signifies "to disciple," we presume no intelligent Baptist will deny; so that any argument based upon this rendering of *matheteusate*, "Go disciple," will be sound, so far as criticism is concerned. Indeed, so far from objecting to this rendering, our opponents claim, that to be discipled in the sense of the text under consideration, is equivalent to embracing the Lord Jesus Christ by faith, and consequently is a prerequisite for baptism: hence, they affirm that infants are improper subjects of baptism, because they are incapable of being made disciples.

But let our reader remember, that the apostles were sent to disciple and baptize the nations of the earth; that they were all Jews by birth and education; had consequently been brought up in the belief and practice of infant church membership; were accustomed to see Gentiles discipled to their religion, and enter their church; and knew that the children of such proselytes were at-

ways received with their parents into the same church, by the same rite of initiation; and then what must we conclude in regard to the practice of the apostles? Can it be possible, that they understood from the command, "Go make disciples, or proselytes, baptize and teach," that the children of such proselytes must now be excluded from covenant relation with the church! Suppose the commission read "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations circumcising them," would there have been any doubts in the minds of our opponents relative to infant circumcision? How then can the relation of children be changed by baptism substituting circumcision, when *both* refer to a work of grace in the heart, and *both* were rites of initiation into the true visible church of God.

But the reader will perceive, that our opponents rely upon the word "disciple" as expressing moral character—an intelligent follower of Jesus Christ—a sincere believer—one, not only capable of understanding, but also cordially embracing the gospel. Because, if the word "disciple" does not necessarily describe a true follower of Jesus Christ, then the idea of actual faith as an indispensable condition of baptism, is exploded, since the apostles were sent, simply to make disciples and baptize and teach them. That the word "disciple," in the New Testament *ordinarily* may denote a sincere follower of Christ, we will not deny. But that it *always* necessarily denotes christian character, we do *deny*. The reader has only to consult Matt. 10: 1—also 20: 17, and he will find that even Judas was a disciple. In John 6: 66, we read "From that time *many* of his *disciples* went back and walked no more with him." Hence it is obvious either, that *many* fell from grace; or *many disciples* were not



christians. If the reader will compare Matt. 8 : 19—22 with Luke 9 : 57—60, he will find that some were even *called* disciples, who simply expressed an *intention* of following Christ—yes; even *before they began* to carry their professed intention into practice. Will any one pretend that the multitude disciplined and baptized by John; and the still greater number made disciples and baptized by Christ and the apostles, were all renewed by the Spirit of God, previous to their baptism: or that these divine teachers even supposed them, at the time, truly regenerated, but were deceived in relation to their real moral character. Look at facts—scripture facts. From Matt. 3 : 5, 6, it appears, that Jerusalem and *all* Judea, and *all* the region round about Jordan,” were baptized by John: and in John 4 : 1, 2, we read that “Jesus (and his disciples) *made* and baptized *more* disciples than John.” Now if our opponents assumed that John the Baptist, and Jesus Christ and his apostles *intended* to baptize *none* but such as gave evidence of piety, or professed faith in the Messiah, then one of two things must necessarily follow:—Either, “Jerusalem, and *all* Judea, and *all* the region round about Jordan,” baptized by John; and the multitude made disciples and baptized by Christ and his apostles, were savingly converted to God: or John, and Jesus, and the apostles were awfully imposed upon and deceived by their professed converts!! But, were the Jews so universally converted, even before the death of the Messiah? Did “Jerusalem and all Judea” and the vast numbers disciplined and baptized by Christ and his apostles—*all* receive “believer’s baptism?” Or were these divine teachers so deceived? Believe it, who can—we *dare* not.

But if our opponents dare not assume and abide by either of the above positions; then they are necessarily

driven to our own conclusions : viz. neither John the Baptist, nor Jesus Christ, or the apostles, considered actual faith, or christian character, absolutely necessary to constitute a disciple : therefore, when the Lord Jesus Christ said "Go make disciples of all nations, baptizing them," &c. he spake in accordance with the covenant and constitution of the church of God, which had always recognized the *right* and *duty* of making proselytes from the Gentile world—both of adults and their infant seed with them. True : the field is now enlarged, and the rite of initiation is changed ; but Jesus utters nothing to support the idea that faith must now precede Baptism : or that infant church membership is abolished. Hence the doctrine that "Believers are the *only proper subjects of baptism*" has no foundation or countenance in the Great Commission, to disciple and baptize all nations.

But let us now examine whether God holds *infants* as incapable of covenant relation—the children of his people as enjoying no place or name in the visible church, other than is enjoyed by the offspring of the unbelieving world. Does the bible ever speak of infants as proselytes, or disciples in any sense ? Does it ever represent them in that character and relation ?

1. Children entered into covenant with God : Deut. 29 : 10—13, "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God : your captains of your tribes, your elders and your officers, with all the men of Israel, *your little ones*, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water. That thou shouldest *enter into covenant* with the Lord thy God," &c. Here the entire host of Israel, "*little ones*" and all, stood up and entered into covenant with God.

2. Infants had a station assigned them in the sanctuary

of God : Num. 3 : 28. " In the number of all the males from a *month old* and upwards, were eight thousand and six hundred *keeping the charge of the sanctuary.*" Little Samuel was carried to the house of the Lord, as soon as weaned. See 1 Sam. 1 : 24.

3. The children of God's people were considered " a *holy seed,*" Ezra, 9 : 2, because consecrated to God in covenant relation. Hence, Isaiah, speaking of God's covenant people, declares, Chap. 65 : 23, " They are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their *offspring* with them." The fact that children were a " holy seed," imposed peculiar obligations upon parents to educate and train them up for God and his church. Such children were considered as the " seed of the church"—the germs, or incipient moral elements of her perpetuity and spiritual increase.

4. Among the Jews, the children of Gentile proselytes were also considered proselytes, and were initiated into covenant relation with the church by the administration of the same religious rite, viz. circumcision. This is so obvious, that we need not offer proof. If the reader wishes to examine this subject, we refer him to Wall's His. of Inf. Bap. Vol. I. p. 4—26 inclusive.

We now call attention to the New Testament with special reference to the same general facts. The candid reader will see that in both New and Old, the relations described and the names applied, all indicate the rights and privileges enjoyed by the children of God's people, peculiar to the original constitution of the church; hence, New Testament writers must have understood, that children were still to be received with their parents into covenant relation with the church.

1. The children of believing parents, under the gospel

dispensation, belong to the visible church, or kingdom of God. Luke 18 : 16, " But Jesus called them unto him and said, suffer *little children* to come unto me, and forbid them not : *for of such is the Kingdom of God ;*" i. e. " The kingdom of God" belongs to such—they have rights and privileges in that kingdom. That the "kingdom of God" in this place, and in parallel passages, denotes the visible church, we shall undertake to prove in due time.

2. The children of God's people are reputed "holy," or proper subjects to be consecrated to God. 1 Cor. 7 : 14, " For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband : else were your children unclean ; but now are they *holy.*" Things "unclean" could not be offered to God, under the law ; while things reputed *clean* or *holy* were proper offerings. The Greek word rendered "holy" in this text, is elsewhere translated "*saint*" or "*saints.*" For example, see 1 Cor. 1 : 2, " To them that are sanctified (set apart) in Christ Jesus, called to be *saints.*" Eph. 1 : 1, " To the *saints* which are at Ephesus." Col. 1 : 2, " To the *saints* and faithful brethren in Christ." Hence, while the children of God's people are reputed a "*holy seed*" in the old testament, they are considered "*holy children*" in the new.

3. The children of God's people are called "disciples." That such children as are capable of exercising faith, may be denominated "disciples," our opponents will not deny. But self-preservation demands, that the admission should extend no further ; since, if children incapable of faith may be disciples, they may also receive baptism. Matt. 10 : 42, " And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." " Little ones" then, were capable of being dis-

ciples. That the Saviour speaks of little children is certain from Mark 9 : 36, 37, where it is said " he took him (one of them) in his arms."

In Acts 15 we find a dissension relative to circumcision. The Jews insisted that the brethren must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses. Peter, in council, replies as follows : " Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the *disciples* which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear." That this yoke was " circumcision and the law of Moses," none will deny. But was not this yoke put upon the necks of infants, as well as adults ; consequently, must not infants have been among the disciples ; as they were always among proselytes under the law ? Hence, if Peter by the word " disciples" refers to the proper subjects of circumcision under the law, then infants are disciples ; because they were proper subjects of circumcision. We see not how our opponents can avoid this conclusion, unless they deny, that the circumcision of proper subjects under the law was the subject of controversy ; or maintain that Peter's answer had no relevancy to the question under consideration. We leave them to decide which.

4. Whoever has attended to this controversy, is aware that the great objection to infant baptism is based upon the assumption that infants are incapable of moral exercises ; therefore cannot comply with the conditions upon which baptism is administered. This objection either overlooks, or discards the fact, that in certain relations, God speaks of children, and treats them as accountable moral beings, possessing the *same* character, and under the *same* obligations as adults. Hence, the children of God's people if uncircumcised, were considered and treated as covenant breakers ; Gen. 17 : 14. They entered into cov-

enant with God; Deut. 29: 11. They were considered a "holy seed;" Ez. 9: 2. They are called the children of God; Ezk. 16: 21. Holy children; 1 Cor. 7: 14. Jeremiah was sanctified and ordained a prophet from his birth, Chap. 1: 5. John was filled with the Holy Ghost from his birth, Luke 1: 15. Children belong to the kingdom of God, or are among such as compose the kingdom of God, Luke 18: 16. The promises of God's covenant are made to children, Acts 2: 39. Out of the mouth of *babes* and sucklings God has perfected praise; Matt. 21: 16. Ps. 8: 2.

We now ask the candid reader, what more can be said of adults? Is such language ever employed to describe the character and relation of heathen children; or children not in covenant relation with God's church? Did the apostles understand, that the commission to "disciple and baptize the nations" excluded the seed of believers? To believe it is to believe against evidence.

Two considerations ought to convince the candid and unprejudiced, that the children of believers were among the subjects of baptism, and that the apostles so understood the commission.

I. Infant baptism was common among the Jews, both before and after Christ came; and the apostles must have been familiar with the fact.

II. After Christ shed his blood for the remission of sin, baptism was given in the place of circumcision. Of course, these positions are controverted; because to admit them would be fatal to the system of our opponents. As we do not ask our reader to believe without evidence, or ground faith upon the *silence* of authors, we propose such authority and evidence, as we deem sufficient for our conclusions.

I. Infant baptism was common among the Jews, both

before and after Christ came, and the apostles must have been familiar with the fact.

The dispensation of John did not introduce baptism as a *new* rite in the visible church; but simply gave it greater prominence. In fact, baptisms, or symbolic washings and purifications by ceremonial ablutions were as common before Christ came, as they have ever been since. Before John's day, bloody rites were the more important as significant symbols, showing forth the remission of sin by the shedding of blood. But John came to introduce the Messiah—"The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world;" and baptism is now the chosen rite to represent the removal of sin by moral cleansing. Hence, the *Baptism* of John excited no surprise among the Jews, who were ever watchful and jealous of innovations; they simply inquire "Why baptizest *thou* then, if thou be not that Christ?" John 1: 25. God's prophet had foretold, that when Messiah came, he would "sprinkle many nations;" Is. 52: 15. The Jews consequently supposed the baptism of John must belong to the dispensation of the Messiah,—that it was from heaven. The Saviour's reply to Nicodemus shows that baptism was common among the Jews before the christain dispensation. "Art thou a master of Israel and knowest not these things?" viz. "except a man be born of *water* and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." But how should a "master of Israel" know any more about being born of water, or baptism, than any body else, if baptism was wholly new—unpractised before? Paul writing to the Corinthians, says, "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud and all passed through the sea; and were all *baptized* unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." 1 Cor. 10: 1, 2. Baptism, therefore was as ancient as

the days of Moses, among the Jews. They baptized when they came from the market: and they had "divers baptisms," not only of themselves but of "cups and pots and brazen vessels and tables" or beds, Mark 7: 3, 4; Heb. 9: 10. So far then as baptism is concerned, it was in universal practice among the Jews long before John came baptizing in the wilderness, and preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

But our proposition affirms that "*infant baptism* was common among the Jews both before and after Christ came;" and to this point we now invite attention. The Jews considered the Gentiles as unclean; hence, when proselyted to their religion they were first circumcised to bring them under covenant obligation to worship and serve the true God; and then baptized or washed to denote moral cleansing. Females were simply baptized. Of the existence of this practice there seems to be a vast amount of evidence.

Dr. Wood says "The Rabbins *unanimously* assert that the baptism of proselytes had been practiced by the Jews in all ages, from Moses down to the time when they wrote." *Wood on Bap.* p. 48.

Dr. Pond says "All the Rabbins, ancient and modern, bear testimony to the custom of baptizing proselytes." *Pond Bap.* p. 89.

Dr. Lightfoot says "The baptizing of infants was a thing as well known in the church of the Jews as ever it has been in the Christian church." *Wall His.* Vol. 1, p. 21.

Dr. Prideaux says, that in our Saviour's time the Jews were very active in making proselytes, and, that "when any were thus proselyted to the Jewish religion they were initiated to it by baptism, sacrifice and circumcision."—*Prideaux Connections*, Vol. 2, p. 203.



The learned Dr. Witsius says "When a Gentile was received into the Israelitish Covenant, and as the Jews speak, became a proselyte of righteousness, three ceremonies of initiation were used, without which even the Israelites themselves, according to their received notion, could not enter into that covenant; to wit, *circumcision*, *baptism* and *sacrifice*." And the Jewish masters have fixed it as a law, that this baptism is so necessary, that without it, as much as without circumcision, there can be no proselytism; but this alone with sacrifice is all the initiation that is necessary in the case of a female proselyte." *Œconomy of the Covenants*, Vol. 3, p. 384.

According to the editor of Calmet's Dictionary, Mr. Abram Booth, one of the fathers of the Baptist Church in England, admits that "The children of proselytes were baptized with their parents among the Jews." *Apostolic Bap.* p. 58.

#### TALMUDS, &c.

To quote all that the Jewish Doctors affirm respecting "Proselyte Baptism," would require much patience and time; we shall, therefore, present a few specimens from the mass of authority, and leave the reader to consult *Wall's Introduction* for a more complete exhibition of this subject.

The Babylonian Talmud "the text of which," says Dr. Pond, "was composed as early as the close of the second century," or within 100 years of the apostles, contains the following. "When a proselyte is received, he must be circumcised, and when he is cured, they *baptize* him in the presence of two wise men. Or if it be a woman, the women lead her to the waters."

"The proselytes enter not into covenant but by circum-

cision, *baptism*, and sprinkling of blood." Again "He is no proselyte unless he be circumcised and *baptized*. If he be not baptized he remains a Gentile."

"Your fathers did not enter into covenant but by circumcision, and *baptism* and sprinkling of blood; so neither do proselytes enter into covenant but by circumcision and *baptism* and sprinkling of blood."

"They baptize an *infant* proselyte according to the judgment of the Sanhedrim;" and "if it has been bereaved of its father, three men must be present at the baptism who may be as a father to it."

In the Jerusalem Talmud it is said, "Behold one finds an infant cast out, and *baptizes* him in the name of a servant; do thou also circumcise him in the name of a servant. But if he *baptize* him in the name of a freeman, do thou also circumcise him in the name of a freeman."

Maimonides (a Jewish Rabbi) gives us the following account of the forms of initiation among the Jews: "In all ages when a Gentile is willing to enter into the covenant with Israel, and place himself under the wing of the Divine Majesty, and take upon himself the yoke of the law, he must be circumcised and *baptized*, and bring a sacrifice; or if it be a woman, be baptized and bring a sacrifice; as it is written 'As ye are, so shall the stranger be,' Numb. 15: 15. How are ye? By circumcision and baptism and bringing a sacrifice. So likewise the stranger through all your generations, by circumcision and baptism and bringing a sacrifice." Again: "An Israelite that takes a little heathen child, or that finds an heathen infant, and baptizes him for a proselyte, behold he is a proselyte."

Arrian, a heathen philosopher at Rome A. D. 140, (about 50 years after the apostles) reproaches those who turned proselytes to the Jews, calling them the *baptized*

ones." See Pond on Bap. p. 89—91. Wall's Intro. Inf. Bap.

But it seems unnecessary to multiply quotations upon this subject; since the fact of "Proselyte Baptism" among the Jews, both before and after Christ came, has been so universally admitted by learned men of every age. Indeed, opposition seems to have grown out of necessity, rather than diversity of opinion. *Proselyte Baptism* among the *Jews* gave so much confirmation to the doctrine of *infant baptism* among *christians*; that some modern baptist writers have felt the necessity of assailing this ancient custom of the church. Hence, the great objection is stated, "*Certain authors are silent as to any such practice among the Jews!*" It would seem, that in the estimation of such objectors, witnesses who testify to *nothing* are witnesses *against* proselyte baptism!! Perhaps Dr. Watson's mild rebuke is merited, not only by Dr. Gill, but also by this entire class of objectors. Speaking of the Doctor, he observes.

"Dr. Gill, indeed, in his *Dissertation on Jewish Proselyte Baptism*, has ventured the assertion that 'there is no mention made of any rite or custom of admitting Jewish proselytes by *baptism*, in any writings or records before the time of John the Baptist, Christ and his apostles; nor in any age after them for the first three or four hundred years; or, however, before the writing of the *Talmuds*.' But the learned doctor has not condescended to understand the evidence of this fact. It does not rest on the testimony of Jewish records solely; it was in circulation among the heathen, as we learn from the clear and demonstrative testimony of Epictetus, who has these words: (he is blaming those who assume the profession of philosophy without acting up to it :) 'Why do you call yourself a Stoic? Why do you deceive the multitude? Why do you pretend to be a *Greek* when you are a *Jew*, a *Syrian*, an *Egyptian*? And when we see any one wavering, we are wont to say, This is not a

*Jew*, but acts one. But when he assumes the sentiments of one who hath been *baptized* and *circumcised*, then he both really is, and is called a Jew. Thus we, falsifying our profession, are Jews in name, but in reality something else.’

“ This practice then of the Jews—*proselyte baptism*—was so notorious to the heathen in Italy and in Greece, that it furnished this philosopher with an object of comparison. Now Epictetus lived to be very old : he is placed by Dr. Lardner, A. D. 109, by Le Clerc, A. D. 104. He could not be less than sixty years of age when he wrote this ; and he might obtain his information thirty or forty years earlier, which brings it up to the time of the apostles. Those who could think that the Jews could institute *proselyte baptism* at the very moment when the Christians were practising *baptism* as an initiatory rite, are not to be envied for the correctness of their judgment. The rite certainly dates much earlier, probably many ages. I see no reason for disputing the assertion of Maimonides, notwithstanding Dr. Gill’s rash and fallacious language on the subject.”—Watson on Bap. p. 28.

“ In regard to this subject,” says Dr. Wood, “ let the following things be well considered. 1. The Rabbins unanimously assert that the baptism of Proselytes had been practiced by the Jews in all ages, from Moses down to the time when they wrote. Now these writers must have been sensible that their contemporaries, both Jews and Christians, knew whether such practice had been prevalent or not. And had it been known that no such practice had existed, would not some Jews have been found, bold enough to contradict such groundless assertion of the Rabbins? At least, would there not have been some *Christian*, fired with the love of truth, and jealous for the honor of a sacred rite first instituted by Christ, who would have exposed to shame those who falsely asserted that a similar rite had existed for more than a thousand years? But neither of these things was done. 2. Had not the Jews been accustomed to baptize proselytes previously to the christian era, it is exceedingly improbable that they would have adopted the practice afterwards. For their contempt and hatred of christianity exceeded all bounds, and must have kept them at the greatest possible distance from copying a rite peculiar to christians. 3. It seems to have been perfectly *consistent* and *proper* for the Jews to baptize proselytes, for their divine ritual enjoined various purifications by washing, or *baptism*. And as they

considered all Gentiles to be *unclean*, how could they do otherwise than understand the divine law to require, that when any of them were proselyted to the Jewish religion, they should receive the same sign of purification as was in so many cases applied to themselves." Wood Bap. p. 28.

"When John commenced baptizing in the wilderness of Judea," says Dr. Pond, "he introduced no new rite into the religion of the Jews, nor was he ever complained of as an innovator. And when our Saviour directed his disciples to go and baptize the nations, he instituted no new rite, but merely adopted and sanctioned a previously existing Jewish institution. The work of proselyting men to the true religion had before been carried on within narrow limits. It was now to be carried on extensively, and baptism (as before) was to be administered to all proselytes. 'Go ye and proselyte the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost!' clearly, the disciples must have understood their Master to intend here, that kind of baptism to which both they and he had been accustomed, viz. *the baptism of children with their parents*. Under these circumstances instead of needing an express command to authorize the baptism of children, they must have needed a prohibition to prevent their doing it." Pond on Bap. p. 93, Appendix G.

Here then we rest our argument for "Proselyte Baptism," which included parents and their children, having exhibited a mere *sketch* of argument and authority, whereas we might have presented a volume. When our opponents offer one substantial objection to the practice, *beyond* the "silence of certain authors," we promise to review and strengthen our position.

II. We now advance to our second position, viz. "After Christ shed his blood for the remission of sin, baptism was given in the place of circumcision." Here our opponents rally their strongest force. To yield this point, would be to admit the spiritual character of the covenant of circumcision; and the oneness, or identity of the Old and New Testament church. In short, it would be yield-

ing the divine right of infant baptism. So far as the argument for the divine right of infant baptism is concerned, we might concede that circumcision and baptism sustain no relation to each other, whatever, as religious rites. We would simply claim that the Jews were commanded to admit their children, with themselves, into covenant relation with the church, and circumcision was the appointed rite of initiation. We would then present the fact that the constitutional church relation of children has never been repealed, or materially changed; consequently they are still to be received into covenant relation with the church, by the same rite that initiates adults into covenant relation; and that rite, our opponents claim, is baptism. But the cause of truth demands that circumcision and baptism should be recognized in the order and relation that God has ordained. Hence we undertake to prove that "Baptism was given in the place of circumcision."

God gave the Old Testament, or Jewish church, two religious ordinances before the ceremonial law was instituted: These were circumcision and the passover; the institution of the former is recorded Gen. 17, and the latter Ex. 12. Circumcision, in its *application*, pointed *first* to the Messiah, as the *seed* of Abraham; and *secondly*, as a *bloody* rite, it referred to the remission of sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently taught the necessity of a moral change, or change of heart. See Part First, p. 46, 47. The passover was instituted the night Israel escaped from Egyptian bondage. A lamb was slain—the flesh was eaten and the blood sprinkled upon the door posts, &c. That the passover, or Paschal lamb pointed to Christ, we presume none will deny. Paul expressly teaches that "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us," 1 Cor. 5: 7. That the Lord's supper took the place of the passover, we believe

is very generally admitted. But what rite has taken the place of circumcision, is now the question. Once circumcision was the *sign* and *seal* of God's covenant, and the rite of initiation into the true visible church of God. Is there no substitute, or equivalent under the gospel dispensation.

Now it can be shown, that circumcision and baptism answer as exactly to each other, as the passover and Lord's supper; and that the apostles and their immediate followers and successors believed and taught that baptism was given in the *place* of circumcision.

1. Circumcision was a *religious* rite ordained of God, and practiced by the true visible Church of God. That the same is true of baptism is universally conceded.

2. Circumcision was an *initiatory* rite, i. e. by circumcision, individuals were received into covenant relation with God and his church; and without the rite of circumcision *none* were ever admitted to such privileges. As evidence of this fact, uncircumcised persons were cut off from the people of God—excluded from the sanctuary of God, and from the ordinances of the church. Part First, p. 58.

Baptism is an *initiatory* rite; i. e. by baptism individuals enter into covenant relation with the visible church. This our opponents will not deny, since they will invite *none* but regularly immersed church members to the communion of the Lord's supper.

3. Circumcision was also designed to distinguish the professed people of God from the world, by a profession of their faith before the world. Jews, or Gentile proselytes, by receiving circumcision, avowed themselves the worshipers of the living and true God. Baptism also distinguishes the professed people of God from the world.

Should it be objected that some have practiced circumcision who did not even *profess* the true religion; we answer, the same is true of baptism. The reader will bear in mind, that we are considering the *relations* of circumcision and baptism, and not the *perversions* of these rites.

4. Circumcision was a "*sign and seal.*" Rom. 4: 11. "And Abraham received the *sign* of circumcision, a *seal* of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised." As a *sign*, circumcision was significant of a moral change. It pointed to the work of the Holy Spirit in renewing and cleansing the corrupt heart. This is a necessary inference from the fact, that circumcision pointed to Christ, as the seed of Abraham and as a sacrifice for sin. But that circumcision pointed to a work of grace in the heart, is made absolutely certain by the declarations of both old and new testaments. Deut. 30: 6. "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thy *heart* and the *heart* of thy seed, to *love* the Lord thy God with *all thy heart*, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. See ch. 10: 16; Lev. 26: 41.

Perfectly in accordance with this exposition of circumcision in the old Testament, is the testimony of Paul in the New. Rom. 2: 28, 29. "For he is *not* a Jew which is one (only) *outwardly*; neither is that circumcision which is (only) *outwardly* in the flesh. But he is a Jew which is one *inwardly*, and circumcision is that of the *heart*, in the *spirit*, and *not* in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

Baptism is also a *sign* of moral cleansing; or of the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart. Almost the first announcement in the ministry of John contains undeniable evidence of this fact. Matt. 3: 11. "I indeed baptize you with *water* unto repentance . . . but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." John's baptism therefore,



referred to the influences of the Holy Spirit. When Paul is converted, Ananias says to him, "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins." i. e. "Receive that ceremonial washing, or baptism, which is significant of moral cleansing." Hence, baptism is called the "washing of regeneration," because it points to that moral change, which is expressed by the word "regeneration." Water is the element in both Old and New Testament employed to denote purification, or cleansing; and when ceremonially used, never signifies any thing else.

5. Circumcision is called a *seal*. "And Abraham received the sign of circumcision, a *seal* of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised." Now, what does the apostle mean to teach by this language, and in this connection? As we conceive, simply this: While in *uncircumcision* Abraham fully believed and embraced, the promise of God, respecting the Messiah, and a numerous spiritual seed; and on the ground of that faith was justified; or in other words, "his faith was counted unto him for righteousness." God then added to the promise, circumcision, as a *sign* or "token" of his covenant. Circumcision; as a *sign*, in its *application*, promised that "as concerning the flesh," Christ should be of the seed of Abraham; and as a *bloody* rite, it showed forth the remission of sins, and consequently, a work of grace in the heart. This bloody *sign*, therefore, was also a *seal*, or confirmation of all that God had promised him.

Now we affirm that baptism is not only a *sign*, but also a *seal*, in the same sense that circumcision was; it is a *seal*, or confirmation of gospel promises, and gospel blessings. In the institution of baptism, God seems to say to the church, "This ceremonial washing is not only a *sign* of moral cleansing, but also a *seal*, or confirmation of my

covenant with you. I now ordain the use of *water* to signify that cleansing, which was promised in the shedding of blood." Baptism and circumcision therefore, were ordained seals of the same covenant, under different dispensations; but agreeing in substance. The apostle declares; 1 John, 5: 8, "And there are three that bear witness in earth, the *spirit*, and the *water* and the *blood*; and these three agree in one." Hence blood and water agree in their testimony and significancy; both referring to the way, and fact of moral cleansing, and thus confirming, or sealing the promises and truth of God.

Various and intricate have been the objections urged against this simple and consistent view of baptism, as the substitute of circumcision. Some "deny that circumcision was ever a *seal* of any covenant." Others affirm that it was a "*sign* of carnal descent, a *mark* of national distinction;" or "that the rite was instituted to distinguish the Jews from other nations." Part First, 24, 25. Some have ascribed to this rite a *mixed* character—partly religious, and in part worldly in its design. Many of these contradictory and absurd positions have been so often exploded, that refutation has almost become unpardonable tautology. Still, we beg leave to call attention to one or two points in the discussion, somewhat important. Our opponents deny that baptism was given in the place of circumcision; or that baptism is a *seal*, in any sense whatever; because circumcision left a *visible mark*, or *sign*; while baptism leaves none. See Campbell and McCalla's Debate p. 204, 5. Edition by McCalla, p. 217, 8. Some leading baptist writers admit that circumcision had not only a spiritual design, but also related to some of the same spiritual blessings; and still deny that baptism is a seal, or was given in the place of circumcision. Mr. Carson says "circumcision and

baptism correspond in meaning, they both relate to the renewal of the heart." Carson and Cox, p. 367. Dr. Gill, on Gen. 17: 11, says "circumcision was a *sign* of Christ, as all the ceremonies of the law were, and of the shedding of his blood to cleanse from all sin, original and actual, and also of the circumcision of the heart; and was moreover a seal of the righteousness of faith." Mr. Andrew Fuller, in commenting on Gen. 17, says; "Like almost all other positive institutions, it (circumcision) was also pre-figurative of mental purity, or 'putting off the body of the sins of the flesh.' "

The reader will perceive that these distinguished writers have admitted the *substance*, while they have rejected the fact; since while they admit that circumcision was a *sign of Christ*, and like baptism *related to a renewal of the heart*, they yield the substance of what is claimed by us.

But let us examine whether a *visible mark* is always necessary in scripture language, to constitute a *seal*; so that baptism cannot be a seal, because it does not leave a visible mark; the word, *seal* in the bible, *may* sometimes denote either an *instrument* or the *impression* made by such instrument. But that it always necessarily denotes either an instrument, or visible impression, is denied. Are we to understand a visible mark, or impresson, or external *sign*, when the word *seal*, occurs in such passages as the following? John 3: 33, "He that hath received his testimony, hath set to his *seal* that God is true." Ch. 6: 27, "For him (i. e. Christ) hath God the Father *sealed*." 1 Cor. 9: 2, "The *seal* of mine apostleship are ye, in the Lord." 2 Tim. 19, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this *seal*, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Eph. 1: 13, "In whom also, after that ye believed ye were *sealed* with that Holy Spirit of promise." Chap.

4 : 30, “ And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are *sealed* unto the day of redemption.” When we read of a *seal* on the heart—of *sealing* up transgression—of *sealing* up the stars —of *sealing* instruction—of *sealing* to the destitute the fruit of christian benevolence, &c. how sublime the associations in minds accustomed to see visible marks in all bible *seals*.

But we deny that the word *seal*, as used in connection with the “*sign* of circumcision,” is designedly employed to express the idea of a visible mark. That it may *convey* the idea of such a mark, we concede. In fact, the covenant of circumcision required a visible sign as a seal or confirmation of the covenant itself. But the doctrine the apostles means to inculcate is this, *The sign* or mark, was *a seal*, or confirmation; and not that the sign or mark of circumcision was a *visible* sign. Agreeable to this view, Dr. Gill, the learned Baptist commentator, teaches, Rom. 4, that “Circumcision was a seal, not for secrecy, but for *certainty*; it being a *confirmation* not only of the sincerity of Abraham’s faith, but of his justifying righteousness, which was not his faith, but that which his faith looked to.” Even Alexander Campbell, after reasoning perseveringly to prove that a *seal* is a visible mark, therefore baptism cannot be a seal, because it makes no visible mark; in his “New Testament Translation” follows Macknight, and renders Rom. 4: 11 “And he received the mark of circumcision *as a seal*,” &c. Hence, according to our opponents’ own showing, the mark of circumcision was “*as a seal*,” or “a confirmation,” &c.

Our opponents sometimes raise the objection, that the “*sign* of circumcision” was a seal to Abraham only, and not to his descendants: because it was a “*seal* of the righteousness of the faith which Abraham had yet being in un-

circumcision." In opposition to this Dr. Gill affirms that "The apostle uses the word *seal* concerning circumcision, it being a word his countrymen made use of when they spoke of it." According then to one learned Doctor, the apostle Paul and his Jewish brethren considered the "mark of circumcision *as* a seal of the righteousness of faith," whether applied to Abraham or his seed. Will our opponents maintain that the nature, design, and truths set forth by the rite of circumcision depended upon the character of the circumcised; that it meant one thing when applied to Abraham, and something else when applied to his seed! and that circumcision was not a token of God's covenant, did not refer to Christ, and a renewal of the heart, when administered to an unworthy candidate? If circumcision was a *token* of God's covenant with Abraham, then it was a token of the same to all who received the rite by divine authority. If circumcision, from its nature and application, "was a sign of Christ," and also of the circumcision of the heart, to Abraham, then it signified the same to all who were, by divine appointment proper subjects to receive the rite. And if it was a *seal* of the righteousness of faith, when applied to Abraham, then it was a *seal*, or confirmation of the same truth when applied to his seed. Could circumcision be a token of God's covenant, the *sign* of Christ and spiritual blessings, and *not* be a *seal*, or confirmation of the covenant, and consequently a seal of what the covenant promised? If so, then when God gives his people a token, or sign, it confirms nothing.

Now, what was true of circumcision, in this respect, is also true in relation to baptism. *First*: baptism is a token of the gospel covenant—a standing memorial of a dispensation of grace. *Second*: baptism is the appointed *sign* of

moral cleansing, or a renewal of the heart by the Holy Spirit. *Third*: the *sign* of baptism, is a *seal*, or confirmation of that righteousness by faith, which is signified by ceremonial washing. Hence, while we are "sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise," and "sealed, by the Holy Spirit of God unto the day of redemption," water baptism is the *outward* sign to signify the *inward* grace, and confirm the doctrine of righteousness by faith.

I. Having shown the agreement of circumcision and baptism we now introduce the *direct* testimony of the bible in support of our position. Col. 2: 11, 12, "In whom ye also are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God." According then to the apostle Paul, "Baptism is the circumcision of Christ;" i. e. baptism is given in the place of circumcision. Should our opponents attempt, to evade this conclusion, by assuming that spiritual circumcision is intended; then it must follow that *water baptism* is given in the place of spiritual circumcision; or the circumcision of the heart!! Water baptism, therefore, must be regeneration. But if they insist that both the circumcision and baptism alluded to by the apostles are to be understood in a spiritual sense; then we are presented with the novel idea, that spiritual baptism is given in the place of spiritual circumcision. Mr. Carson undertakes to escape, by assuming, that the apostle means to teach by this text that, "the circumcision made without hands, came in the room of the circumcision made with hands; the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, came in the room of the cutting off the foreskin; the circumcision of Christ came in the room of the circumcision o

Moses." Carson and Cox, p. 366. Here is a double and twisted exposition which simply amounts to this, "The circumcision of the heart, came in the room of circumcision in the flesh." This I consider sophistry of the very poorest sort, though emanating from the great Dr. Carson of England.

Reader, did not Abraham, and thousands of his seed, receive circumcision in the *flesh* and also of the *heart*? Was not Abraham circumcised in *heart*, *before* he received circumcision in the *flesh*? According to Dr. Gill, circumcision was a standing sign of *Christ*, and of moral cleansing: and according to Dr. Carson moral cleansing comes in the room of this *sign*, and consequently must be also a sign. But if the circumcision of *Christ* came in the room of the circumcision of *Moses*, and circumcision and baptism "both relate to the renewal of the heart," as Mr. Carson affirms, then baptism must be the external rite to signify what the circumcision of *Moses* signified, and therefore given in the place of circumcision.

2. In Gal. 3 : 27, 29, we read "For as many of you as have been baptized into *Christ*, have put on *Christ*. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither *male* nor *female*: for ye are all one in *Christ Jesus*. And if ye be *Christ's*, then are ye *Abraham's* seed, and heirs according to the promise." That this "promise" refers to the Abrahamic covenant, none can doubt. That covenant, before *Messiah* came, required a sign, significant of that event, and which from its nature was applicable only to males. But under the gospel dispensation, where baptism is given in the place of circumcision, there is no such distinction of *male* and *female*. Why should the apostle say in connection with baptism, and when speaking of the Abrahamic covenant, "there is neither male nor fe-

male," unless he intends to bring to view the fact, that baptism is given in the place of circumcision, and is equally applicable to all?

Let us in the next place see, if the followers and successors of the apostles believed and taught the doctrine, that baptism is given in the place of circumcision.

HERMAS, who was cotemporary, and the friend of the apostle Paul, and who is mentioned Rom. 16: 14, expressly teaches, that baptism is a *seal*, and is consequently given in the place of circumcision. He says "Now that SEAL is the water of BAPTISM." Wall's His. V. I. p. 48—54. McCalla's Debate, p. 228.

JUSTIN MARTYR, who wrote about forty years after the apostles, says, "Why, if circumcision were a good thing, we do not use it as well as the Jews did?" The answer is, "We are circumcised by baptism with Christ's circumcision." He then quotes Col. 2: 11, 12, in proof. Wall V. I. p. 66.

CYPRIAN and the council of Carthage. About 150 years after the apostles, Cyprian, in council with his ministerial brethren, 66 in number; received a letter from Fidus asking whether it was proper to baptize an infant before the eighth day, as agreeable to the rule of circumcision. The council unanimously affirms that it is; and then declares that "Christ has given us baptism, *the spiritual circumcision.*" *ib.* p. 129—132. Pond p. 81. The question, as to the eighth day, and the answer, show conclusively that baptism was considered as the substitute of circumcision.

BASIL says "A Jew does not delay circumcision because of the threatening that every soul that is not circumcised the eighth day shall be cut off from his people: and doth thou put off the circumcision made without hands, which



is performed *in baptism* when thou hearest the Lord say, except one be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Pond, 81.

AUGUSTIN says, "Our communion, I mean the grace of *baptism*, gives cure without pain, and procures to us a thousand benefits. And it has no determinate time as the ancient circumcision had; but one in the very *beginning of his age*, or one that is the middle of it, or one that is in his old age may receive this circumcision made without hands." Ib. 82.

EPIPHANIUS says, "The law had circumcision in the flesh, serving for a time, till the great circumcision came, that is, *baptism*, which circumcises us from our sins, and *seals* us unto the name of God." M'Calla, p. 222.

We might continue these quotations to a much greater extent, but consider it unnecessary. That such was the universal sentiment of the church within 150 years of the apostles, is evident from the fact that 66 bishops in council, without dissent or protest, decide that "Christ has given us *baptism*, the spiritual circumcision." But where were our opponents during all this time? In these days they abound in zeal to rebuke and disapprove the idea that baptism is given in the place of circumcision. But where is the decree of their councils, or the solitary dissent of some faithful elder, showing a different opinion in the church of God, in the time of Cyprian!

We are now prepared to look at the Great Commission, "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them," &c. In the *first* place we have shown, that God put the children of his professed people into the church, and under the same covenant, by the same rite of

initiation. *Second*: There is no evidence on record, that God has repealed, or so changed the original constitution of the church, as to change the covenant and church relation of children. *Third*: Jesus Christ sent his apostles to make *disciples*, or proselytes, and baptize them. *Fourth*: The children of God's people bear names and enjoy relations, under both Old and New Testament dispensations, peculiar to such, and such *only*, as are admitted into covenant relation with the church. *Fifth*: The baptism of children was common, both before and after Christ came, and the apostles knew it. *Sixth*: Baptism is given in the place of circumcision. How then are we to understand the commission to make disciples, and baptize them? How did those Jewish ambassadors of Christ understand it, who heard from the lips of their divine Master, "Go ye therefore," &c. Would they; nay, *could they infer* the dismemberment of the seed of believers? Never! without an express law revoking the ancient constitution of their church, and an unequivocal provision, ordaining the rejection of children; a provision that would have met with stern opposition from the Jews. But inspired history is *silent* as to such change, provision, or opposition!!

The change from the bloody rite of circumcision to water baptism is illustrated in a sermon by Rev. Erdix Tenny, of Lyme, N. H. by the following similitude. "A man orders his servants to mark the sheep of his flock with a bloody sign; and is careful to add, see that you apply this sign to *all the lambs* also. Afterwards he sees fit to dispense with the *bloody* sign made with a knife in the flesh; and ordains that his servants mark his sheep with *paint*: but he says nothing about the lambs. Will those servants, because the marking is a "positive institution," argue that the lambs are no longer to be marked? As

they buy more sheep with lambs, will they mark the sheep, but say they have no warrant for marking the lambs? The contrary. And so from the very circumstances of the case, the disciples of Christ understanding the design and import of baptism, and having been previously accustomed to extend another sign of the same import and use, to children, would naturally interpret the command to baptize, as implying the baptism of infants." Hall on Bap. p. 156.

But how do our Baptist brethren evade the force of these facts and arguments? What is the great objection to infant baptism. Whoever has attended to this controversy is already familiar with the fact, that our opponents insist, that "*gospel faith must always precede baptism.*" Indeed, "believer's baptism" and "immersion" is the foundation, and top-stone of the Baptist Church, so far as its distinctive character is concerned. Remove these peculiarities and you annihilate the "close-communication, Calvinistic Baptist Church." Should they insist upon *immersion*, but admit *infant baptism*, they necessarily lose their essential character, and become '*Pedobaptists.*' Hence, the existence of the Baptist Church, as such, depends upon the assumption, that "*faith must always precede gospel baptism.*" We might reasonably suppose that a position involving the very *existence* of a church, would be fortified and strengthened with some express declarations of God's word, so clear and pointed, as at least to present the *appearance* of a "Thus saith the Lord." Consistency seems to demand that our opponents furnish an *express* law for exclusive "believer's baptism," since, after we have shown that God originally put the children of his people *in* the church, they call for a "Thus saith the Lord," to prove that children are to be *continued* in the church. But, alas! their "Thus saith the Lord" tapers off to a *mere in-*

*ference*, drawn from *controverted premises* ! Still worse we intend to show, that the famous argument for exclusive "believer's baptism," is a mere *play* upon words.

Our opponents endeavor to support their position, that "faith and repentance must precede baptism," by reference to such texts as the following : Mark 16 : 16—"He that *believeth* and is baptized shall be saved." Acts 8 : 36, 37—"And the eunuch said, See, here is water ; what doth hinder me to be baptized ? And Philip said, if thou *believest* with all thine heart, thou mayest." Acts 2 : 38—"Then Peter said unto them, *repent* and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ," &c.

But how do these passages of scripture, disapprove *infant* baptism ? Wherein do these texts differ from the teachings of those who practice infant baptism ? Wherein do they differ from the instruction of an Israelite, who carried out the spirit and design of the Abrahamic covenant, only as an Israelite would put circumcision, where the New Testament teachers put baptism ? But let us bring this objection in all its parts to the test of logic and sound criticism.

1. The objection, and argument by which it is supported does not meet the question. It affirms that New Testament teachers made faith and repentance a condition, or qualification for baptism. But did apostles and primitive teachers preach to *infants* ? Of *whom* did they require faith as a pre-requisite for baptism ? Certainly of those capable of exercising it. God never required any thing of infants as a condition. Their rights, and relations to God's covenant and the visible church, are based upon the *faith* of their natural guardians or parents. Hence on the day of Pentecost, Peter is heard to say "Repent and be baptized every one of you . . . For the promise is

unto you, and to *your* children." Had the Old Patriarch, Abraham himself addressed a Gentile upon the subject of embracing the true religion, he would have said " *First* embrace the true God *yourself*, and enter into covenant with him, and then administer the token of God's covenant upon your children." Evangelical ministers have always preached repentance and faith to *adults* as qualifications for baptism. Where then is the force, or application of the Baptist argument, which assumes, that "infants are excluded from baptism, because the apostles preached to their hearers, that they must repent and believe before they could receive baptism." A syllogism to logically set forth such an argument, must be constructed somewhat after the following order.

1. The gospel requires faith and repentance, of all who are capable of these exercises, before baptism.

2. Infants are incapable of exercising faith and repentance.

3. Therefore, infants, who are incapable of faith and repentance, must not be baptized.

Now a school boy can see, that infants are not in the *premises*, and consequently should not be in the *conclusion*. Leave out *infants* and the conclusion is just. Let the reader now look at the objection dressed in its proper garb, and presented in its real character. "God requires of *adults* a profession of faith, as a condition of baptism, therefore *infants* must not be baptized."

Suppose there had been a Baptist elder in the days of Paul; and in one of Paul's sermons he heard the apostle advance the sentiment. "For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law," &c. Rom. 2:25. So he goes to work and frames an argument against *infant* circumcision, making the apostle's remark the basis of a syllogism.

1. Without obedience to the law circumcision is unprofitable.

2. Infants cannot obey or keep the law.

3. Therefore infant circumcision is unprofitable and useless, consequently, none but obedient adults should ever be circumcised, for such only can keep the law. See P. Edwards, p. 34.

Now we submit it to the candid, whether such a conclusion would not be as logical as the inference drawn from the premises of our opponents for exclusive believer's baptism. And what the apostle affirms concerning circumcision, is also true of baptism, without obedience it is unprofitable.

2. In the next place, the great argument against infant baptism derived from such texts, to a great extent is a mere play upon words. Why, repentance and faith must precede baptism, because the word baptize comes after faith and repentance. Suppose *we* should avail ourselves of this logic in the use of the following passages, John 3:5, "Except a man be born of *water* and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Water, therefore, or baptism must precede the work of the Spirit, because water is first in order. Mark 1:4, "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." John therefore *first* baptized his candidates and afterwards preached to them about the baptism of repentance. Mark 16:16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." This text don't say He that believeth, and is afterwards baptized; but *is* already baptized. Reader, if this is descending, pardon us, we have simply used the argument *reductio ad absurdum*.

3. We object to this argument of our opponents because it proves altogether too much. Dare our opponents

abide by their own position ; that gospel faith and repentance must always precede baptism ? Let us give them a trial.

1. Gospel faith and repentance must always precede baptism.

2. The Lord Jesus Christ could not exercise gospel faith and repentance.

3. Therefore, the Lord Jesus Christ ought not to have been baptized.

This argument, like the fabled traveler, seems to “ Blow hot and cold with the same breath.” Do our opponents attempt to escape by the plea, that Christ was an exception to their doctrine of “ believer’s baptism ?” Where is the “ Thus saith the Lord ?”

But we have said, this argument of our opponents proves altogether too much. To illustrate this point we will introduce P. Edwards, p. 27. “ And to show how miserably fallacious the reasoning of the Baptists is, I will lay down a plan of their logic on this text, which will produce more conclusions than there are principle words in that part of the verse. The place is Mark 16 : 16, ‘ He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.’ Now as the Baptists reason from the order of the words, I will mark them with figures—believeth—baptized—saved. The logic is as follows : Take the first and second—*believeth*—*baptized*—and say with the Baptists : First : None are to be baptized but such as believe, because believing must be before baptizing.—1 ‘ believeth’—2 ‘ baptized.’ This will conclude against infant baptism. Next, take the *first* and *third*—believeth—saved — and say in the same way : Second : None are to be saved but such as believe, because believing must be before saving—1, ‘ Believeth’—3, ‘ Saved.’ This concludes against infant salvation. Now take the

second and third—baptized—saved—and argue in the same manner : Third : None are to be saved, but such as are baptized, because baptizing must go before saving—2, ‘Baptized’—3, ‘Saved.’ This will conclude on the side of infant baptism, they must be baptized, or they cannot be saved. Lastly, take all three—believeth—baptized—saved—and say : Fourthly : None are to be saved but such as believe and are baptized, because believing and baptizing must be before saving—1, ‘Believeth’—2, ‘baptized’—3, ‘Saved.’ This concludes against the salvation of believers in Jesus Christ, if they have not been baptized. And so upon the principle of the Baptists, it concludes against the salvation of all Pedobaptists. All these conclusions arising from the same reasoning, may serve as a specimen to show the fallacious mode of arguing against infant baptism, adopted by the Baptists.”

Hence, according to the reasoning of our opponents, if infants are *saved*, they must be *baptized*, because “baptized” certainly comes before “saved,” and “Except a man,” or as it may read, “Except any one be born of *water* and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” We might well suppose, that the greater included the less, and consequently, if infants can be *saved* without faith, they ought to receive baptism, the sign of that moral cleansing which all consider as a fitness for salvation.

The Petrobrussians, a sect that arose about the beginning of the 12th century, and who were the *first* sect on earth, that ever admitted *water* baptism, but rejected the doctrine of *infant* baptism, maintained, that, as infants could not believe, they could not be saved; therefore must not be baptized. They reasoned upon Mark 16 : 16, as our opponents now do—1 ‘believe’—2 ‘baptize’—simply adding the third term in order, “saved.” Let our reader decide as to the comparative consistency of our



ancient and modern opponents—See Wall's His. Inf. Bap. Vol. 2, p. 256—278. Miller's Bap. p. 31, 32.

### GOOD CONSCIENCE.

We now invite attention to another objection—the *twin-sister* to the argument for exclusive “believer’s baptism,” which our opponents urge with considerable confidence. The objection is this, “Baptism is the answer of a good conscience; and as infants can have no conscience about it, therefore they ought not to be baptized.” The reader will perceive that this objection is based upon 1 Peter 3 : 21. “The like figure whereunto even baptism, doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” Now, the simple truth set forth by the apostle is this; Noah and his family, secure in the ark, “were saved by water,” while the ungodly world perished: so water baptism *now*, points to the way and means of salvation; and is, therefore, a Christian duty; or “The answer of a good conscience towards God.” When Paul declared “I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day,” he simply meant, that he had endeavored to do his duty as a sincere, honest man.

Now let us apply this exposition to the covenant of circumcision. All agree that circumcision was applied to infants by divine authority. But let me inquire, was not that circumcision, which was a “*sign* of Christ,” and a “renewal of the heart” also a *duty* binding upon every true worshiper of God, under the Old Testament dispensation? Was it not the “answer of a good conscience towards God” whenever received as a “token” of God’s covenant? Or had conscience nothing to do with circumcision? Was it all the same whether conscience was good,

bad, or indifferent? If circumcision had nothing to do with conscience; then it could not be true “He is not a Jew, which is one (only) outwardly: neither is that circumcision which is (only) outwardly in the flesh!” Paul was mistaken when he affirmed “He is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the *heart*, in the *spirit*, and not in the letter!” If circumcision had nothing to do with conscience, then it had nothing to do with a covenant that required obedience! The difficulty in the argument of our opponents is this, their premises and conclusions do not live on speaking terms—are not even neighbors. They put *adults* in their premises, and adults and *infants* in their conclusions. When God says to adults, believe, or repent, and be baptized; our opponents say, “Infants cannot repent, or believe; therefore must not be baptized!” When God says, “Baptism is the answer of a good conscience;” our opponents contend, that “infants can have *no* conscience about it; therefore, must not be baptized.” And to be consistent, when God says “circumcision verily profiteth if thou keep the law;” or “circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter;” our opponents should reply; “Infants cannot keep the law—and be circumcised in heart; therefore infant circumcision was wrong!”

But let us see, whether our opponents will abide by the legitimate results of their own position. In other words, will they reduce their own principles to practice; and thus demonstrate their soundness and utility; as well as their own confidence in them. With them, the right, and validity of baptism, depend upon “the answer of a good conscience towards God.” Now for an illustration of the principle. In the Town of P—— a young man went to a Baptist elder, and expressed a desire to receive “believer’s

baptism." As he professed to be a convert, of course, no objections were raised. He was accordingly examined by the church—immersed, and duly received into full communion and fellowship. Soon after his baptism he visited the elder, and informed him, that his sole design in asking baptism, was to gain a worldly object, that he neither believed in Jesus Christ, nor received the Bible as a revelation from God; and as the object for which he asked baptism was now gained, he requested his name to be stricken from the church records. About 8 months after his excommunication from the church, this same young man became indeed a convert, and with hearty confession of sin, and tears sought forgiveness, and asked to be received again into the church from which he had been expelled; and was accordingly restored. Perhaps our reader will inquire, "Was he re-baptized?" By no means—he had already been immersed! But had he received "*believer's baptism*?" Did he "answer a *good conscience towards God*," when baptized in his infidelity, and base hypocrisy? Do our opponents say, "the illustration presents a very extraordinary case?" We admit it. But unless the Baptist church is vastly more pure, than ever we believed it to be—much purer than any other church on earth, there are hundreds of instances, where individuals become members *without* piety; apostatize and are excommunicated; but subsequently become genuine converts, and are restored to the church. Do our brethren ever think of re-baptizing them! Mormonism would give them a second, or even a third baptism: but we have yet to learn that the regular Baptist church will descend to such extremes of absurdity. But what becomes of "*believer's baptism*?" Where is the "*answer of a good conscience*" in such cases? Do our opponents argue, that

they may accept of their former baptism? We reply, so may infants when converted to God.

Now we assume, that the validity of baptism does not depend, either upon the piety of the minister, or faith of the candidate; but that water applied in the "Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," by an *acknowledged* minister of Christ, is *gospel baptism*; and always signifies *one* and the *same* thing, whether applied to believer, or unbeliever, infant, or adult. Let our opponents assume that the validity of baptism *does* depend upon the piety of the minister, or candidate, and see what will be the results.

1. Suppose the validity of baptism depends upon the piety of the minister; how can one in fifty prove that they have ever received valid, gospel baptism? Can they prove the piety of the ministry? If so, then they can search the heart! Again; whenever a Baptist minister furnishes evidence, that he is a servant of Satan, instead of a true minister of Jesus Christ, all who have received baptism at his hands, must be re-baptized. Do our Baptist brethren have no apostate ministers, who renounce the faith of Christ? Where is the notorious Kneeland, and his baptized converts?

2. But in the case of the subject, or candidate, faith must precede baptism—the validity of the ordinance depends upon piety in the subject. So reason our opponents. Well, if the validity of baptism depends upon the faith, or piety of the subject, then the law of consistency binds our opponents to re-baptize all apostates and excommunicated persons, who repent and return to the church, whenever there is good reason to believe that such persons were not soundly converted to God, when *first* baptized. Again: all those church members who doubt their conversion at

the time of entering the church, must be re-baptized, or live in doubt whether they have ever received gospel baptism, and consequently have any right to the table of our Lord! In fact, the whole Baptist church may to-day, fellowship and commune with 10,000 immersed church members, who have never received gospel baptism, because baptized without saving faith! Well said the Psalmist, "If the foundations be destroyed, what shall the righteous do." "Consistency is a jewel" indeed.

But our own premises relieve us of all this uncertainty and doubt. An *acknowledged* gospel minister applies water to the subject, in the name of the sacred Trinity, and it is valid gospel baptism. Water thus applied, always signifies *one* and the *same* thing; it is God's chosen element, the symbol, or sign of moral cleansing. Whether applied to infants, or adults, is a mere circumstance, it still expresses this great truth "moral cleansing." According to the highest Baptist authorities, such as Gill, Carson, and Fuller, "circumcision was a sign of Christ," and "related to a renewal of the heart." No matter to whom it was applied—infants or adults, believers or unbelievers; it was the same "token," and signified the same thing. So of baptism; it is the *sign* of moral cleansing, and the character of the subject can neither change its significancy, nor destroy its validity. To suppose, that the nature and design of a "positive institution" depends upon the character of such as may observe it, is an absurdity on the face of the subject. Did the nature and design of the Passover depend upon the character of those who observed it? Suppose a blank infidel should take his seat among the people of God, at the communion table, and receive the consecrated symbols of our Lord's body and blood! Does the fact of his infidelity change the significancy of

those symbols? Does the consecrated bread and wine cease to point to the broken body and shed blood of our Lord, because in the hands of a base man? Did these elements signify one thing in the hands of John, and something else in the hands of Judas? The same principle applies to baptism. God has ordained the elements, and the form of words; and decided what water thus applied shall signify; and whether applied to converted Paul, or Elymas, the sorcerer, it signifies the same. Baptism may be administered to improper persons, but it is baptism still, and still the sign of moral cleansing. Hence, like circumcision, it is as significant when applied to an unconscious infant, as when administered to a believing adult.

#### BAPTIZING DOMESTICS.

Perhaps, in the present connection, it is due the reader to call up another objection; somewhat formidable, because frequently urged with an air of triumph. Our opponents claim, that if we take the Abrahamic covenant, and the practice of Abraham for our guide; then we must give the rite of baptism, not only to our *children*, but also to our *domestics*; because the servants of Abraham were all circumcised upon the ground of Abraham's faith. In other words, Abraham's covenant and faith was the ground of their circumcision; therefore, our covenant and faith, must include children and domestics as subjects of baptism. Our answer to this objection will show, how easy it is to raise up plausible objections by reasoning from false premises. Now the very thing *assumed*, relative to Abraham's servants, we *deny*. We deny that a *single adult servant was circumcised upon the ground of Abraham's faith*; but affirm that they were circumcised upon the profession of their *own* faith; and that they then brought

*their* children with them to receive the “token of God’s covenant.” Let the candid look at a few simple facts.

1. God called Abraham out from the idolatrous world, for the express purpose of raising up, and establishing the true religion. But did Abraham commence the enterprise by gathering about him several hundred impenitent sinners, as servants; for we find as early as the 14th chap. of Gen. that Abraham could *arm* 318 servants. What kind of a church would Dr. Judson make with 318 impenitent Burmans, not to speak of women and children.

2. How did Abraham obtain so many servants? We read in Gen. 12: 5, “And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother’s son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran, and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan.” The Chaldee paraphrasts translate it “*The souls of those whom they PROSELYTED in Haran.*” See Clarke’s Com. The Jerusalem Targum understands it, “All the souls which he had subdued unto the law.” But take another text, Gen. 14: 14, “And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his *trained* servants, born in his own house, 318, and pursued them unto Dan.” But what are we to understand by “trained servants?” Does the word “train” in this place indicate military discipline? We were aware that Abraham was somewhat conspicuous in Scripture history, as the father of believers—a man of unexampled faith; but his military fame must be apocryphal. The word *train* in this connection can hardly describe a military drill. Let us then seek for a higher meaning—one more consonant with the character of him, who in Scripture language is styled “The friend of God.” The Hebrew word for “trained” may be rendered “*catechised*;” hence they were instructed in the nature of the

true religion. But suppose we take the word train. God says "Train up a child in the way he should go," &c. Who ever thought of applying this to any thing but a religious education? Such an education, a *good* man would give servants born in his own house. We may therefore safely conclude, that servants "proselyted" to the worship of Abraham's God; and others born in his house—"catechised" and "trained" up to manhood, would be prepared to enter into covenant with God for themselves and on the profession of their own faith.

3. But that Abraham's servants entered voluntarily into covenant with God, and received the sign of circumcision, is evident from the nature of the case. It would have been no small job, to *drive up* 318 trained servants and oblige them to submit to circumcision: rather more than the Old Patriarch could have accomplished, unless they differed materially from modern sinners.

4. God would allow Abraham to keep none but such as professed the same religion with himself. Hence God's covenant provided that "the uncircumcised soul should be cut off from his people."

5. The character of Abraham is proof that his adult servants were all piously educated, and prepared to make a public profession of religion. God says, Gen. 18: 19, "For I know him (Abraham) that *he will command his children and his HOUSEHOLD after him, and they shall keep the WAYS OF THE LORD to do justice and judgment.*"

What slander then, to represent Abraham as keeping a gang of servants, too ignorant or wicked to enter into covenant with God for themselves: but good Old Abraham must stand up *godfather* for his numerous adult household! Reader, "faithful Abraham" was no religious sponser for his servants: his servants were too well in-



structed to require a profession of faith by proxy. No: they received the rite of circumcision, as Abraham did, as a token of God's covenant—a *sign* of Christ, and of the circumcision of the heart.

#### ARGUMENTS DIRECT.

About 20 years after the death of Christ, a discussion came up in the church relative to circumcising the gentiles, and requiring them to keep the law. See Acts 15. So a council was called at Jerusalem, to consider the matter. This council sent Paul, Barnabas, Judas and Silas to Antioch with a letter of instruction, as follows: 1. Abstain from meats offered to idols. 2. Abstain from blood. 3. From things strangled. 4. From fornication. Now this discussion is conclusive proof that the Jews continued to practice circumcision, although under the Gospel dispensation.

This same subject is introduced again in Acts 21:20—24, after the apostle Paul returned to Jerusalem; about A. D. 60. Paul was accused of preaching against circumcision and the "law of Moses." James says to him, "Thou seest brother, how many thousands of the Jews there are that *believe*, and they are all zealous of the law; and are informed of thee that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs." Now from this discussion about circumcision, we draw the following inference. 1. Both circumcision and baptism were practiced in the christian church many years after the gospel dispensation commenced. If our opponents argue that this goes against the idea that baptism was given in the place of circumcision; then we reply, that the same argument would prove

that the gospel dispensation did not substitute the ceremonial dispensation, because then some believing Jews insisted, that the Gentiles must keep the Law of Moses, as well as be circumcised.

2. It is evident that these believing Jews considered circumcision as a religious rite pertaining to the true visible church. If not, why insist that the Gentiles must circumcise their children? and keep the law of Moses.

3. If these believing Jews continued to circumcise their children, under the gospel dispensation, then they still considered the Abrahamic covenant, as the covenant of the church; and their children as sustaining the same relation as formerly. Did the believing Jews circumcise their children, and then submit to their being cast out of the church, and cut off from the rights and privileges once enjoyed? Believe it, who can!

4. If the believing Jews circumcise their children, then they considered them in covenant relation with the church; unless circumcision was used for an entire different purpose from what it ever had been. But were these children admitted by circumcision *without* baptism? That their parents were both circumcised and baptized is certain. That Timothy and Titus were both circumcised and baptized, will not be denied, unless our opponents maintain that baptism was not absolutely essential to membership. Acts 16:3. Gal. 2:3. But were the children of God's people admitted to covenant relation with the church, *without* baptism? Or is it reasonable to suppose that like circumcised adults they were also baptized? To our mind, the latter is quite certain.

5. But look at the ground of complaint against Paul. James says, "Thou seest brother, how many thousands of the Jews there are which believe, and are all zealous of

the law; and are informed of thee that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles, to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs." From this, it is evident that Paul had something to say among the Gentiles about children; Mr. Taylor observes in connection with this text, "They (the Jews) had heard that he did *something*, or advised *something* to be done concerning them; what could it be? What did he substitute in the place of circumcision? We know of nothing but baptism that could give occasion to this information respecting Paul's proceedings." Apos. Bap. p. 70. Let us examine whether there is any thing in Paul's preaching and practice among the Gentiles calculated to give rise to such information. In the *first* place, that Paul should insist upon the duty of baptism, and at the same time tolerate circumcision among the *Jews*; while in *mixed* societies—Jews and Gentiles, he taught that circumcision was unnecessary; perfectly accords with what he, himself affirms concerning his course, 1 Cor. 9:19—23. He became all things to all men, that he might by all means save some. Paul well knew, that to *believing* Jews, who had *already* embraced the Messiah, circumcision would do no injury. While to allow circumcision in *mixed* communities would be to place a stumbling block before the Gentiles, or impose upon them a useless rite. And still the conciliatory spirit of the apostle led him to circumcise Timothy and Titus—the one a Greek, and the other a Greek on his father's side.

Secondly: There was also some foundation for a report, that while Paul taught the Jews, who dwelt among the Gentiles, that the *circumcision* of children was no longer necessary; he *did*, both by precept and example teach that the *baptism* of children *was* necessary. For example,

when at Philippi, he *did* “baptize Lydia and her household.” He *did* say to the anxious jailor, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and *thou* shalt be saved, and thy *house* ;” and then “straightway” he *did* “baptize the jailor and all his.” And when at Corinth, Paul *did* “baptize the household of Stephanas.”

Now these facts, no doubt were afterwards reported to the believing Jews who dwelt in Jerusalem ; and who continued to circumcise as well as baptize their children. But these reports spake only of Paul’s “*baptizing* households”—nothing said about *circumcision*—a rite always administered, both to the head of the family when converted, and to his household. The Jews therefore, were jealous for the “customs” of their fathers.

If our conclusions, in reasoning upon this subject, are *not* correct, then we are driven to one of two things ; either the “many thousands of believing Jews which dwelt in Jerusalem circumcised their children and cast them *out* of the church ; or they were admitted into covenant with the church *without* baptism !! If the latter be true, then the church was made up of baptized and unbaptized members ; but if the former, then circumcision was not applied as a token of God’s covenant. We leave our opponents to reconcile these points while we abide by our position that both believing parents and their children were first circumcised and then baptized.

#### CHILDREN BROUGHT TO CHRIST.

The relation that the children of God’s people sustain to the church under the gospel dispensation, is beautifully set forth in the language of our Saviour, in Luke 18 : 15, 16. “And they brought unto him also *infants*, that he

would touch them : but when his disciples saw it they rebuked them." But what did Christ say ?

"But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not : *for of such is the kingdom of God.*" This same incident is related in Matt. 19 : 13—15. Mark 10 : 13—16. Now we do not pretend that these *infants* were *baptized* by Christ ; or that they were brought to him for baptism. The point is simply this ; what relation do they sustain to the church under the gospel dispensation, according to the authority of Christ. If the children of God's people are component parts of the church—belong to it ; then they must be baptized.

1. These infants were brought to Christ by *believing parents*. This will scarcely be denied, since it is evident that they were brought to Christ for his blessing. That such as did not believe in Christ, should bring them, would be indeed singular—too singular to be true.

2. They were *infants*, and not adults. 1. They are expressly called *infants*. Matthew calls them, not merely children, but "*little children.*" Mark says "*young children.*" The word *children* would have been sufficient, and more likely to convey the truth, had they been old enough to believe in Christ. 2. That they were infants is farther evident, from the fact that they were "*brought*" to Christ, or carried in the arms of their parents. 3. The Saviour "*took them up in his arms.*" Hence they were "*little children,*" so young in years as to require carrying, or handling as is usual with infants before they run alone.

It seems there were some who rebuked those individuals that *brought* children to Christ ; but the Saviour was *much displeased*, and said "*Suffer little children to come*

unto me and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God."

Now the question arises, as to what the Saviour intends to teach by the declaration; "For of such is the kingdom of God." The phrase "kingdom of God" and "kingdom of heaven," &c. frequently denotes the gospel church on earth. That such is its meaning in this place we are fully persuaded. Dr. Gill, the Baptist commentator is of this opinion; hence he remarks on Matt. 19:14, "It is as if our Lord should say, Don't drive away these children from my person and presence; they are lively emblems of the proper subjects of *a gospel church state*; and of such that shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; by these I may instruct and point out to you, what converted persons should be, *who have a place in my church below*, and expect to enter into my kingdom and glory above." Hence the "kingdom of God" in this place is equivalent to "the church below." In Matt. 21:43, the Saviour says to the unbelieving Jews, "Therefore, say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." What kingdom was this? Certainly not the kingdom of glory, because that never belonged to unbelieving Jews. Part First, p. 77, 78.

But admit for the sake of argument, that the phrase "kingdom of God" means "kingdom of glory," and what follows? Why, such children sustain a *saving relation* to Jesus Christ; and should therefore receive the sign of their union with him. Shall we exclude from his kingdom, or church on earth, such as belong to the kingdom of glory above? We might reduce the question to a syllogistic form.

1. All who are saved through our Lord Jesus Christ are proper subjects of baptism.

2. Infants and believing adults are saved through our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Therefore, infants and believing adults are proper subjects of baptism.

Should it be objected that infants may grow up unbelievers, we reply, that would not alter the fact, they *were* proper subjects of baptism. Infants circumcised might and frequently did grow up, and become the most abandoned characters. But that does not prove that God mistook the proper subjects of circumcision when he put parents and their children under the same covenant.

On this passage Dr. Watson observes, p. 36, "Take it that by the 'kingdom of God,' or 'of heaven,' our Lord means the glorified state of his church: it must be granted that none can enter into heaven who are not redeemed by Christ, and who do not stand in a vital relation to him as members of his mystical body, or otherwise we should place human and fallen beings in that heavenly state who are unconnected with Christ as their Redeemer, and uncleansed by him as the Sanctifier of his redeemed. Now this relation must exist on earth before it can exist in heaven; or else we assign the work of sanctifying the fallen nature of man to a future state, which is contrary to the scriptures. If infants, therefore, are thus redeemed and sanctified in their nature, and are before death made 'meet for the inheritance of the saints in light;' so that in this world they are placed in the same relation to Christ as an adult believer, who derives sanctifying influence from him, they are therefore the members of his church,—they partake the grace of the covenant, 'I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.' In other words, they are made members of Christ's church, and are entitled to be recognized as such by the administration of the visible sign of initiation into some visible branch of it."

Mr. Edwards says "The Baptists in general understand this (kingdom of God) of a state of glory, and allow infants to belong to that, but deny that they belong to the church. This, indeed, is granting the greater and denying the less;

and therefore an argument may be taken from what they grant, to destroy what they deny; that is, an argument *a majore ad minus*. If infants belong to a state of glory, which is the greater; then much more do they belong to a church state, which is the less. Besides, as the institution of a church is a dispensation of God which leads to glory, it is absurd to grant persons a place in glory, and at the same time deny them a place in that dispensation which leads to it." p. 69.

Hence, if we should grant that by "kingdom of God," the kingdom of glory is intended, it does not relieve our opponents of their embarrassments. It was this dilemma that drove the Petrobrussians, the first sect that ever denied the right of *infant* baptism, yet admitted water baptism, into a denial of infant *salvation*. To admit that "of such is the kingdom of glory," and deny such the sign of God's grace, was too glaring, even for these early opposers.

But our opponents are provided with another objection based upon the same text. They say, "The phrase 'For of such,' relates to adults of like disposition;" hence the text would read "Suffer little *children* to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such *adults* is the kingdom of God." On this interpretation Mr. Edwards remarks as follows: "Some of the Baptists remarking upon the phrase *ton tōioutōn*, of such, or of such like, affirm that our Lord meant adults of a child-like disposition, and that of these, and not of the infants, he said, of such is the kingdom of God. This construction, which indeed has nothing to support it, will appear very uncouth, when we consider these words of our Lord, as a reason for bringing and permitting the little children to come to him. Suffer them to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of God. But



this exposition, besides that it makes our Lord speak obscurely, represents him as giving a reason quite distant from the subject he was upon. For whereas a reason for coming should be taken from those who are to come, and not from others; this exposition makes our Lord say, Suffer *these* to come, because *those* belong to the kingdom. To say, adults belong to the kingdom of God, is no good reason for bringing infants to Christ. It is a much better one to say, suffer these little children to come, because these little children, and others like them belong to the kingdom of God. But if it be said, others belong to the kingdom of God, because they are like infants, then infants must belong to the kingdom of God because they are like them. The truth is, our Lord evidently speaks of infants as he had done before, in the preceding passage." p. 68.

Says Dr. Miller, "The language which our Lord himself employs concerning them (infants) is remarkable; of such is the kingdom of heaven." That is, theirs is the kingdom of heaven. It is precisely the same form of expression in the original, which our Lord uses in the commencement of his sermon on the mount, when he says "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" "Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." This form of expression, of course precludes the construction which some have been disposed to put on the passage, in order to evade its force, viz. that it implies that the kingdom of heaven is made up of such as resemble little children in spirit. We might just as well say that the kingdom of heaven does not belong to those who are "poor in spirit," but only to those who resemble them; or that it does not belong to those who are "persecuted for righteousness' sake," but only to those who manifest a similar

temper. Our Lord's language undoubtedly meant that the kingdom of heaven was really theirs of whom he spake; that it belonged to them; that they are heirs of it, just as the "poor in spirit" and the "persecuted for righteousness' sake, are themselves connected in spirit, and in promise with that kingdom." See Miller on Bap. p. 18.

The kingdom of God was taken from the Jewish nation because they rejected the Messiah, and given to the believing Gentiles. That the kingdom of God which was taken from the Jews and given to the Gentiles, denotes the Jewish church dispensation, is certain; and it is equally certain that infants belonged to the kingdom of God which was taken from the Jews. The language of our Lord then, amounts to this "Suffer little children to come unto me; they still belong to my kingdom, or church, and consequently sustain an important relation to me." This would be intelligible and satisfactory, and a sufficient reason why infants should be brought to Christ to receive his blessing; it would have met the wishes of every pious heart, and accorded with the original charter of the church of God—God's everlasting covenant with believers and their seed.

But says the objector, "If infants belong to the kingdom of God, and must therefore be baptized; why not baptize all infants?" answer: we will, provided parents will consent, and solemnly covenant to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," as did Abraham; and as do believers now, who intelligently bring their children to Christ and consecrate them to him in baptism.

Reader: the Saviour was "*much displeased*" with those who rebuked parents for bringing their children to our Lord! Is that Saviour displeased with parents now who *bring* their children and *consecrate* them unto him by the

washing of water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost? Has that Christ, who "took little children up in his arms" and said "suffer them to come unto me and forbid them not," finally cast them out of his church; and denied them that rite which signifies moral cleansing through the efficacy of his own blood, and by the Spirit of God? We have never so learned Christ, neither do such conclusions accord with the genius of our christianity.

### CHILDREN HOLY.

1 Cor. 7: 14—"For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy."

This text seems to assign a reason why the children of God's people belong to the kingdom of God—they are *holy children*, or in the language of the Old Testament a "holy seed." The text does not teach that the children of believers are morally pure; but relatively holy. The meaning is simply this, "If only one of the parents believes, it so sanctifies the family relation, that the children are holy, i. e. proper subjects to be consecrated to God in covenant relation, as were the seed of Abraham." This exposition is easy and natural; is agreeable to the spirit and design of the original constitution of the church, and accords with the sentiments of the Fathers who flourished immediately after the apostles. While the exposition of our opponents is contradictory, and absurd, as we shall undertake to show. The reader shall now have a specimen of the logic of great men in a pinch. We will begin with the learned, confident Dr. Carson, whose manner of affirming is very conclusive, however faulty his logic.

Dr. Carson says "with respect to the passage referred to (1 Cor. 7 : 14) it is usually and sufficiently explained, by an allusion to Ezra 10 : 3. 44—Neh. 13 : 23, 24. The sanctification referred to, must be *legitimacy according to the law of God.*" p. 333.

Dr. Gill says, the parties spoken of, "Are duly, rightly, and legally *espoused* to each other ;—otherwise, that is, if they are not truly married to each other, the children must be *spurious*, and not legitimate, *else were your children unclean, but now are they holy* ; this is, if the marriage contract between them was not valid, and if since the conversion of one of them, it can never be thought to be good ; then the children begotten and born, either when both were infidels, or since one of them was converted, must be unlawfully begotten, base-born, and not a genuine, legitimate offspring ; but as the parents are lawfully married, the children born of them are in a civil and legal sense holy, that is, legitimate." Wood on Bap. p. 83.

Pengilly, "Scripture Guide," p. 41, 50, explained the text as does Drs. Carson and Gill, and professes to quote Abram Booth in support of the same opinion.

In looking at the labored results of these learned Drs., we confess the remark of Elihu appears peculiarly pertinent ; "Great men are not always wise." Reader, does lawful marriage constitute "holy children?" Or is it necessary that one parent should believe in Christ to constitute children legitimate, "lawfully begotten?" Did Paul undertake to teach the profound doctrine, that where the *husband* or *wife* believed, their marriage was lawful? That children born under such circumstances were not bastards!! But that our reader may see the utter inconsistency of the exposition given by our opponents ; that it has neither scripture, logic, nor criticism to support it ; we will introduce a few simple facts.

1. "Else were your children *unclean*, but now are they *holy.*" By "*unclean*," according to our opponents we must understand illegitimate, i. e. bastards ; and by "*holy*" legitimate—" *lawfully begotten.*" Now the word for bas-

tards is *nodos*; and for legitimate *gnesios*, neither of which is used in the text; but *agia*, holy, elsewhere saints i. e. devoted to God. This word is never used for legitimate. It was a common title by which the apostle designated those who were consecrated to God and in covenant relation with his church. 1 Cor. 1: 2, "To them that are sanctified (set apart) in Christ Jesus called to be *saints*;" Eph. 1: 1, "To the *saints* which are at Ephesus." Col. 1: 2, "To the *saints* and faithful brethren in Christ." Now what sense would it make to render the word *saint*, or *saints* "legitimate;" and still it comes from *agios*. The inconsistency of our opponents appears in the argument of their great champion, Mr. Tombes, who held a discussion with Mr. Baxter in 1649.

In the report Mr. Baxter says "You yielded that the word *sanctify* and *holy*, is taken in my sense near 600 times in scripture, and no where else *once* in your sense; and yet pleaded that here (1 Cor. 7: 14) it must be taken in yours, and not in mine, without showing any ground for a necessity of it." Baxter's Report, p. 208, quoted by McCalla, p. 303. It certainly shows some decision, to say a bible word means so and so, and stick to it, although there is not an example on record!! Such opponents are hard to convince.

2. The words *clean* and *holy* most certainly do describe that which is, or may be consecrated to God; and are almost always, if not exclusively employed to denote such a relation or use, when used in a religious sense. Let our opponents furnish the *first* example to the contrary.

"Every thing dedicated to God is styled *holy*, as the temple, the offerings, the vessels of the sanctuary, and the *people* in covenant. Not because they are all regenerated;

but because they stand in a visible covenant relation to an holy God." Clinton on *Bap.* p. 42. Says Dr. Doddridge :

" On the maturest and most impartial consideration of this text (1 Cor. 7 : 14) I must judge it to refer to *infant baptism*. Nothing can be more apparent than that the word *holy*, signifies persons who might be admitted to partake of the distinguishing rites of God's people. Compare Ex. 19 : 6—Deut. 7 : 6—14 : 2—26 : 19—33 : 3—Ezra 9 : 2—Is. 35 : 8—52 : 1—Acts 10 : 23. And as to the interpretation which so many of our brethren, the Baptists, have contended for, that *holy* signifies *legitimate* and *unclean, illegitimate* (not to urge that this seems an unscriptural sense of the word) nothing can be more evident, than that the argument will by no means bear it ; for it would be proving a thing by itself, *idem per idem*, to argue that the converse of the parent was lawful because the children were not bastards ; whereas all who thought the converse of the parents unlawful, must of course think that the children were illegitimate." See Com.

3. But what seems to settle this point, is the fact, that the *children* of such parents are distinguished by the very name that distinguishes such *adults* as are in covenant relation with the church. " Else were your children unclean, but now are they *holy*." Mr. Clinton observes " The word *holy*, is never applied in the scriptures to any person *out of covenant*, and *destitute of the covenant seal*. . . . The term *holy* is appropriated to persons visibly in covenant, is applied directly to them, *but not to any others*." page 45. The Israelites were denominated " *a holy people*," because in covenant with God ; their *first born holy to the Lord* ; and their entire offspring " *a holy seed*," and as Whitby argues :

" If the *holy seed* among the Jews were to be circumcised, and be made federally holy by receiving the sign of the covenant and being admitted into the number of God's people, because they were born

in sanctity, or were seminally holy ; *for the root being holy so are the branches* ; then, by like reason, the holy seed of christians ought to be admitted to baptism, the sign of the christian covenant, and so to be entered into the society of the christian church."

In Ridgley Divinity, I find the following note : Tertullion observes on this passage, ( 1 Cor. 7 : 14 ) that if either parent were christians, the children were enrolled in Jesus Christ by *early baptism*. And it fairly implies infant baptism in the days of Paul. For, having declared that the unbelieving partner was not to be divorced according to the law of Moses, which held the heathen to be unclean ; he pronounces the unbeliever set apart by such marriage to God, as far as regarded that marriage ; and in proof of this he refers to a fact as known to the Corinthians, namely, that the children of such marriages were received into the church, and treated as holy, that is, devoted to God. Now if the children of such marriage were not treated as heathens, but owned by the church, and this could be in no other way than by receiving them by baptism, there can be no doubt, that this was the case when both parents were believers." Vol. 4, p. 196.

We might refer our reader to the opinions of the ancients, Fathers of the church, as being in accordance with the exposition we have given of 1 Cor. 7 : 14 ; but it is unnecessary ; if any doubt, let such consult Wall, Vol. 1, p. 95, 181, 342—6, &c. It has always been a matter of surprise to us, that an exposition so natural and easy, and urged both by the precepts and examples of Old and New Testament, should meet with opposition from any source. The covenant relation of children based upon the faith of parents, is a doctrine as old as the constitution of the Abrahamic church ; and this is the doctrine advocated by the apostle in this place. In confidence we now submit it to the candor and good sense of our reader, with the evidence before him : whether children, denominated by the apostle "*clean*" and "*holy*," belonged to the "*kingdom of heaven*" on earth, or visible church ; and consequent-

ly were entitled to the rite of initiation ; or whether by " holy," we are simply to understand " legitimate ;" when out of more than 600 examples of the use of the word " holy," legitimate is never *once* given as the meaning of the word " holy ;" but as Burkit well observes, " Is *always* used for a state of separation to God."

#### HOUSEHOLD BAPTISM.

The inquiry is frequently raised, " If infant baptism is a doctrine of the New Testament, why is not more said about it ; and why are not examples of the practice more numerous ?" We reply, long established customs are seldom mentioned in history, unless incidentally in connection with other things. There are periods in the history of the Jews, of more than 500 years, when circumcision is not once mentioned, nor an example given ; are we hence to infer that circumcision was not practiced during this long silence ? There are intervals of more than 100 years when the sabbath is not named ! Had it been blotted from the Statute Book of heaven ? There was no occasion for speaking of circumcision, or the sabbath ; and there certainly was no necessity for noticing the fact of their existence. The same is true of infant baptism. Had there been any material change in the covenant relation of children, no doubt such change would have been made conspicuous, as was the fulfillment of the ceremonial dispensation, and the institution of the gospel system. But as children had always sustained a covenant relation with the church, and continued to sustain that relation under the *gospel dispensation*, there was no occasion for mentioning infant baptism, as a fact, any more than there is occasion for speaking of the 4th of July, to an intelligent American, as a historical fact. When our Baptist brethren



administer baptism, it is unnecessary to add, that it was on "profession of faith;" that is a matter of course. When Pedobaptists speak of administering the rite to "households," is it necessary to say "children were included?" By no means, that is implied. So of the apostles; they practiced according to the constitution of the church, which provided for infant church membership, as we have already shown.

But we deny that the New Testament is without precept and example for infant baptism; or that, compared with the general history of baptism, it is even seldom brought to view by inspired writers. We claim that examples of "household baptism" are common in connection with the reported labors of the apostles. Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles. Now, if the reader will take his bible and count, he will find, that all the distinct cases of baptism recorded in the New Testament do not exceed ten. Pengilly numbers only 18 places, when commenting upon all those texts, or portions of scripture which *relate* to baptism. Now it is a singular fact, that out of the ten distinct cases on record, *six* belong to the ministry of Paul, and *three* out of the six are "*household baptisms:*" and what is still more remarkable, the examples given, are mentioned *incidentally*, as common occurrences, and not as extraordinary, or out of the common course. In fact, had it not been for the *baptism* of Lydia, we should have never known that she had a "household;" because these words include every syllable that relates to her family: Acts 16: 15, "And when she was baptized, *and her household,*" &c. Of the jailor it is simply said, "He was baptized *and all his;*" thus briefly adverting to the fact, as a customary thing. Had it not been for party strife at Corinth, no mention would have been made of the baptism of

the "household of Stephanas;" 1 Cor. 14—16. Now, if in six recorded examples of baptism, connected with the ministry of Paul, we find *three* cases of "household baptism," and those mentioned in this incidental manner, the inference seems just, and unavoidable, that a multitude of like cases were passed over in silence, since it was not the object of the inspired writers to minute examples of infant baptism—they merely alluded to the fact when connected with some other important matter.

But our opponents roundly deny that these examples of "household baptism," have any thing to do with *infant* baptism; hence a somewhat critical examination of these cases is demanded. That our position should be *denied* by our opponents, is by no means strange. Indeed, as we have already shown, self-preservation requires it. See p. 155. But a *denial* proves nothing—every important doctrine of the bible has been denied, and still maintained with unshaken confidence. But to the candid reader we say, let these examples, fairly interpreted speak for themselves. Our position is this: the language and circumstances, explained according to all just rules of interpretation, prove the practice of infant baptism.

#### LYDIA AND HOUSEHOLD.

1. We will take a view of the simple *facts* and *circumstances*, without going into a critical examination of *words*. Our criticisms upon certain words in the text, shall be our corroborating testimony abundantly confirming our position, and our explanation of the "facts and circumstances." We will begin with the case of Lydia and her household. Acts 16: 14, 15: "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshiped God, heard us: whose heart the

Lord opened that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there : and she constrained us."

Here then we find all that relates to the conversion, and baptism of Lydia, and her household. That her "household" were really *baptized*, our opponents will not deny ; and that the word, "household" frequently denotes a *family*, they also admit. So far then we agree. But did Lydia's household *believe* before they were baptized ; is the question at issue ? Our opponents affirm that Lydia's baptized household *were* believers and were baptized upon the profession of *their own* faith : while we maintain that there is not one syllable to prove that a single subject of baptism believed, except Lydia ; and that her faith was the foundation of the baptism of her household.

The argument of our opponents consists of two parts. In the *first* place, they tell us what we can't prove : and *secondly*, they attempt to prove that Lydia's household were all believers, "*brethren*." We will give the substance of their argument from the famous "R. Pengilly," whose work is published and endorsed by the "Baptist General Tract Society, Philadelphia :" and whose argument is in fact the common argument of all their great men. Scrip. Guide, p. 28, 29.

Mr. Pengilly says, that there "Are *four* things which a Pedobaptist must take for granted, before he can urge this place in his favor ; but if he can prove none of them, his argument is good for nothing. 1. That Lydia had, at this time, or lately an husband. 2. That she had children, and children then in infancy, or under the years of

understanding. 3. That these children were with her at Philippi. 4. That such children were really baptized."

This same mode of reasoning we will now apply to our opponents. They admit that Lydia's "household" was baptized; and that the word "household," frequently denotes a *family*; now as nothing is said about the faith of her "household," we call upon our opponents to show;

1. That Lydia had no children.
2. Or, if she had, that there were no infants among them.
3. Or that she had not brought them with her to Philippi.
4. Or, that if with her, any of them believed.

Should they assume that Lydia's servants constituted her "household," then we ask for the proof, not only that she had servants, but that they were converted. The inspired writer affirms that her "household" were baptized; but nothing is said about their believing. In fact, the manner of recording *her* conversion and baptism, proves that Lydia was the *only* believer connected with the "household." Look at the text. "And a certain *woman* named *Lydia*, a seller of purple of the city of Thyatira, who (*Lydia*) worshiped God, heard us; whose (*Lydia's*) heart the Lord opened that *SHE* attended to the things which were spoken of Paul." Now according to our opponents, it should have read thus, "*They* heard us—*their* hearts were opened—*they* attended to the things which were spoken of Paul:" and when Lydia said, "If ye have judged *ME* faithful," it should have been "If ye have judged *US* faithful." But instead of the plural, Lydia *only* is alluded to; and we should have never known that she had a household, had not her baptism been mentioned. Would an impartial historian so minutely state all the facts and circumstances in the conversion of Lydia, and then pass over the conver-

sion of her *whole household* in perfect silence!! Was the simple fact of their *baptism* more important than the fact of their *conversion*!!! Let the candid judge.

*Secondly* : But our opponents attempt to prove that the household of Lydia were all believers : we will now look at the argument to prove it. Mr. Pengilly says, p. 28, " Paul and Silas being delivered from prison, went into the house of Lydia, and here, undoubtedly, they found her 'household,' that they had baptized : having entered, we read, (verse 40) they saw **THE BRETHREN**, and **COMFORTED THEM**.—Lydia's household, therefore, being called 'brethren' and capable of being 'comforted' by the word, must have been adults, and not infant children." To our mind, this argument is almost too weak, to claim serious attention. Look at the passage ; " And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia : and *when they HAD SEEN the brethren*, they comforted them and departed." Did not Mr. Pengilly know that Luke and Timothy were with Paul and Silas at Philippi? When Luke, the writer says " She (Lydia) constrained us" to abide in her house : does it not prove that they *did* abide there? Yes : " they comforted the *brethren*"—nothing said about the *sisters*—not even Lydia, whose hospitality they enjoyed. But suppose we should exclude Luke and Timothy and say somebody else is meant : were there no disciples who would take the trouble to call at Lydia's house and see Paul and Silas before their departure? We should consider it rather cold treatment, to go into a place—preach the gospel—be scourged and imprisoned for preaching ; and when set at liberty, leave the town without so much as a friendly call from the "brethren." The language, 'And when they

had seen the brethren implies, not a "household," but the brethren at Philippi, who sympathized in their suffering—Luke, Timothy, the Jailer, and any others.

But our opponents insist that there is no evidence that Lydia had any children—that her baptized "household" were converted "brethren." Indeed, had the word "household" been rendered "family," or "children," there would have been little room for controversy. Now it is a singular fact, that the Venerable Peshito-Syriac version, and the Coptic, read; "And when she was baptized WITH HER CHILDREN." See Hall on Bap. Errors, p. 76. How far this Ancient "Peshito-Syriac" version is entitled to confidence, as also the Coptic, is a matter of some importance. *First*, what say our opponents.

Rev. Willard Judd, the Reviewer of Prof. M. Stuart of Andover, says "The old Syriac, or Peshito (version) is *acknowledged to be the most ancient* as well as one of the *most accurate* versions of the New Testament. It was made at least as early as the *beginning* of the *second century*, in the very country where the apostles lived and wrote, and where both the Syriac and the Greek were constantly used, and perfectly understood. Of course it was executed by those who *understood and spoke both languages precisely as the sacred writers themselves understood and spoke them.*" Judd's Review, p. 163, 164.

The "Bible Question" published by the Baptist Bible Society says, "The Peshito-Syriac version is generally referred to the beginning of the second century: by some critics, even to the close of the first." Again, "It is considered to be the earliest version extant: the language differs, probably, very little from that spoken by our Lord and his disciples." See Bib. Question, p. 121. The Rev. J. J. Woolsey considers the Peshito version, "the very

best that ever has been made," and is in doubt whether it "be the work of an inspired apostle or not." Hall *Bap. Er.* p. 76. Thus speak our Baptist brethren, and the Baptist Bible Society for the ancient Peshito version, when pleading for immersion. We concede all the worth and antiquity that they claim for this excellent version, which possibly is even older than the book of Revelation, and *may* "be the work of an inspired apostle."

But then, what become of "Lydia's *servants*"—the "brethren" who constituted her "household?" this version declares that "she was baptized *with her CHILDREN.*" The Coptic version, which some maintain, is as old as the second century, declares the same—"She was baptized *with her CHILDREN.*" Now, will our opponents impeach their own witness, even after endorsing his character for competency and veracity, because he testifies against them? or will they rather give up all their *guess work* about Lydia being "unmarried"—"keeping a number of servants who were converted"—"the brethren comforted were her household" &c. Let our reader decide which is due to candor, and christian controversy; while we consider the case of the Jailer.

#### THE JAILER AND FAMILY.

The conversion of Lydia seems to have led to the conversion of the Jailer. The history of his conversion we give in the language of the inspired writer. Acts 16: 25—34. "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God; and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened and every one's bands were loosed. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep,

and seeing the prison-doors open; he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, do thyself no harm, for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas; and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straight-way. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." Here then, we have all the facts and circumstances connected with the conversion of the Jailer, his baptism, and that of his household. Now let us consider, in the spirit of honest inquiry, the evidence *for* and *against* infant baptism, derived from this example.

1. We claim that the Jailer had a *family*;—that his family embraced *young* children. 'That he had a family, our opponents do not deny. See Pengilly, p. 30. But that he had a family, which embraced *young* children, is evident; *First*, from Paul's answer to his question, "What must I do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* shalt be saved and *thy house*." But would the apostle have promised salvation to his *house*, upon the condition of *his* faith, if *servants* constituted his house, or family; or even if his *children* were of sufficient age to act for themselves? Does not the promise seem to be limited to such parents, as are training up infant offspring "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?" But, in the *second* place, the conduct of the Jailer upon



this occasion, shows that he was comparatively a young man, and consequently had a family which embraced young children. We read "He called for a light, and *sprang* in," which denotes too much activity for an old man. Again; "He drew his sword and was about to kill himself." This looks more like the rash, hasty decision of young men, than the deliberation and coolness characteristic of age. *Third*: It is unreasonable to suppose, that the *care* and *labor* of a prison would be imposed upon any but an able and efficient man; such as would be found among the young and vigorous.

2. We argue the baptism of the Jailer's children from the character of the promise made to him. The promise is peculiarly Abrahamic in its character; "I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee." So in Luke 19: 9. "This day is salvation come to this *house*, forasmuch as he also is a son of *Abraham*." Peter, on the day of Pentecost calls upon his anxious hearers to repent and be baptized, and adds "For the promise is unto you, and to your *children*." And to the Jailer, Paul says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* shalt be saved, and *thy house*." Now we affirm that the same covenant, which united parents and children in the promises, also united them in the rite whereby they entered into covenant with God. This accords with the preaching and practice of the apostle in the case of the Jailer; he first preached "Believe . . . and thou shalt be saved, and *thy house*;" and then baptized him and all his house.

3. We believe that the children of the Jailer were baptized, because it is expressly said, "he was baptized, and *all his*, straightway." Now if "all his" were immediately baptized, then his children were among the num-

ber. The promise was also to his "house," and his "house" is also united with him in baptism.

4. There is nothing on record to prove that his children were converted, and consequently baptized upon the profession of their *own* faith; but all the facts and circumstances prove that they were baptized upon the faith of the parent. Look at the facts: "HE" asked "What must I do to be saved,"—"HE believed,"—"HE rejoiced,"—"HE was baptized, and all his." Dr. Pond says "It is *certain* from the Greek, as every one acquainted with the language must perceive, that the *believing* and *rejoicing* here spoken of, being in the *singular number*, can refer to the Jailer on *y*." Page 96.

Let us now consider the objections of our opponents to this view of the subject. To meet our argument, *two* objections are urged by Pengilly, which comprise, we believe all that our opponents can glean from the case of the Jailer wherewith to oppose *infant baptism*. For the benefit of our opponents we will quote Mr. Pengilly's argument—*italics* and *capitals*.

1. "We may next learn, from the text, in the most satisfactory manner, of what the Jailer's household consisted: that they were not infants, or persons so young as to be incapable of being taught the gospel, and of believing it; for thus we read, ver. 32, "*They spake unto him the word of the LORD, AND TO ALL THAT WERE IN HIS HOUSE.*" These two or three words from the pen of inspiration, decide the controversy. This household is *instructed*, *ALL*; therefore infants could not be included.

2. "St. Luke farther describes the Jailer and his household, and shows thereby, how the LORD's commission was still strictly obeyed. Paul and Silas first *preached the gospel* to the whole house, as observed above; and now we read, ver. 34, the Jailer *rejoiced, BELIEVING IN GOD WITH ALL his HOUSE.* Then it follows he had no infant children." See Pengilly's Guide, p. 30.

So much for objections, so convincing and conclusive, in the estimation of Mr. Pengilly, the Oracle of the "Baptist General Tract Society," that with apparent triumph, he affirms, "*These two or three words from the pen of inspiration decide the controversy.*" Yes; Mr. Pengilly, but which way do "these two or three words" . . . decide it? We fully concur thus far, "two or three words from the pen of inspiration," in this very text quoted by our opponents to *disapprove* infant baptism, considered in their proper connection, *ought* forever to decide the controversy; but not as Mr. Pengilly decides it.

Candid reader; let us now consider "These two or three words from the pen of inspiration," in their proper connection with the whole subject. *First*, it is said "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, *and to all that were in his house.*" Yes, reader; mark well the language! It don't say "They spake the word of the Lord to *all HIS*," or "*to his HOUSE*;" but "*to all that were in his house*;" i. e. they preached to all that *were present with him*. Hence, when the Jailer's *children* are intended, we read; "Believe . . . and thou shall be saved, and *thy house*.—And was baptized, he and *all his*," i. e. all his house. But when *others* are intended—whether prisoners, domestics, or both; this peculiar phrase is not employed: then we read, "And they spake the word of the Lord . . . to all that were *in his house*," or present with him at the time and place. The very form of expression, "*all that were in his house*," compared with the phrase "*his house*"—the latter being uniformly employed in both Old and New Testament to denote the family,—embracing children; proves beyond all doubt to our mind; that by the former, we are to understand persons with him, but not his family in the proper sense; while the phrase "*his house*" and

“*all his,*” denotes his children. When our opponents can find the *first* example, in all the bible, where the former is used to denote the *children* of the house, then we will allow that it *may* have such meaning in this place.

That our view, is the *correct one*, will appear from a careful examination of the facts presented by the inspired writer. *First*, In connection with the earthquake, ver. 26, we read “Immediately *all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.*” Hence the prisoners were *loosed*, and at liberty to go where they pleased about the prison. *Second*, in ver. 30, 31, it is said that the Jailer “called for a light and sprang in” and “brought them out,” i. e. out of the “inner prison,” where he had thrust them. The next verse 32, informs us that “they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house,” or with him in that part of the building, into which he brought them, when he brought them out of the “inner prison.” But that his family abode is *not* intended by the word “house” in this place, is certain, from the fact stated in the 34th ver. “And when he had brought them into his *house*, he set meat before them, &c.” Hence those to whom they “spake the word of the Lord” were not at the time in *that house* into which Paul and Silas were brought when meat was set before them. This will appear still more conclusive, when we come to show that the inspired writer has employed in the original, two different words, although their peculiar significancy is lost in consequence of translating both “house,” without marking their distinct meaning.

The view we have presented, is not only supported by all the *facts* recorded; but all the *probabilities* in the case go to confirm the same opinion. Let our reader imagine the interest felt on that occasion, by the prisoners—the earth

quaking—their bands suddenly unloosed, and their doors unbarred by an invisible power; the alarmed Jailer springs in with a light, and imploringly asks, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved.” Would not every prisoner, urged by fear and anxiety, hasten to the light, and listen with solemn interest to those wonderful men, whose prayers, and midnight songs of praise to God, had already excited their attention? Would not Paul and Silas immediately—without leaving the spot, preach the same salvation to them, which they had just offered to the trembling Jailer? These same prisoners then, were the individuals to whom “they spake the word of the Lord:” and the “house,” which they were in when they heard the “word of the Lord,” was a part of the prison premises—the place where the anxious Jailer received an answer to the inquiry, “What must I do to be saved:” while the “house” into which the Jailer brought Paul and Silas *after* “they spake the word of the Lord unto him” and those with him, was the family residence, where refreshment was at hand; so that “he set meat before them.” If our opponents insist, that they are in the family residence, where the Jailer “and his house” dwelt, when Paul and Silas spake the word of the Lord to all; then into what “house” were they brought, when refreshment was given?

*Second:* But our opponents claim that all the Jailer’s house believed, because it is said he “rejoiced, believing in God *with all his house.*” There are two answers to this objection, either of which prove that the objection rests upon a very slender foundation. 1. Should we admit the present rendering of the text—that it is correct—the very best translation of the Greek; even then it proves nothing conclusively. When Joshua declares, “As for me and my house, *we will serve the Lord,*” does it prove that Josh-

ua had no infant children in his family, because *all* were pledged to the service of God? When Peter restored Eneas, Acts 9 : 35, it is said, “ *All* that dwelt in Lydda and Saron saw him and *turned* to the Lord.” There could have been no infants, therefore in Lydda and Saron, because “ *all turned* to the Lord ;” which infants were incapable of doing! Should a pastor visit a family, and report to his people, that the family were *all* glad to see him; that he conversed and prayed with *all the house*; would his people necessarily conclude that there were no infants in the family; because infants could neither rejoice nor converse? When it is said that a family worships in a certain church, does it prove that there are no infant children in such family; because infants are incapable of worshipping any where. Surely a literalist, so literal would make a sorry exposition of God’s revelation. 2. But let the reader consider the text translated as it should be: “ He rejoiced through all his house, having believed in God.” See Scott’s Com. : Also Henry. Or as some render the passage, “ He rejoiced domestically, having believed in God.” Dr. Pond observes, “ If there is an ambiguity in this English phrase, there is none in the original. It is *certain* from the Greek, as every one acquainted with the language must perceive, that the believing and rejoicing here spoken of, being in the *singular number*, can refer to the Jailer only,” p. 96. The word translated *house*—“ with all his *house*” is *panoiki*, an adverb, and properly signifies *domestically*, and describes the manner of his rejoicing: as Henry remarks, “ He, believing in God, rejoiced all the house over; he went to every apartment, expressing his joy.” That he should pass through different rooms, in arranging and preparing refreshment for Paul and Silas, and rejoice as he went, would by no means be a singular

circumstance : the transition from trembling anxiety and alarm, to joyful hope inspired by confidence in the living Redeemer, would produce such results. But why should the inspired historian so minutely record the facts, *He* asked, what must *I* do to be saved—" *he* rejoiced"— "*he* believed," and pass over the still more important fact, if, as our opponents claim, it be a fact, that his *whole house* were converted to God the same hour!! One thing is certain ; if the inspired writers were *opposed* to infant baptism, their manner of expressing it was exceedingly unfortunate for the cause of truth ; since their recorded examples of household baptism have gone to support the doctrine of *infant* baptism in every age. Our opponents would make few converts to their system by simply pursuing the same course.

#### HOUSEHOLD OF STEPHANAS.

The next example of household baptism which we will consider, is recorded, 1 Cor. 1 : 16—" I baptized also the household of Stephanas." The history of this example is so brief and abrupt, that little opportunity is afforded for a labored argument in opposition to the baptism of children. Still our opponents are not without an objection, and accordingly point us to 1 Cor. 16 : 15, " Ye know the house of Stephanas that it is the first-fruits of Achaia and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." But let our reader remember that the " household of Stephanas" had been baptized a number of years before Paul wrote to the Corinthians ; so that under the faithful training of a godly parent they might have been all converted *after* their baptism. To our mind the text decidedly favors this idea:—" Ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, *and that*

*they have (since) addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.*" As if the writer had said, "Since the household of Stephanas were baptized, they have been converted, and are now useful in administering to the wants of the saints." The very manner of speaking of them indicates that some change had occurred in the household of Stephanas, since Paul visited Corinth and baptized Stephanas and his family; and that change was so important that the apostle calls particular attention to the fact in concluding his epistle to the church. In this connection, we offer no criticism upon the words "household" and "house," as used in the *first* chapter and 16th verse, but conclude with an extract from Taylor's "Facts and Evidences," p. 55.

"By the apostle's reproof of a PARTY SPIRIT among the Corinthians, we learn, incidentally and unexpectedly, the baptism of the family of Stephanas. The Apostle was not discussing the subject of baptism, but was intent on suppressing PARTY. Having censured this disposition, he takes occasion to thank God, that *his* party, the Paulists, was so few! for how many did it consist of in the Corinthian church? Only two, Crispus and Gaius. 1 Cor. 1: 14—16, '*I thank God that I baptized none of you, Corinthian church-members, except Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in my own name, and so had formed a party among your church. However, I did baptize also the family of Stephanas;*' but, *they* are out of the question, as they cannot support any party. Besides, or as to the rest of families, *I do not recollect that I baptized any other family:—but if I did, they also are out of the question; since they also cannot support any party in the church.*"

With these examples of household baptism before the reader, let him also bear in mind that the apostles were



Jews by birth, education and religion : that their church had always been accustomed to receive "households" with the head of the family, by a religious rite, into covenant relation with the church ; and what then are we to infer from the record, when a Jewish inspired historian informs us, that, under the commission, "Go ye therefore make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ;" these same Jewish teachers did go, and whenever the *head* of the family was converted to God, they immediately baptized him, "and all his," or "her household." Let our opponents furnish the *first* example from apostolic practice, where the believing parent was baptized, while his, or her *children* were not. But how comes it to pass that the baptism of the *household*, always follows the baptism of the *head* of the family, if these ministers of Christ did not practice after the customs of the Abrahamic church, i. e. *first* proselyte the parent, and then receive into covenant relation with the church, both the *head* of the family and his *household* by the same rite of initiation. In this respect, the facts on record connected with the labors of the apostles precisely correspond with the practice of Pedobaptists now. Were the history, or journal of a missionary published, in which occasional mention of "household baptism" occurred, no one would ever think of questioning his belief in infant baptism ;—such facts would be regarded as conclusive evidence that he was a Pedobaptist. But do we read of the baptism of households among our baptist brethren ? Did a Baptist elder ever record such a fact as this ; "I baptized Mr. B. and his household, or all his ?" Why not, if the practice of our opponents corresponds with that of the apostles ! Strange indeed, that out of *nine* cases of baptism reported in connection with the labors of

the apostles, there should be *three* examples of household baptism ; while out of thousands of cases among our opponents, not a single example occurs ; and still they claim to be the true visible, apostolic church, following the inspired word and example of our Divine Lord and his apostles. We submit it to the candid.

#### OIKOS and OIKIA.

Before dismissing these examples of household baptism, we wish to call attention to the Greek words rendered "house" and "houshold" by the translators. We intend to show that the sacred historian has employed words, in speaking of the baptism of households, which in their strict and most literal signification imply, that those households embraced children, and that they were consequently baptized.

The inspired writers make use of two words, *oikos* and *oikia*, which are very generally translated *house* and *household*, in our common English version. *Oikos* is the proper word for *house*, in the sense of a *family* embracing children, and is always employed, when the inspired writers speak of the baptism of households. But *oikia* is more general in its meaning, and includes the premises at large—servants and all that pertains to a household. On this subject Mr. Taylor observes "The Greek term for *house*, *oikos*, corresponds exactly with our use of the English word ; and the distinctions are uniformly preserved throughout scripture, without any instance of confusion or interchange. As applied to persons, this Greek term signifies a continued descending line of many generations. So we have the *house* of Israel, and the *house* of David, the nearest line by consanguinity that can be drawn to Israel, to David through an indefinite number of generations. It signifies also a *family* living at the same time, and usually under one roof, contemporaries. With the addition of a syllable, *oiki-as*, it changes its application, and imports the attendants on a family, the servants of

various kinds, or the *house-HOLD* ; whoever *holds* to the *house*. Marriage or adoption might engraft a member of the *house-hold* (*oikia*) into the *family* (*oikos*) ; yet *that* is not according to the appointment of nature, but is an arbitrary convention of civil society.

The term *house*, in the sense of a building, or as signifying a series of descending generations, can have no connection with the subject of baptism of persons. Neither has the term *house-HOLD* (*oikia*) any immediate connection with this subject ; scripture affording no instance of a *house-HOLD* being baptized, *as such* ; though individuals comprised in it might be. We are therefore restricted to the consideration of the term *house* in the sense of *FAMILY* ; and it corresponds perfectly with our English term. Had it been rendered *family* at first, no error could have arisen upon the subject of baptism." *Facts and Evidences*, p. 47.

Rev. James E. Quaw, speaking of the difference between *oikos* and *oikia* says, " If servants or property were to be included in a word, another was used by the Greeks. They then employed (*oikia*), a word for which it is difficult to find an exact substitute in the English Language. Household, denoting the family or house and what holds to it, expresses more of its meaning than any other single English word. But the term *oikia*, itself includes or may include the family, the dwelling, the out-houses, the servants and the property in and near the buildings. This compound idea is frequently at least, embraced in this one Greek word. . . This word, *oikia*, says a noted uninspired Greek writer (Aristotle) is used to denote both " bond and free." But let us find its meaning in God's book. A few paragraphs from the inspired word, will show its meaning as taught by perfect wisdom. *It includes servants*. This is taught in the salutation " of Cæsar's (*oikias*) household." About the year 64, when this was written, not one of Cæsar's relations had been converted to Christianity ; but at that time a number of his servants had embraced the christian faith. The word *oikia*, therefore, which includes servants is used, not that *oikos* which denotes *kindred*, or *relation*. Our Saviour declares, " the servant abideth not in the (*oikia*) house forever." Here the word *oikia* signifies or certainly includes the apartments appropriated to the servants for their special accommodation. *It (oikia) denotes out-houses*. It is said of Christ and his mother : " there was no room for them in the Inn," yet the wise men, " when they were come in-

to the (*oikian*) house—saw the young child with Mary his mother.” The word here certainly denotes a stable or an out-house; for Jesus after his birth was laid “in a manger.” This word (*oikia*) includes the property belonging to the family. This truth is taught in the charge brought by our Saviour against the Pharisees—He says to them; “Ye devour widow’s (*oikias*) houses.” These words (*oikos*) and (*oikia*) are not synonymous; nor are they so nearly so, that the one may be substituted for the other. The account which God gives, by his inspired servant, of the conversion of Cornelius, the Roman Centurion, proves this position. His dwelling including his family, is five times expressed by (*oikos*) one of these words. “He feared God with all his (*oiko*) house;”—an angel directed him to send for Peter “into his, (*oikon*) house;”—Peter and “six brethren—entered into this man’s (*oikon*) house;”—“he had seen an angel in his (*oiko*) house;”—“thou and all thy (*oikos*) house shall be saved.” The dwelling, out-houses, servants and family of Simon the tanner or his whole establishment is four times expressed by *oikia*, the other word. The tanner’s (*oikia*) house is by the sea-side;—the men inquired “for Simon’s (*oikian*) house;”—Peter “is lodged in the (*oikia*) house of one Simon a tanner;”—“three men” came “unto the (*oikian*) house where Peter was.” In this account the angel, the inspired writer of the Acts, Cornelius, his servants and Peter, all use these words. But in no instance is the one substituted for the other. The spirit of God does not therefore use them as if they were synonymous. Moreover, the one (*oikos*) expresses only a part of what the other (*oikia*) signifies. The word which denotes only a part of any thing cannot be synonymous with that which expresses the whole. Besides the one (*oikos*) is masculine and the other (*oikia*) is feminine. This their difference of gender, as well as their difference of signification, shows that they cannot be interchanged. It appears therefore that the meaning of the word (*oikos*) for house denoting a family, is definitely fixed in the Greek language; that it primarily and principally signifies infants; and that it is very seldom, if at all used where infants are not included. It is also manifest that where servants and others compose the whole, or a part of the society mentioned, another word (*oikia*) is used.” See Quaw on Bap. p. 299, 300.

Mr. Taylor, Editor of Calmet’s Dict., after a most diligent and patient examination of *oikos* and *oikia*—their use and meaning in both Old and New Testament, and also

among ancient classic Greek writers, concludes as follows ; “ Being myself convinced that the apostles practised infant baptism, and that the Evangelist meant to tell us so ; I affirm that the *natural* import of the term (*oikos*) family, includes *children of all ages*. In proof, I offer *fifty* examples ; if *fifty* are not sufficient, I offer *a hundred* ; if *a hundred* are not sufficient, *two hundred* ; if *two hundred* are not sufficient, *four hundred*. I affirm that *oikos* VERY OFTEN expresses the presence of infants ; of this I offer *fifty* examples ; and if we admit classic instances, *fifty* more. Euripides alone affords half the number ; though he frequently uses *domos* instead of *oikos*. More than *three hundred* instances *have been examined*, which have proved perfectly satisfactory.” Facts and Evidences, p. 89.

In further proof of our position, that *oikos* properly denotes such a *family* as embraces *children*, we will now introduce some examples of the use of the word from both Old and New Testament. When Sarah gave her handmaid to Abram, she said, “ It may be that I may *be build-ed* by her.” On this text Dr. Gill, the Baptist Commentator, observes, “ For women by bearing children *build up an house*, see Ruth 4 : 11, hence a son in Hebrew is called **BEN**, from **BANAH**, to build.” When Boaz married Ruth, his coutrymen said, “ The Lord make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachael and like Leah, which two did build the (*oikon*) house of Israel.”—“ And let thine (*oikos*) house be like the (*oikos*) house of Pharez . . . of the seed which the Lord shall give thee of this young woman.” Hence the (*oikos*) house of Boaz, of Pharez, and of Israel was “ built,” as Dr. Gill says, “ by bearing children.” So also in relation to David it is said, “ The Lord—will make thee a (*oikos*) house ;”—“ he will build thee a (*oikos*) house.” David prayed saying, “ bless the (*oikos*) house of thy servant ;”—“ let the (*oikos*) house of thy servant be blessed forever ;”—and God said to him, “ thy (*oikos*) house shall be established.” 2 Sam. 7 : 11—29.

Mr. Taylor observes in his 'Facts and Evidences,' p. 87, 88, 'That the Lxx express *infants* by the term *oikos*, appears from the following instances.' Gen. 18: 19—'For I know Abraham that he will command his children, even his family—*oikos*—after him.' Isaac was only promised, not born at the time. Gen. 34: 30—'I being few in number shall be destroyed, I and my family, *oikos*.' There were infants in Jacob's family, at the time. Num 18: 31—'Ye shall eat it in every place, ye and your families, *oikos*; for it is your reward for service.' The *infants* of the priest's and Levites did eat at three years old 'their reward for service.' Deut. 12: 7 and 15: 20—'And ye shall eat before the Lord and rejoice, ye and your families, *oikos*.' The same infants who did eat before the Lord are here said to 'rejoice' before the Lord. Deut. 14: 26—'Thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou and thy family, *oikos*.' Here again the parent is said to 'rejoice' with his family before the Lord; which is exactly what is said of the Jailor's family when baptized; and as it here *expresses* the presence of *infants*, children of three or four years old, so undoubtedly it does in the New Testament. Deut. 25: 9—'Then shall his brother's wife say, Thus shall it be done unto that man who will not build up his brother's family, *oikos*'—by procreation of infants. 1 Sam. 2: 33—'The increase of thy family—*oikos*—shall die in the flower of their age.' This must mean *infants*. 2 Sam. 7: 16. 29—'And thy family, *oikos*, and thy kingdom shall be established forever. Thou hast spoken of thy servant's family, *oikos*, for a great while to come. 1 Chron. 17: 23—25—This must mean *infants*. 1 Kings 13: 2—'Behold, a child shall be born to the family, *oikos* of David.' This child must be an *infant*. Psalms 113: 9—'He caused the barren woman to have a family, *oikos*; and to be a joyful mother of children.' Infants are here intended."

The following quotation from Mr. W. L. McCalla, shows how Dr. Gill explains the word house, and household, when writing as a commentator. "In the following half dozen instances, Gill considers the word *house* as equivalent to *family*, and neither he nor any other will probably deny that *infants* are included. The people are required to support the priests, 'that the blessing may rest in thine *house*'—Ez. 44: 30. 'And the Lord blessed Obed-edom and all his *household*'—2 Sam. 6: 11. 'And thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the Lord thy God hath

given unto thee, and unto thine *house*'—Deut. 26 : 11. 'Therefore now let it please thee to bless the *house* of thy servant.' 'And with thy blessing let the *house* of thy servant be blessed forever'—2 Sam. 7 : 29. 'And all the people departed every man to his house, and David returned to bless his *house*'—1 Chron. 16 : 43. 'Wo to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his *house*'—Hab. 2 : 9.

"When it is said again, 'Then David returned to bless his *household*'—2 Sam. 6 : 20. Gill says 'his wife, *children* and servants.' When it is said that 'Esau took his wives, and his *sons* and his *daughters*, and all the persons of his *house*'—Gen. 36 : 6, Gill interprets, 'his men-servants and maid-servants that were *born in his house*, or bought with his money.' When Jacob 'had a large *family* to provide for,' as Gill observes, then he said to Laban, 'When shall I provide for mine own *house* also'—Gen. 30 : 30. When the prophet tells us that wicked governors 'oppress a man and his *house*'—Micah, 2 : 2, Dr. Gill interprets that they 'distress a man and his *family* for the present, and his posterity after him'... When the wise man says 'Every wise woman buildeth her *house*'—Prov. 14 : 1, Dr. Gill understands that she does it not only by her piety, prudence, and industry; but 'by her *fruitfulness*, as Leah and Rachael built up the *house* of Israel.' When it is said 'She looketh well to the ways of her household'—Prov. 31 : 27, Gill considers it as meaning 'her *children* and servants.' When it is said of this wise woman, that 'She giveth meat to her *household*'—Prov. 31 : 15, Gill, in spiritualizing the passage, makes *household* to include *children* and *babes*. Paul says that a bishop must be 'One that ruleth well his own *house*, having his *children* in subjection with all gravity.' 'For if a man know not how to rule his own *house*, how shall he take care of the church of God.' 'Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their *children* and their own *houses* well.' These *houses* Gill considers as embracing 'the *family*, wife, *children*, and servants.'" McCalla's Report, &c. p. 373, 4.

We might multiply examples of the use of the word *oikos*, house or household, from the New Testament; but we consider it unnecessary. That New Testament writers used it in the same sense that Old Testament writers did is certain. We will now look after the objections of our opponents. All that *can* be said to destroy the argument

for infant baptism, derived from the use of *oikos*, *family*, has been said by Mr. Alexander Campbell, in his "Debate with Mr. McCalla." In his usual dogmatic style, he "boldly pronounces" the criticism on *oikos* a "*refuge of lies*," and goes on to say ;—" I then positively assert that in the bible there is no more difference betwixt the use and application of the words *oikos* and *oikia* than there is between the words *brothers* and *brethren*." I suppose he adds " you all know that the difference betwixt the words *brothers* and *brethren* is only in the orthography, or spelling of the words, and that there is no difference in the sense." Debate, p. 262, 279.

Mr. Campbell then gives us the results of his learned criticism in a long marginal note, wherein he endeavors to prove that *oikos* and *oikia* are used interchangeably to denote the very same *house*, and are therefore, " completely synonymous." We confess, that when we *first* read his note, prefaced with such bold and confident assertions, it appeared somewhat formidable ; but after carefully looking out his proof-texts, and examining their " use and application," we were only confirmed in our belief, that our position is the *bible view* of the subject, and is unanswerable. Our position is this : *oikia* is the word employed by the inspired writers to denote the establishment or premises at large—out-houses, servants, and *may* include the *oikos* or family : while the word *oikos* is used to denote a *family* embracing *children*, and is *seldom*, if *ever* employed to denote servants exclusively. Hence, *oikia* is used in a more *general*, and *oikos* in a *restricted* sense. This Mr. Campbell denies, and affirms that " there is no more difference betwixt the words *oikos* and *oikia* than there is between the words *brothers* and *brethren*"—that they are used " as completely synonymous"—and " differ only in orthog-



raphy or spelling." Now, for the sake of argument, suppose we should admit that out of 500 examples of the use of *oikos* and *oikia* Mr. Campbell has found 20 instances where they denote the *same house*; does that either disapprove our position, or prove that these words are "completely synonymous?" Suppose these words are interchanged in a few instances! Does *that* prove, that *oikos* is not the proper word to denote a family embracing children? Does it prove that *oikia* is not the proper word to denote the premises at large?

The difficulty is here, Mr. Campbell's logic affirms, that when two words are applied to the same thing, they are "completely synonymous"—they only differ in spelling—there is no difference in the sense! According to this new canon of criticism, all words applied to the same thing must be synonymous. The appellations and perfections of Deity may be expressed by different words, still those words all denote one and the same idea! Redeemer, Saviour, Jesus, Messiah, Christ, Mediator, are but different ways of *spelling* out the same idea—the words are "completely synonymous." Why not, if *oikos* and *oikia* are "completely synonymous" because applied, as Mr. C. claims to the same house?

But there is a single fact which shows the absurdity of Mr. Campbell's bold assertion. We have already stated, that *oikos* is *masculine* and *oikia* *feminine* gender. With this fact before him, is the reader prepared to believe, that "there is no more difference betwixt the use and application of the words *oikos* and *oikia*, than there is between the words *brothers* and *brethren*?" Are words of *different* gender, "completely synonymous with Mr. C.?" Did the inspired writers make no distinction in gender, only in orthography or spelling? Why in the name of common sense then,

did they keep up a distinction in gender, if they intended in the use of both words to express precisely the same idea? If *oikos* and *oikia* mean the same thing, then, for ought we know, when the inspired writers use the words *brother* and *sister*, they mean the same person by both words, the words only differ in spelling! We had always supposed that when writers employed words of different gender, they designed to express a difference in *kind*, or *quality*; but according to Mr. C. there is necessarily "no difference, only in spelling," the words may be "completely synonymous." But enough! If *oikos* and *oikia* differ in *gender*, then they do not agree in "*sense*," and Mr. Campbell's position is the "refuge of lies."

But we now repeat the substance of the remarks we have already made, viz. that it is not even necessary to show that *oikos* and *oikia* are *not* "completely synonymous" in order to establish our position, that *oikos* is the proper word, and uniformly employed by the inspired writers to denote a *family embracing children*. The texts already introduced prove such to be the fact: nor do the quotations furnished by Mr. Campbell go to disapprove it:—his great effort is, to prove these words "*synonymous*." But the reader need not be informed that words *may be* "completely synonymous" and still *one* be the proper word, and uniformly employed to express a certain idea. This is what we affirm of *oikos*—it is *the* word to denote *such* a house, household, or family as embraces children of all ages—infants and little ones." Let us now apply this fact to the examples of household baptism recorded in the New Testament. In every instance where the sacred writer speaks of the *baptism* of a house, the word used is *oikos*, but never *oikia*. And if *oikia* is in any way connected with the occasion, or circumstances, it is never used when

speaking of the *fact* that the *household* was baptized; *oikos* is then employed in every instance. Hence we read of the baptism of Lydia “and her *oikos*, household,”—of the “baptism of the *oikos*, household of Stephanas,” and of the baptism of the Jailer “and all his,” i. e. *house*. The case of the Jailer carries with it the evidence that the inspired writer *designed* to apply *oikos* to his *family* exclusively. Look at the facts. In the 31st verse, where the apostle preaches the good old Abrahamic covenant doctrine, of *blessings* to the *believer* and his *seed* after him, the word is *oikos* :—“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* shalt be saved, and thy *oikos*, house.” But when it is said in verse 32, “They spake the word of the Lord . . . unto all that were in his *house*,” the word is *oikia*, and most certainly denotes the *outer prison* at large, because *after* this it is expressly stated, verse 34, that the Jailer brought them, i. e. Paul and Silas into his *house*, and set meat before them; hence, they were not in his family residence, when they spake the word of the Lord . . . unto all that were in his *oikia*, house. But immediately after, when “he brought them into his *house*,” the word *oikos* is used again. In this *oikos*, the Jailer lived with his family;—here he could spread his table, and set meat before them. It is in this connection that we read, “he rejoiced, believing in God, with all his *house* ;” or as it should be rendered, “he rejoiced through all his *house*, having believed in God.” The word *house* in this last instance, is in Greek *panoiki*, “he rejoiced through all his *panoiki*, *house*.” The same word occurs in Ex. 1 : 1, “These are the names of the children of Israel which came into Egypt; every man and his *panoiki*, *household*, came with Jacob.” Now in Gen. 46 : 5, it is expressly said, they “carried their little ones” into Egypt : hence *panoiki* denotes “*little*

ones ;” and renders it doubly certain that *oikos* in this connection is employed with special reference to the fact that the Jailer’s house embraced *children*.

In view of these examples, the question comes up again, Why did the inspired writers use *oikos*, the regular word to denote a family embracing children, if they believed and taught, that *believers only* must receive baptism, and each individual upon the profession of his or her own faith? Why adopt the very phraseology employed to express the presence of children of all ages—“infants and little ones,” if they designed to exclude “infants and little ones !” Certainly the *precepts* and practices of the Jews, as a nation, would lead every honest Jew to suppose that children were still in covenant relation with the church, since these Jewish ministers baptized *households*, the same as households were circumcised among them. In fact, the very mention of “household baptism” would infallibly lead every converted Jew into the practice of *infant baptism*, unless particularly instructed to the contrary :—so that the very *term* *oikos* in connection with baptism was calculated to mislead, unless sacred writers intended to teach the doctrine, and practice by the use of this word. There is no escape from this conclusion without proving that *oikos*, is *not* the proper word to denote a family embracing children of all ages ; a task which our opponents will never undertake.

#### FACTS and REASONS.

Before continuing the “History of Infant Baptism” from the “Acts of the apostles” through the “History of the Father’s of the church, during the earliest ages of christianity” we will offer a few arguments based upon “*Reason and facts.*”

1. Infant baptism accords with the wishes and feelings of the christian parent. We put it to the conscience of every christian father and mother: Would you consider it no privilege to bring your children to the altar of God's sanctuary, that they might receive that sacramental washing of water, in the name "of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," which denotes moral cleansing, and points to God's covenant with believers, and their seed after them? We pity that parent, who does not even *desire* the privilege, but considers the act *unholy* and *profane*! That the provisions of God's covenant should accord with the desires of the pious heart, is a dictate of reason.

But we are met with the objection, "I can consecrate my children to God in the closet, and in private." Ans. Pedobaptists can also consecrate their children to God in the closet, and in secret; and still do it publicly. That individuals opposed to all public pledges, or covenants, should make this objection, is not strange; but it is singular that christians, who believe in public covenants should offer it. Why not object to *publicly* covenanting to serve God, when they unite with the church? Or unite with a voluntary association by a *secret pledge*! This objection is founded in a mistake relative to the real design of infant consecration. It overlooks the great practical influence of entering into covenant with God by some visible *token* as a *sign* or confirmation of the divine promise, and as evidence of our relation to God. A covenant that involves obedience, imposes conditions, and consequently is mutual. Hence, God said to Abraham, "Walk before me and be *thou* perfect... and *I* will make my covenant between *me* and *thee*." God therefore promised to be "a God unto Abraham, and his *seed* after him;" and Abraham promised to live unto God himself, and train up his *house-*

*hold* in the fear and service of God. Precisely the same is now true in the baptism of a believer and his household;—God says, “I will be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee,” or, “Believe . . . and *thou* shalt be saved, and thy *house* ;” while the believer says, “*I* will be thine, and I will train up my consecrated household for thee.” There is, therefore, precisely the same reason for a *public* consecration of your *child* to God in baptism, that there is for *your own* consecration to God in baptism. That child *belongs* to you, and *depends* upon you, so far as its moral training up to a certain age is concerned, as much as you belong to yourself; or your moral character depends upon yourself. The salvation of that child, under God, is as much in your hands, as your own salvation. And the baptism of that child signifies just what your own baptism denotes—it points to the work of the Spirit of God.

We are fully aware that our position throws a tremendous weight of responsibility upon the parent: but even so, *there* is where *God* lays the responsibility; and one great object of the *covenant* relation of children, is to make parents *feel* that responsibility. When the inspired writers speak of the *duties* of parents, and of the *results* of faithfully discharging those duties, they speak positively. Hence, “Train up a child in the way he *should* go, and when he is old he *will not depart* from it.” God don’t say, “*try* to train up a child,” but positively *do* it! God don’t say, “when he is *old*, *perhaps* he will not depart from it,” but positively, “he *will not!*” Prov. 22: 6. The fidelity of Abraham was the ground of confidence, when God declared “I know him (Abraham) that he *will* command his children and his household after him, and they *SHALL keep* the way of the Lord.” The same is true under the New Testament dispensation; hence the apostle enjoins the duty, “Bring them (children) up in the nur-

ture and admonition of the Lord"—Eph. 6 : 4. Not merely *try* to "bring them up!" but *do* it. God neither limits the *duty*, nor the *promise*, because the duty is *practicable* and the promised results, *certain*; and the fact that the promise is not always realized, only proves that the conditions are not always fulfilled. We utterly discard, and condemn as derogatory to the character of God, that exposition of such passages, which assumes that parents *may* do their whole duty and yet fail of the promised blessing! "Let God be true but every man a liar," sooner than admit such a principle. God's everlasting covenant says, "I will be a God unto *thee*, and to thy *seed* after thee"—"The promise is unto *you*, and to your *children*"—"Believe . . . and *thou* shalt be saved, and thy *house*:" and as the covenant requires a public dedication of *ourselves* to God; so it demands a public consecration of our *children*, who are equally embraced in the promise. Let parents do *their* duty, and God will perform *his* promise; so that a baptized child may infallibly become a child of grace.

Another, and very common objection is answered by the remarks just offered. We frequently hear the question "What good will it do to baptize infants?" This is a kind of *infidel* objection. The objector might find both an *answer* and a *rebuke* by extending his question. "What good did it do to *circumcise* infants?" "What good does it do to baptize an *adult*?" "What good will it do to *pray*?" "What good does it do to enter into *covenant* with God?" In fact, such an objection is a virtual insult to God; as if his covenant was of no practical use. Had such objectors lived in the days of Abraham, they might have expostulated with the old patriarch, relative to the absurdity of applying a religious rite to an "unconscious

babe" only eight days old. "What good will circumcision do an *infant*?" But if circumcision, in the case of an infant only eight days old, was useful, as a "sign of Christ, and of the renewal of the heart;" then baptism may also be useful as a sign of moral cleansing by the spirit of God; and those who challenge the utility of infant *baptism*, may with equal propriety question the wisdom of God in ordaining infant *circumcision*.

But says the objector: "A great many parents wholly fail of training up their baptized children as they covenant to do, and their children are as bad, and many times even worse than others." Answer: Many baptized *professors* of religion fail of living up to their solemn covenant engagements, and are even worse than many who make no profession! What then? Was it wrong to covenant? Or is a public covenant useless? This would be arguing the *utility* of an institution, or ordinance from the *abuse* of it, instead of judging of its character from its *design* and *tendency*.

2. We argue the doctrine of infant baptism from its adaptation to facilitate and secure the faithful discharge of parental duty in training up children for God and usefulness. We have already shown that infant baptism involves a covenant between God and the parent, which binds the latter to "bring up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Now in this covenant God acts perfectly in accordance with the laws of the human mind. The more solemn, public and important you make an act, the more likely you are to secure the end contemplated. Hence the formal administration of an *oath* goes to impress the witness with the importance of telling "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." The same is true in regard to any pledge or promise: the more



solemn importance you give to the subject, the more inviolable the engagement, and the more likely to be fulfilled. The same principle applies in the baptism of infants; and if the solemn *vow* of the parent, to train up his offspring for God; made in the temple of God, when the consecrating element was applied "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," is *useless*; then it is *useless* for the christian, "in the presence of God, angels and men solemnly to avouch the Lord Jehovah to be his God and portion forever." If a deliberate, pre-meditated public consecration of *ourselves* is useful, because our pledged honor, integrity, and solemn vow constrain us to be faithful; then the public consecration of our *children* to God is useful for the same reason.

Again: While the solemn covenant vow of the parent becomes the means of quickening in duty, the fact of consecration to God may be impressed upon the mind of that child and with the divine blessing become the means of its salvation. If an appeal to the solemn baptismal vow, and fact of consecration to God forever, fail of impressing the mind of a child; the dying request of a father, and the prayers and instructions of a departed mother, cannot be more persuasive and solemn, to impress and restrain: yet the power of the latter, all acknowledge.

3. We further argue the divine origin of infant baptism from its *utility*, as demonstrated by facts. Now, we assume, that were the bible wholly silent upon the subject, yet infant baptism proved a decided blessing, it would still be obligatory upon the church of God. We are far from believing that the *letter* of command is the *boundary line* of human duty. Do the *Ten Commandments* specify all that is obligatory? Does the gospel of Christ distinctly point to each duty? Says James, 4: 17, "Therefore, to

him that *knoweth* to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Reject this position and all "voluntary associations" become merely *discretionary*, and opposition to them is a matter of taste, or preference—simply a different way of doing things. But admit that God is with such associations, blesses the means employed to gain the end contemplated; and then opposition is "fighting against God." The same may be said of infant baptism:—prove its *utility*; that God blesses the covenant relation and baptism of infants as a means to their conversion; and you then prove that the practice fully accords with the genius of christianity, and that the christian may not oppose it, without making war upon God's own method of doing good. Look at facts.

Dr. E. Hall remarks as follows: "An attention to facts shows that God does remember his covenant, and put honor upon its seal. From the published and official returns of the Congregational churches of Connecticut to the General Association in 1834, it appears that *two-thirds* of all that were received to the churches on profession of faith, the preceding year, had been baptized in infancy. Struck with this fact, I was curious to add up the results for several years, and found them very nearly the same. The result of our examination of like reports of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and of the General Association of New York were not essentially different.

About two-thirds of all those received to our Pedobaptist churches on confession of faith, are such as were baptized in their infancy. But taking the whole field, the baptized children constitute probably, not more than *one-third* of the children attached to the congregations of these churches, or falling properly to no other denomination. The state of the case, then, is this; out of *one-third* of a population *two* are hopefully converted, and brought into the church, where there is *one* so converted out of the remaining *two-thirds*: a ratio of *four to one*! What will this amount to in the whole country? What in the whole world? What will it amount to if you trace it down to the end of time? To a "multitude which is as the sand by the seashore, innumerable!" But in the Western and Southern parts of the country, the difference is more striking than in New England; be-

cause the proportion of the members of the church of Christ to the whole population is far less. And these results are witnessed when so much confident denunciation of infant baptism has led so many members of the church to neglect it; and led so many more to regard it as a mere ritual rather than as the valuable seal of God's covenant. O what might have been done, had parents taken hold of that covenant with unwavering faith; and pleading the covenant, had taken encouragement from its promises, and from God's faithfulness to be more correct in the discharge of the duties which that covenant implies on the part of parents! Who is to answer for all this loss and harm? Who is to be responsible for teaching the church of God to neglect and despise both the covenant and its seal." Hall on Bap. p. 203—4.

The same writer says in a note, "Of more than 100 so received by this church in this place, (Norwalk, Conn.) during the eight years of the writer's ministry about *three-fourths* were baptized in their infancy." p. 203. Another pastor states, that\* out of 500 added to the church during a number of years, 480 were baptized in infancy.

We might multiply examples to prove that the experience of the church is uniform, and that by far the larger portion of her increase has been from her sons and daughters consecrated to God in baptism. But the facts already exhibited show how much confidence is due the oft-repeated assertion of our opponents, that infant baptism is injurious to religion. That God sets his seal of approbation to the ordinance is certain, if the conversion and salvation of children is considered a divine blessing. But would God so signally bless an institution founded in falsehood? Let those who dare oppose an ordinance that God seals with his blessing, answer it; while it is enough for us to know that God accepts our consecration.

4. We argue infant baptism from the fact that God never made a covenant with parents that did not include their children. It is *divine* policy that children should go with

their parents ; and not that *parents* should be received into covenant, and their *children* sustain no other relation than *heathen* children to the church of God. p. 114.

5. Says Dr. Pond, “ The Epistles of Paul are in most instances addressed to particular *churches* ; as the church at Rome, the church at Corinth, the churches in Galatia, &c. But we find on examination that several of these Epistles contain directions for children, ‘ Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right,’ ‘ Honor thy father and mother that it may be well with thee and thou mayest live long on the earth’—See Eph. 6 : 1, and Col. 3 : 20. Is it not evident from these passages, that the apostle regarded the children of church members as in some way connected with the churches, or as sustaining a very near and peculiar relation to them ? Else, why should he so particularly address himself to children, in epistles directed expressly to the churches ?” p. 77.

6. Casting the children of God’s people out of the church, would have been a change of vast importance, particularly to the believing *Jews*. From Abraham to Christ, the entire Jewish nation had been accustomed to infant church membership ; indeed, it was a part of the constitution of their church, and essential to its existence. But dear reader, did the Jews quietly give up the covenant rights and relations of their children, when Christ came—and even without so much as a notice of the change. If a single Pedobaptist church should now abandon infant baptism, it would be trumpeted as an event of great moment and quoted a thousand times as proof against the doctrine. But according to our opponents, this change was effected so silently, as not even to leave a trace of the fact on the pages of inspired history. Yes ; the tenacious, jealous Jews gave up this long cherished institution of

their fathers, and such was the indifference, that neither friend nor foe ever recorded the fact! Believe it who can.

7. According to our opponents the gospel dispensation does not grant as many privileges to believing parents, and make as full provision for the salvation of their children, as the Old Testament dispensation. The latter united parents professing the true religion, and their offspring in covenant relation with God and his church; while according to our opponents, the gospel system admits believers *only*, and excludes their children. Once, circumcision was "profitable" as the appointed *sign* and *seal* of God's covenant with his professed children and their seed after them; but the gospel system so impairs the Abrahamic covenant, with its promise, "I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed," as to leave the children of believers to the "uncovenanted mercies of God." The Abrahamic covenant required a solemn public consecration of children to God, and affixed a token of that covenant; but the gospel denies to children the sign of God's covenant, baptism, and leaves the parent to his own private promises of fidelity in training up his offspring. We submit it to our reader, whether such is the gospel plan—so inferior in its provisions and promises to the Old Testament dispensation; or whether the "blessings of Abraham have come upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ."

## CHURCH HISTORY.

1. HISTORY, sacred or profane is a simple record of facts as they have transpired in the past. As such, we introduce the History of the church in support of infant baptism. An argument to prove, or disprove infant baptism is not *history*;—it is an argument. When we quote the

ancient Fathers of the church, we do not rely upon their *opinions*, but their testimony to **FACTS**; in their *opinions* and views of bible doctrine, they might mistake as fallible men: but as martyrs for the truth they would not lie about *facts*. If therefore we can introduce numerous examples of infant baptism among the Fathers of the church during the *second* and *third* centuries; and if those Fathers testify that the practice was common and universal in their day, and that they received it from the apostles, then the argument from history is conclusive; and the only way to meet the argument is to impeach the testimony of men, who died martyrs for the truth.

Again: we have already shown, that when Christ came, he found infants in covenant relation with God and his church, and that the baptism of infant proselytes was in use. Now if we prove that 100 years after the Saviour's death, infants were baptized and received into covenant relation, then, even were the New Testament silent, the conclusion would seem unavoidable, infant baptism prevailed during the interval of the apostles. But when we find infant church membership universal up to the time of the apostles; and "household baptism" practiced by the apostles themselves; and then find the practice universal, within 100 years after the apostles, what are we to think of the candor of such as decide that such testimony is irrelevant, or proves nothing as to apostolic practice or belief. True we have not yet *proved* all this, but by the blessing of God we intend to establish it, and point out the *first man in history that ever opposed infant baptism*.

1. We will begin with the old Peshito-Syriac version. Let our reader now turn to page 190 and see what our baptist brethren say for this version. They date it back to the first or beginning of the second century, and almost claim

for it *inspiration*. But that version declares that “Lydia was baptized and her CHILDREN.” So does the Coptic version. Now whoever got up these versions, believed in the doctrine that the baptism of children in the character of “households,” was a *bible* doctrine, and accorded with apostolic practice.

We will now invite the attention of our reader to Wall's History of Infant Baptism. Wall's History gives all the *facts* which relate to infant baptism, both *for* and *against*, during the first four hundred years of the christian church: and as quotations and extracts in proof of ancient practice relative to infant baptism, should have a responsible origin, we will briefly notice the character of Dr. Wall's History. The work was first published in 1705—almost 150 years ago; hence measurably before the age of fierce controversy upon this subject, and consequently more likely to be impartial in its character. This History was deemed so valuable an acquisition to the christian church, that the English clergy, soon after its publication, “assembled in convocation,” passed Dr. Wall a vote of thanks for his *learned* and *excellent* work.

The learned Mr. Wm. Whiston, a baptist, and the successor of Sir I. Newton in Cambridge University, calls him “*the very honest, learned and pious Dr. Wall*; whose History of Infant-baptism (not as to the controversial part, but as to the facts therein contained) seems to me most accurately done; and may I think be depended on by the Baptists themselves.” See the Editor's Advert. of Wall vol. 1, p. 17.

Crosby, the historian of the English Baptists, calls him “the ingenious Dr. Wall,” and pronounces his work “*an elaborate history*.” *ib.* p. 18. Such testimonials, coming from the clergy in council, and also from our opponents, his learned contemporaries, can but inspire confidence in

his work ; and as Mr. Whiston remarks, “ as to the *facts* therein contained . . . may be depended on by the Baptists themselves.” With Wall’s History before us, we now proceed to our examination of *facts* relative to the practice of the primitive christian church.

HERMAS, whose name is mentioned by Paul, Rom. 16 : 14, and who, it is supposed, wrote his Pastor even before John wrote his gospel, says, “ whosoever therefore shall continue as infants, without malice, shall be more honorable than all those of whom I have yet spoken. *For all infants are valued by the Lord, and esteemed first of all.*” And again, “ The baptism of water is necessary to *all.*”

JUSTIN MARTYR, who was born before the death of John, “ the beloved disciple,” says, “ Several persons among us of 60 and 70 years old, of both sexes, who were made disciples to Christ in childhood, do continue uncorrupted.” Wall, V. 1, p. 70. For “ disciple,” Justin uses the same word that our Saviour employed when he says “ Go ye therefore and teach, or disciple all nations, baptizing them,” &c. : and the word translated “ childhood” is the same word that Christ uses when he speaks of “ little children :” Luke says, “ infants.” Sixty or seventy years back of the time Justin wrote, would carry us down to the days of the apostles : so that these aged persons might have been among the first-fruits of household baptism.

IRENAEUS, wrote a few years later than Justin Martyr. The highest authorities place his birth about four years before the death of the apostle John ; or 97 years after the *birth* of Christ : so that his parents lived during the age of the apostles. Irenaeus speaks as follows, “ Therefore as he was a Master, he had also the age of a Master. Not disdaining nor going in a way above human nature ; nor breaking in his own person the law which he had set for mankind : but sanctifying every several age by the likeness that it has to him, for he came to *save* all



persons by himself: all, I mean, who by him are regenerated (i. e. baptized) unto God; *infants* and *little ones*, and children and youths, and elder persons. Therefore he went through the several ages; for *infants* being made an infant, sanctifying infants; to *little ones* he was made a little one, sanctifying those of that age; and also giving them an example of godliness, justice and dutifulness: to youths he was a youth," &c. *ib.* 72.

Here then is conclusive evidence of the practice of infant baptism, in the christian church, within about 65 years of the death of St. John. But perhaps it is due our opponents to say, that they have succeeded in starting at least, the *shadow* of an objection to the testimony of Irenaeus. For "baptized unto God," he uses the phrase "*renascuntur in Deum*"—"regenerated unto God." Dr. Wall, who well understood the language of the Fathers of the church, says, "any man, who has been at all conversant with the Fathers, will be satisfied that they as constantly meant *baptized* by the word *regenerated*, as we mean the same by the word *christened*."

Mr. Whiston, the learned Baptist writer already quoted, admits this fact, "that the word *regeneration* is generally, if not constantly used with relation to *baptismal regeneration*:"—indeed he declares it a "thing *undeniable* by any *modest* arguer." See Whiston's *Primitive Inf. Bap.* p. 7. Wall V. 4, p. 50. 370.

Even the great Baptist Controversialist, Mr. Alexander Campbell, in the "*Millennial Harbinger*," Vol. 2 Extra, p. 28, 29, uses the following language relative to this point.

"In my debate with Mr. Walker and Mr. McCalla, I objected to the substitution of the word *regenerated* for *immerse* (or baptize) in the extract from IRENAEUS, and other of the primitive fathers, as they are called, on the ground of their not being exactly representatives of the same idea universally. I admitted that *sometimes* they used the word *regenerated* for *baptized*, but not always; and, indeed, not at all, *in the popular sense* of *regenerated*. Well, now it comes to pass, that I represent ALL the primitive fathers as using the term *regenerated* as equivalent to the term *baptized*. All this is true; and what then? Why, at that time I used the word *regenerated* as ex-

pressive of a *spiritual change*, and found that these fathers spoke of a *spiritual change* as well as we. I could not therefore reconcile this to the exclusive application of the term *regenerated* to the act of *immersion* (baptism); but on a more accurate and strict examination of their writings, and of the use of this term (regenerated) in the *New Testament*, I AM ASSURED that they used the term *regenerated* as equivalent to *immersion* (baptism) and spoke of the SPIRITUAL CHANGE under other terms and modes of speech." See Campbell and Rice's Debate, p. 430.

Here then according to the testimony of Irenaeus, "*infants and little ones . . . were baptized unto God*," in the christian church in his day. In the next place we will call attention to the testimony given by Tertullian, who was contemporary with Irenaeus, although he wrote a few years later. Tertullian was the first Latin father—a finished scholar, but somewhat whimsical theological writer. That he speaks of infant baptism our opponents admit; indeed, they even claim him as the early opponent of infant baptism. Campbell and McCalla's Debate, p. 368. Robinson's History—Baptist work, p. 170. But what says Tertullian?

"Therefore according to every one's condition and disposition, and also their age, the *delaying* of baptism is more profitable, especially in the case of *little children*. For what need is there that the god-fathers should be brought into danger? because they may either fail of their promise by death, or they may be mistaken by a child's proving of wicked disposition. Our Lord says indeed, "*Do not forbid them to come to me*." Therefore let them come when they are grown up; let them come when they understand; when they are instructed whither it is that they come; let them be made christians when they can know Christ. What need their guiltless age to make such haste to the forgiveness of sins . . . For no less reason *unmarried persons* ought to be kept off, who are likely to come into temptation; as well as those that *never were married* upon account of their coming to ripeness, as those in *widowhood* for the miss of their partners, until they either marry, or be confirmed in continence. They that understand the weight of baptism, will rather dread receiving it, than the delaying of it." Wall, V. 1. p. 93, 94.

Here we find the *first* man that ever raised an objection to infant baptism. In the language of Dr. Pond, we can say, "with the absurd *opinions* of this father, we have nothing to do. It is merely as a *witness to a fact* that he is introduced. And there is no father whose testimony as

to the general practice of infant baptism in the primitive age is more convincing, than that of Tertullian. He was an honest, but fanciful, whimsical writer, embraced many strange and peculiar notions; and was finally ejected from the communion of the church." Pond on Bap. p. 101.

The reader can easily decide whether this witness is *for* or *against* us, as to *facts*. Does he confirm our position, that infant baptism was practiced in those days, or deny it? Did Tertullian speak against infant baptism, and oppose it *before* it was practiced, or is his opposition conclusive evidence *of* the practice. We only add, if our opponents endorse his speculations about *delaying* baptism, then let them apply his theory in the case of *unmarried persons*, as well as infants.

ORIGEN, is the next writer whose testimony we will now introduce. He was born about 85 years after the apostolic age. "Origen," says Dr. Pond, "had the best possible means of information; for his grandfather, or at most his great grandfather (both of whom were christians) must have been cotemporary with the apostles themselves. Besides he was one of the most learned men of his times; had traveled in various countries; and was acquainted with the usages of christians throughout the world." Hear Origen.

"According to the usage of the church, baptism is given to even infants; when if there was nothing in infants which needed forgiveness and mercy, the grace of baptism would seem to be superfluous." And again, "*The church received a tradition from the APOSTLES to give baptism even to infants.*" Wall, V. 1. p. 103—6. We might quote pages from Origen, where, under almost every form of expression, the same fact is repeated.

CYPRIAN. Our next reference is to the distinguished Cyprian, who was born about 90 years after the age of the apostles, and finally suffered martyrdom for the truth's sake. What renders his testimony more important, is the fact,

that it is the *united* testimony of himself, and brethren convened in solemn council, in answer to the question, whether it was proper to baptize infants before they were eight days old:—thus recognizing baptism as coming in the place of circumcision.

“*Cyprian and the rest of the bishops who were present at the Council, sixty-six in number, to Fidus our brother, greeting.*”

“We received your letter, most dear brother, in which you write of one Victor, a priest, &c. But as to the case of infants: whereas you judge that they must not be baptized within two or three days after they are born; and that the rule of circumcision is to be observed, so that none should be baptized before the eighth day after he is born: we were all, in our assembly, of a contrary opinion.

For as for what you thought fitting to to be done, there was not one that was of your mind, but all of us on the contrary judged that the grace and mercy of God is to be denied to no person that is born.” “This therefore, dear brother, was our opinion in the assembly; that it is not for us to hinder any person from baptism, and the grace of God, who is merciful and kind and affectionate to all. Which rule, as it holds for all, so we think it more especially to be observed in reference to infants and persons newly born.” Wall, V. 1. p. 131—2.

The testimony derived from this council is conclusive. Many of the men composing it, were undoubtedly *old* men, whose history stretched far back toward apostolic times and usages. Is it possible that they were ignorant of what the apostles taught and practiced, with reference to infant baptism? Or did these men deliberately unite to deceive the world? It seems, that in this large council, composed no doubt of men from different parts of the country, the question, “Is it proper to baptize infants,” was not even *started*, much less discussed. Reader, where were our zealous opponents in those days? And on what page of history did they enter their solemn protest against the acts and doings of that Pedobaptist council? Where?

It would be easy to multiply quotations, and extracts from the fathers until they constituted a volume by themselves. We might refer to Clemens Alexandrinus, who flourished about the time of Tertullian,—also Optatus, Gregory, Nazianzen, Basil, Ambrose, Chrysostom and Jerome—all of whom flourished within about 100 years of Cyprian's time. Still, a little later we find the great Augustine, who declares that, infant baptism “come not by any general council, or by any authority *later* or *less* than *that of the apostles.*”

It was Augustine who pressed Pelagius with the question, “*Why are infants baptized for the remission of sins if they have none?*” And it was to avoid the imputation that he *denied* the doctrine of original sin, that led Pelagius to reply as follows; “Men slander me, as if I denied the sacrament of baptism to infants”—“*I never heard of any, not even the most impious heretic who denied baptism to infants. For who can be so impious as to hinder infants from being baptized, and born again in Christ, and so make them miss of the kingdom of God.*” Here then is Pelagius who was born in Britain, within 300 years of the apostolic age; had resided some time at Rome; traveled through Asia, and Africa; visited Egypt and Jerusalem; and yet with all his reading and travels “*never heard of any, not even the most impious heretic who denied baptism to infants.*”—Of course, he never heard of the present order of Baptists.

But it seems unnecessary to argue the point that infant baptism was universally practiced in the christian church in the *third* century—this will scarcely be denied after hearing the testimony of Tertullian and Cyprian.

Says Dr. Wall, “For the FIRST FOUR HUNDRED YEARS... there appears only *one man*, Tertullian, that advised the delay of infant baptism, in *some cases*; and one Gregory that did, *perhaps* practice

such delay in the case of his children ; but *no society of men* so thinking, or so practicing : nor *no one man* saying it was unlawful to baptize infants : so in the next SEVEN HUNDRED YEARS there is not so much as *one man* to be found that either spake for, or practiced any such delay. But *all* the contrary. And when about the year 1130 one sect among the Albigenses declared against the baptism of infants, as BEING INCAPABLE OF SALVATION, the *main body* of that people *rejected* that, their opinion, and they of them that held that opinion quickly dwindled away, and disappeared ; there being no more heard of holding that tenet, till the rising of the German Anti-pedobaptists, anno 1522." Wall, Vol. 2, p. 502—3.

Dr. Worcester of Salem says, " Dr. Gill himself, one of the most learned of the anti-pedobaptists writers, acknowledges that " infant baptism was the practice of the church *universally* from the *third* to the eleventh century." See two Discourses on the Covenant, p. 58. Mr. A. Campbell says, " We have no objection to admit that infant baptism is 1500 years old, or perhaps a few years older." See Debate with McCalla, p. 365. This concession was made about 24 years ago : and the " few years older" which Mr. C. is ready to concede will carry us down within some 200 years of the apostolic age. Let the reader remember this, when told that, " Infant baptism had its origin in Popery," and " is a part of the system."

As conclusive evidence, that infant baptism was universally practiced in the christian church the *first four hundred years*, we adduce the fact that Irenaeus, Epiphanius, Philastrius, Austin and Theodoret, each wrote catalogues of all the *sects* and *heresies* that had arisen in the church ; but there are none found who reject infant baptism, unless such as reject water baptism altogether. Epiphanius reckons in all, eighty heresies, which he says " were all that he heard of in the world." Philastrius wrote a little later, and makes above 100 heresies. Theodoret mentions some sects that rejected water baptism ; but of those that used water bap-

tism, none rejected infant baptism. See Wall, V. 1, p. 497—515. With such evidence of the universal practice of infant baptism in the primitive church, the editor of the *Christian Observer*—a work of great merit, published in England, was safe when he wrote the following; “We challenge the opponents of infant baptism to *produce ONE SINGLE INSTANCE for the first thousand years of christianity, of any writer that has left it on record as his opinion that infant baptism is not lawful to be practiced*; some few declared heretics excepted, who rejected water baptism altogether.” See Eell’s *Conversation on Bap.* p. 42. And equally safe is the position of Dr. Worcester, when he affirms that, “For more than 3000 years” (referring to the period, from the days of Abraham, to the rise of the Petrobrussians, A. D. 1130) “*the seal of the covenant was universally applied to the seed of the church; NO ONE FORBIDDING IT.*” *Two Sermons, &c.* p. 57. Even Menno, the founder of an anabaptist sect called Mennonites, who flourished about 380 years ago, acknowledged that “infant baptism had been in use from the apostles’ time. But he said that the *false apostles* were the authors of it.” Wall V. 2, p. 301. In fact, the *first sect ever known, or recorded in history*, that admitted water baptism, yet denied the lawfulness of infant baptism, were the Petrobrussians, *ib.* V. 1, p. 514.

### CORRUPTIONS AND PERVERSIONS.

We cannot do justice to ourselves, and the cause of truth, without briefly noticing the progress of this discussion:—the *ways* and *means* employed by our opponents to disprove infant baptism and establish the opposite system. In performing this task, we shall endeavor, as far as pos-

sible to give our reader authorities, without note or comment. Our opponents many times make a great display of Pedobaptist writers, so quoted, as to teach what they never believed, or intended to express. This torturing process was first introduced by Abram Booth, the great apostle of the English Baptist church; and has since become the standard method of reasoning. Every new book upon this subject, teems with what are denominated "Concessions of Pedobaptist writers:" whose very names prove that they are *perverted*, when called to support doctrines which they never believed or taught. As many of our readers may not have the means of consulting these writers, we will give a few specimens of the *manner* of quoting them, reserving the complete "Expose" for a separate number.

The first example, we will give from Mr. Booth's "Pedobaptism Examined;" Part 2, chap. 1, where Mr. Baxter is quoted to disprove infant baptism "Mr. Baxter. "If there can be no example given in scripture of any one that was baptized without the profession of a saving faith, nor any precept for so doing, then must we not baptize any without it. But the antecedent is true; therefore so is the consequent. . . . In a word, I know of no one word in scripture that giveth us the intimation that ever man was baptized without the profession of saving faith, or that giveth the least encouragement to baptize any upon another's faith." Pengilly, Jewett, Woolsey, &c. quote it from Booth.

Now what are the facts in the case? Why Mr. Baxter wrote against the common practice in his day of giving the sacraments to unconverted men; wherein he takes the ground, that "saving faith" must precede the baptism of such;—a doctrine common to all evangelical churches in every age. So Mr. Booth, in making out his compliment of "Pedobaptist witnesses," quotes Mr. Baxter, as teaching that "the profession of saving faith" "must always precede baptism;" without even hinting that Baxter was speaking of *adults*, and had no reference whatever to infants:—thus compelling Baxter to give testimony against



infant baptism. Had Mr. Booth simply said, "Such are Mr. Baxter's views upon the subject of *adult* baptism," the reader would not have been deceived, and Mr. Booth's long quotation would have proved just nothing relative to infants. But by leaving this fact out of sight, the distinguished Mr. Baxter is made the advocate of exclusive "believer's baptism." Were Mr. Baxter the only perverted author, a few words might accomplish our task; but scores of Pedobaptist writers, are quoted by our opponents in the same manner. This charge may appear severe, but if our baptist friends will have a little patience, we promise to do them the justice, either to prove, or renounce it. Says Dr. Wall,

"In short, they (anti-pedobaptists) have in this matter dealt with those ancient authors, just as they did lately with Mr. Baxter; who being busy in writing something in defence of infant baptism, heard the hawkers cry under his window, "Mr. Baxter's arguments for Believer's baptism, &c. being a pamphlet of collections taken out of some of Mr. Baxter's works, wherein he speaking of the terms of the baptismal covenant, had shown the necessity of a justifying faith in order to baptism, though *in the same books he had declared he spoke in reference to ADULT PERSONS ONLY.* On which occasion, Mr. Baxter says "the men that cite authors at this rate, cite me against myself with like confidence." Wall, V. 2. p. 3, 4. Also Baxter's "More Proof of Infant Baptism." p. 414.

Now while our opponents are quoting Baxter *against* infant baptism, by representing him as teaching the doctrine that "saving faith" must precede baptism, it is notorious that Baxter was a most efficient and decided advocate *for* infant baptism. In proof we will quote from Dr. E. Hall's excellent work.

"The hottest controversy which Mr. Baxter ever had was with the baptists. A Mr. Tombes had written a book against infant baptism, and thought Baxter was 'the chief hinderer' of its success. Though says Mr. Baxter 'I never meddled with that point.' 'He had,' says Mr. Baxter, 'so high a conceit of his writings, that he thought them unanswerable, and that none could deal with them in that way. . . At last somehow he urged me to give my judgment of them: when I let him know they did not satisfy me to be of his mind, but went no farther with him.' 'But he unavoidably contrived to bring me into the controversy which I shunned.' In the end Mr. Baxter agreed to hold a public discussion in Mr. Tombes' church, Jan. 1—1649.

'This dispute,' says Mr. Baxter, 'satisfied all my own people, and the country that came in, and Mr. Tombes' own townsmen, except about twenty, whom he had perverted, who gathered into his church, which never increased to above twenty-two, that I could learn.' See Dr. E. Hall's works on Baptism, p. 130—1. Also on Baptist Er. p. 96. Also "Orme's Life and Times of Baxter," Vol. 2, p. 252.

Soon after this discussion Baxter published his work, entitled, "PLAIN SCRIPTURE PROOF OF INFANT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AND BAPTISM." Nineteen years after this he published a *second* volume entitled, "MORE PROOF OF INFANT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP," &c. In his writings he declares, "*God had never a church on earth, of which infants were not infant members, since there were infants in the world.*" Now after all this, to represent Richard Baxter, as maintaining that *believers only*, or those capable of exercising "saving faith," are entitled to baptism, is truly "to cite him against himself." We care not to argue with those who can believe Baxter guilty of such absurdity.

We call attention in the next place to Dr. Miller, Prof. in Princeton Theol. Sem, who, it would seem, has made some "concessions," which the Rev. J. J. Woolsey endeavors to turn to some account in his work against Pedobaptists. We will give a specimen of his mode of reasoning;—the substance of which we quote from Dr. Hall on Bap. Er. p. 89, 90. Mr. Woolsey says "The validity of infant baptism is urged and thought to be established on the ground of its being taken for granted, without any express command in the New Testament." Under this head he says, "Strange as it may appear, the validity of infant baptism is urged on the very ground that Baptists reject it. We reject it because not commanded in the bible. *They hold to it because not commanded, but taken for granted.*" He goes on:—"The silence of the New Testament quite sufficient to establish infant baptism!!! How strangely do men reason when they want for solid and substantial testimony! Who could have thought that a doctor of divinity should have at this enlightened day employed *logic* so singularly strange and at war with every acknowledged principle of correct reasoning!!" "Plead the validity of a practice on the ground of the *entire silence* of scripture. What a principle this for Protestants of the nineteenth century." He likens the argument to the proceedings of a court, when the accuser fails to

bring forward any testimony to establish the charge,"—condemning a person *because* there is no evidence against him;—"Making the entire absence of all testimony against you quite sufficient to establish the groundless charge." This illustration he pursues to some length, and then says, "*And yet this is precisely the kind of argument which our Pedobaptist brethren employ in justification of infant baptism.*"

Perhaps, when Mr. Woolsey tells *his* people, that Pedobaptists "urge the validity of infant baptism," on the "ground of the *entire silence* of scripture;" and "hold to it because not commanded but taken for granted;" *they* believe it: but with Pedobaptists such unqualified, wholesale assertions need no refutation;—*they know better.*

But it seems that Mr. Woolsey is chastising a doctor of divinity for his "*logic*;" and it may be a matter of interest to know who the unfortunate "doctor" is, and whether his "*logic*," is as bad as represented by Mr. Woolsey. Now if our reader will only examine a work, entitled;—"INFANT BAPTISM SCRIPTURAL AND REASONABLE: &c. BY SAMUEL MILLER, D. D." pages 17. 37, 38, he will see this "doctor of divinity" is Prof. Miller of Princeton Theol. Seminary, N. J. And as to the character of his "*logic*" we will give a specimen in his own propositions by which he clearly demonstrates the divine right of infant church membership and baptism.

1. "*Because in all Jehovah's covenants with his professing people, their infant seed have been included.*"

2. "*The close and endearing connection between parents and children, affords a strong argument in favor of the church membership of the infant seed of believers.*"

3. "*The actual and acknowledged church membership of infants under the Old Testament economy is a decisive index of the divine will in this matter.*"

4. "*It is equally certain that the church of God is the same in substance now that it was then.*"

5. "*If infants were once members, and if the church remains the same, they undoubtedly are still members, UNLESS SOME POSITIVE ENACTMENT EXCLUDING THEM CAN BE FOUND.*"

6. "*Baptism has come in the room of circumcision . . . and the former is rightfully and properly applied to the same subjects as the latter.*"

7. "We find the principle of family baptism, again and again adopted in the apostolic age."

8. "We cannot imagine that the privileges and the sign of infant membership, to which all the first christians had been so long accustomed, COULD HAVE BEEN ABRUPTLY WITHDRAWN *without wounding* the hearts of parents, and producing in them feelings of *revolt and complaint against the new economy.*"

9. "Although the New Testament does not contain any specific texts, which in so many words declare that the infant seed of believers are members of the church in virtue of their birth, *yet it abounds in passages which cannot reasonably be explained but in harmony with this doctrine.*"

10. "Finally; *the history of the christian church FROM THE APOSTOLIC AGE*, furnishes an argument of irresistible force in favor of the *DIVINE AUTHORITY OF INFANT BAPTISM.*"

On pages 37, 38, Dr. Miller considers the objection so frequently urged by our opponents, that, "There is no direct, or express warrant for infant baptism in the New Testament."—"The New Testament is silent," &c. To all this, Mr. Miller replies, that "If it be, as Baptists say, that the New Testament is silent on the subject, this very silence is quite sufficient to destroy their cause, and establish ours. It affords proof positive that no such change as that which is alleged ever occurred." Again: "*But it cannot be admitted that the New Testament contains no direct warrant for infant membership.*" But we leave our reader with these facts, to decide as to what degree of confidence is due such statements as are made by Mr. Woolsey and others relative to "Pedobaptist concessions," so far as Dr. Miller is concerned.

Dr. Wood of Andover Theological Seminary is also put down among the "conceders." Mr. Woolsey quotes him as follows: "Dr. Wood, an associate of Prof. Stuart, says, We have no express precept or example for infant baptism, in all our holy writings." The Rev. M. G. Clarke, in his work on "CHRISTIAN BAPTISM AND CHURCH COMMUNION," p. 79, quotes as follows; Dr. Wood in his lectures on infant baptism says, "It is a plain case that there is no

express precept respecting infant baptism in our sacred writings. The proof then that infant baptism is a divine institution must be made out in another way." Mr. Wood's remarks in their proper connection read as follows, "Whatever may have been the precepts of Christ, or his apostles to those who enjoyed their personal instructions; *it is plain*, that there is no *express precept* respecting Infant Baptism in our sacred writings. The proof then that Infant Baptism is a divine institution must be made out in another way." p. 10. Now suppose we quote Dr. Wood a little further, relative to *express precepts*, and also as to what the Scriptures *do* teach upon this subject.

Dr. Wood says, "If you apply the remarks which have been made to the subject under consideration you will soon be satisfied of the truth of the following position; namely; that *the want of an express, positive command of scripture, that infants should be baptized, is not to be considered as a valid objection against infant baptism.* Mr. Wood afterwards takes the following position: "But I shall now proceed to argue the point from the *inspired records* just as they are. My position is, that *the scriptures of the New Testament understood according to just rules of interpretation, imply that the children of believers are to be baptized.*" p. 17. 43.

Professor M. Stuart is also quoted by Rev. Messrs. Woolsey and Clarke. Prof. Stuart says, "Commands, or plain and certain examples in the New Testament, relative to it (infant baptism) I do not find." See Clarke on Bap. &c. p. 79.

Now it will be seen, in the use of these quotations, that our opponents place a great deal of emphasis upon such expressions as the following. — "The New Testament does not contain any *specific texts which in so many words* declare that the infant seed of believers are members of the church:" — "There is no *express precept*:" — "No express, positive command of scripture:" — "No commands, or plain and certain examples." Now the question arises, what do these writers mean, when they say, that, "there

is no *express precept*,—positive command,” &c. for infant baptism? Why, they mean simply this; “The New Testament does not say,” *in so many words* “*Infants shall be baptized:*”—Or “*baptism shall be administered to believers in their children.*” But do they mean to concede that there is no scriptural warrant, or bible authority for the practice of infant baptism? By no means: for they expressly declare, in some form, that there *is* bible authority for the practice, and that “scripture cannot be reasonably explained” without admitting the doctrine of infant baptism: this is so obvious, that our opponents must know it, if they read the authors they pretend to quote, for our edification. With how much consistency and candor then, are such men as Baxter, Miller, Wood and Stuart introduced, as giving testimony *against* infant baptism;—men acknowledged, and known among the defenders of this faith!!

But our opponents should be the last class of objectors to make such a display of “concessions,” relative to “positive commands,” and express precepts for every doctrine and practice. Where is their *positive command* for putting the infant seed of God’s people *out* of the church, after God, by solemn covenant put them *in* the church? where is their “*express*” *precept* for exclusive immersion? where is their command, or plain and certain examples for close communion;—for excluding the people of God from the Lord’s table, when the sacrament is dispensed in a Baptist Church? Where is the *express precept* for female communion? Will they candidly admit that there is no positive commands,—or express precepts, in so many words, teaching all this? If not, then give us the “*specific texts* ;”—The positive, unequivocal law.

Many other examples might be introduced, illustrating

the manner in which Pedobaptists are quoted to disprove the doctrine of infant baptism. But we will defer this branch of our subject, and now present the reader with a few specimens from Church History. Our opponents have always found the History of Infant Baptism, a difficult point to manage. According to their own confessions, the practice is very ancient; at least "1500 years old, and perhaps," says Mr. Campbell, "a few years older." Now to concede such antiquity to *Pedobaptism*, seems to impose the necessity of establishing some claims for antiquity to the *Antipedobaptist* system; hence, history is explored, the creeds of different sects are sought, and old authors quoted, to prove that the system of our opponents is of very ancient date. But the *manner* of establishing this claim is mainly the question under consideration.

As an example, listen to William Jones, the Baptist Historian, who quotes Mosheim in the following manner; "Before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay concealed in almost all the countries of Europe, persons who adhered tenaciously to the principles of the modern Dutch Baptists." See Jones' Ch. His. Vol. 2, p. 92. Mr. Jones refers to Mosheim's Eccles. His. Cent. 16, Sect. 3, pt. 2, ch. 3.

Now admit the quotation to be genuine, and it proves nothing for our opponents; unless all sects are ancient that existed before the time of Luther and Calvin. But what is worse, this pretended quotation turns out to be a gross perversion. We have Mosheim's Eccl. His. laying before us, open at the very Cent. Sect. chap. and part referred to by Mr. Jones, but can find nothing about "DUTCH BAPTISTS" or any other opposers of infant baptism, "who lay concealed in almost all the countries of Europe." Mosheim's language is as follows: "Before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay concealed in almost all the countries of Europe, particularly in Bohemia, Moravia, Switzerland, and Germany, many persons, who adhered tenaciously to the following doctrine, which the Waldenses, Wickliffites and Hussites had maintain-

ed, some in a more disguised, and others in a more open and public manner, viz. That the kingdom of Christ, or the visible church he had established upon earth, was an assembly of true and real saints, and ought therefore to be inaccessible to the wicked and unrighteous ; and also exempt from all those institutions, which human prudence suggests to oppose the progress of iniquity, or to correct and reform transgressors." Comment is unnecessary.

But, perhaps Mr. Jones, or some of his apologists will endeavor to escape the charge of "perversion," by urging the assumption, that the Waldenses, Wickliffites and Hus-sites resemble the "*Modern Dutch Baptists.*" This leads us to consider another example of Mr. Jones' candor and fairness, as a historian. We make the following extract from Dr. Rice's Debate with Mr. Alexander Campbell, pages 404, 405. The extract is the more valuable, since the learned and ingenious Mr. Campbell, armed and equipped for the conflict, as he was, could only say ; "As to Mr. Jones and this accusation, I have nothing to say at this moment."

"Mr. Campbell and other anti-pedobaptists, have claimed the Waldenses and Albigenses, (those witnesses for God and the truth in the dark ages, when christianity seemed almost lost from the earth) as anti-Pedobaptists."

This claim is set up by Mr. Jones, the Baptist historian, of whose history Mr. Campbell has spoken in the highest terms ; yet in his account of the Waldenses, though quoting avowedly from Perrin's history, he left out every thing that squinted at infant baptism ! Perrin was a descendant from these people, and he took the pains to visit them, and obtained their confessions of faith, and other books and documents, from which he wrote their history. Their enemies (the Roman priests) did charge them with denying the baptism of infants ; and Mr. Jones published the charge, as if it were undoubtedly true. In reply to it, John Paul Perrin, their historian thus remarks :—(Book 1, ch. 4, p. 15.)



“The fourth calumnie was touching baptisme, which it is said, they (Waldenses) denied to little infants; but from this imputation they quit themselves as followeth:—The time and place of those that are to be baptized is not ordained, but the charitie and edification of the church and congregation must serve for a rule therein, &c.; and therefore they to whom the children were nearest allied, brought their infants to be baptized, as their parents, or any other whom God hath made charitable in that kind.”

Again (Perrin's book 1, chap. 6, p. 30. 31.)

“King Lewis XII, having been informed by the enemies of the Waldenses, dwelling in Provence, of many grievous crimes, which were imposed [charged] upon them, sent to make inquisition in those places, the Lord Adam Sume, Maister of Requests, and a doctor of Sorbon, called Parne, who was his confessor. They visited all the parishes and temples, and found neither images, nor so much as the least show of any ornaments belonging to their masses and ceremonies of the church of Rome, much lesse any such crimes as were imposed [charged] upon them; but rather that they kept their sabbathes duely, *causing their children to be baptized according to the order of the primitive church*, teaching them the articles of the christian faith and the commandments of God.”

“Now let us see how faithfully the historian, Mr. Jones, who has been recommended by my friend, has quoted Perrin.” (Jones' Ch. His. p. 348.) Or London Ed. Vol. 2, p. 74.

“Louis XII king of France being informed by the enemies of the Waldenses inhabiting a part of the province of Provence, that several crimes were laid to their account, sent the Master of Requests and a certain doctor of the Sorborne, who was confessor to his majesty, to make inquiry into the matter. On their return, they reported that they had visited all the parishes where they dwelt, had inspected their places of worship, but that they had found there no images, nor signs of the ornaments belonging to the mass, nor any of the ceremonies of the Romish Church; much less could they discover any traces of those crimes with which they were charged. On the contrary, they kept the sabbath day, *observed the ordinance of baptism according to the primitive church*, instructed their children in the articles of the christian faith, and the commandments of God.” *Joachim Camerarius* in his History, p. 352; quoted by Perrin, book 1, chap. 5.

“Here,” says Dr. Rice, “Mr. Jones, when he came to *infant baptism*, wholly omitted it; and instead of saying, as did the author he quoted,—‘causing their children to be baptized’—he says ‘observed the ordinance of baptism according to the primitive church’!!! Thus the Waldenses are proved to be anti-Pedobaptists, by concealing their testimony. A more glaring falsification of history I never saw,” &c.

Thus the reader may see, how easy it is to prove a point, simply by leaving out, or putting in a few words, as may

suit the case in hand. Another way still is, to quote so much of an author as is favorable to a certain position, and then stop short in the record without disclosing the real object or sentiments of the author. In this way Mr. A. Campbell quotes Mosheim when arguing the antiquity of the Anabaptists. Mr. Campbell says :

“ Even the greatest enemy, among ecclesiastic historians, Dr. Mosheim, is constrained to say Vol. 4, page 424. The TRUE ORIGIN of that sect which ACQUIRED the denomination of Anabaptists, by their administering anew the rite of baptism, to those that came over to their communion, and derived the name of Mennonites from the famous man to whom they owe the greatest part of their present felicity is HID in the REMOTE DEPTHS of *antiquity* and is of consequence difficult to be ascertained.” Debate with McCalla, page 379.

Here Mr. Campbell ends his quotation, leaving the reader to guess what period of the world is intended by “ *the remote depths of antiquity.*” Had Mr. Campbell quoted a few lines more, it would have exploded all of his high claim, so far as Mosheim is concerned. Mosheim reads as follows. “ The true origin of that sect which acquired the denomination of Anabaptists by their administering anew the rite of baptism to those who came over to their communion, and derived that of Mennonites the famous man to whom they owe the greatest part of their present felicity, is hid in the remote depths of antiquity, and is of consequence, extremely difficult to be ascertained. This uncertainty will not appear surprising, when it is considered, that *this sect started up all of a sudden* in several countries, at the same point of time, under leaders of different talents, and different intentions, and at *the very period when the first contests of the reformers with the Roman pontiffs* drew the attention of the world, and employed the pens of the learned, in such a manner as to render all other objects and incidents almost matters of indifference.” Mosheim, Vol. 3, p. 321—Ed. by Maclaine.

In this same unjust, and unjustifiable manner Mr. Robert Robinson, in his History of Baptism, p. 427, 428, proceeds, when he quotes Dr. Mosheim, as authority, for saying, that the “ Waldenses, the Wickliffites, the Hussites, the BAPTISTS, and many more, who, before the dawn of

the reformation, held to the same principles, and were remarkable for the same peculiarities." "These" says Robinson, "are *nearly* the words of Dr. Mosheim." Now the reader need only turn to Mosheim's *His.* Vol. 3, p. 322, and he will see that Mosheim is most grossly perverted:—Indeed, there is not a particle of evidence that Mosheim even alludes to infant baptism; much less argues the position assumed by Mr. Robinson, of exclusive adult baptism as the grand peculiarity of the Waldenses, &c.

In this way Mr. Joseph Stennet, an English baptist of some note, proves that "Gundulphus and his followers, who being examined by the Bishop of Cambray at a synod in the year 1025, denied that baptism was profitable to infants, and stated their reasons against baptizing them." "Here he stopped," says Dr. Reed, "omitting that part of their confession which did not suit his purpose viz., These men at the same examination, being further interrogated, confessed that they thought *water* baptism of no use or importance to *any one, infants or adults.*" Wall V. 2, p. 263. Reed's Apology p. 294.

Says Dr. Hall, "In the same manner, in this work by 'Pengilly,' published by the Baptist General Tract Society as the 'Scripture Guide to Baptism,' the names of such men as *Doddridge, Baxter, Erskine, Matthew Henry, Calvin, Saurin, Guyse, Charnock,* are arrayed as if against us in the particulars in which we differ from our Baptist brethren. Take the *names* from the book, and the *quotations* annexed to them, and the book is left a mere lifeless carcase. But hear them *fully*: hear them *truly*: and do they stand against us? Could they come up from the dead in the midst of this community, to a man they would wend their way to *these* walls for the truth and order which they held as established by the word of God. To a man they would lift up their voices for the ordinances which now their *names* are made to impugn. They would cry out upon the injustice done to their memories, and the truth, by these attempts to cast the weight of their *names* against what they taught and practiced as the truth and ordinances of God." Hall on Bap. p. 132.

To Dr. Hall's catalogue of names, might be added multitudes of others, equally conspicuous in history, as believers and defenders of our faith:—a "cloud of witnesses"

for infant baptism ; but who are introduced as impugners of their own faith, testifying, as our opponents would have the world believe, against their own unscriptural practices ! Yes ; we are gravely informed, that learned Pedobaptist writers of different ages, doctors, and professors of divinity, historians and bible critics, admit, that there is neither bible precept, example, nor primitive history for their practice !! Surely, if this were *true*, the “ admissions,” and “ concessions” of *such* men would scarcely be worth recording as testimony !

The work of perverting Pedobaptist writers began in England, and was carried on chiefly by Abram Booth, Gale, Stennet, Tombes and Danvers. The latter, Mr. Danvers, made himself so notorious in this department of discussion, that Mr. Baxter, and Mr. Wills *publicly challenged* him for a *forgery of quotations* ; and Wills put in an appeal to his own party against him.” Wall V. 2, p. 11.

Dr. Wall says, “ It would have been a very tedious thing, both to me and the reader, to recite all such quotations and then shew the falseness, or mistakes of them. But instead of doing that, I do declare that all that I have seen, that seemed to be to the purpose, I have searched ; and the search after such as have proved false, spurious, &c. has cost me as much pains, as the collecting of the true ones.” *ib.* p. 11.

Had the works of Wall, Baxter and Wills, on the subject of infant baptism, been extensively published in this country, comparatively few of these pretended extracts, called “ Pedobaptist concessions” would have found their way into a second edition. But multitudes continue to hear and quote these “ concessions” from Pedobaptists, because once published by such men as Messrs. Booth, Gale, &c. and they have never yet met with an expose of such perversions. Indeed, the works of Booth and Gale upon this subject, have been text-books for quotations and extracts from Pedobaptists.

Pengilly's little tract of 60 pages—"Scripture Guide," contains near 40 references to Booth. The result is, the readers of Pengilly are called to believe much respecting Pedobaptist writers, that has long since been exploded. And the same is true in regard to every other author, who has gone to Booth, Gale, &c. for their materials wherewith to oppose infant baptism.

Before closing this branch of our subject, we must briefly notice Dr. Neander, and his Church History. It would seem, that the Rev. Williard Judd, when publishing his "Review of Stuart," considered the opinion of Neander, so important to the completion of his work, that he addressed him a letter of inquiry respecting the mode and subjects of baptism. Says Mr. Judd; "As an ecclesiastical historian, it is supposed, that there is not his superior. Though as a Pedobaptist, he attempts to *justify* the practice of infant baptism and sprinkling, *yet he frankly admits that the former is wholly destitute of scriptural authority; and that the latter was UNKNOWN IN THE HISTORY OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCHES.*" Judd's Review, p. 193.

Now strange as it may appear, in Neander's letter, *in reply to Mr. Judd's inquiries*, speaking of Irenaeus, he says, "Most probably, therefore, we find here the first trace of infant baptism."—And again speaking of Tertullian he says, "Some ten years later (i. e. after Irenaeus) however, an eminent doctor, Tertullian of Carthage, raises his voice against infant baptism," &c. We will leave Mr. Judd to explain, how "the trace of infant baptism could be found," and how "doctor Tertullian could raise his voice against it;" if infant baptism "*was unknown in the history of the primitive churches!*" According to Dr. Neander's own showing, Irenaeus wrote only 77 years after the apostolic age, and Tertullian 87; and both speak of the practice of infant baptism then in use in the church.

True, Neander undertakes to account for the rise of infant baptism in the primitive church; but we consider his *mere opinion* of little weight, compared with the express declaration of some of the early fathers, that infant baptism rested upon apostolic authority. As to the idea advanced by Neander, in his Church History, p. 199; that the opposition of Tertullian is “proof that infant baptism was not then usually considered as an apostolic ordinance, for in that case he would hardly have ventured to speak so strongly against it;” we need only reply, Tertullian also spake strongly against the baptism of young and unmarried persons. Will Messrs. Neander, Judd and others, admit that the baptism of young and unmarried persons was contrary to apostolic practice? “Great men are not always wise!”

Dear Reader: We must here conclude our present number:—The Lord will, we intend to address you again so soon as circumstances will admit, and offer a few things, “new and old,” which must now be omitted. We now commend to your candor, and prayerful consideration, what we have written upon this vastly important subject. We submit these pages with the humble prayer, that they may guide and confirm you in the faith delivered to the saints; and assist you in the duties involved. Fear not to trust God’s “everlasting covenant, to a thousand generations,” and which promises, “I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.” Fear not to bring and consecrate your infant seed to that Saviour, who “took little children in his arms, and said, Suffer them to come unto me;” for surely *he* will not forbid them, nor be “*displeased*” with those who bring them. Be faithful to God, and your covenant vows, and the blessings of faithful Abraham shall come upon you through Jesus Christ.

# COMMUNION OF SAINTS,

OR

## SEVENTEEN REASONS

FOR NOT BECOMING A

# CLOSE COMMUNION BAPTIST,

IN ANSWER TO THE INQUIRY OF

## A FEW CONVERTS.

BY REV. R. H. CONKLIN.

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.  
*Jesus Christ.*

Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences,  
contrary to the doctrines which ye have learned, and avoid them. *Paul.*

☞ If I am *wrong*, convince me—If I am *right*, believe me. ☞

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1853.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

STRYKERSVILLE, March 27, 1851.

REV. R. H. CONKLIN,

*Dear Sir*:—Since you acknowledge baptism by immersion *valid*, why not adopt it as the *exclusive mode* and become a *Close Communion Baptist*, and thus end all controversy on this subject? Will you please write out your reasons for not doing so, and give us the privilege, if we choose, of showing them to others.

*The wishes of a few young Converts.*

Respectfully, yours,

CLINTON WOODRUFF,  
ANDREW TAYLOR,  
AUGUSTIN BALDWIN,  
ANDREW MASON.

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NORTH JAVA, April 3, 1851.

DEAR BRETHREN:

Your letter of inquiry finds me in the midst of an interesting revival of religion—worn and weary with constant labor and but little time for the discussion of questions, such as are proposed in your letter. But a sincere desire of vindicating and promoting gospel truth and order, and also a respectful regard for your “wishes,” induces me to comply with your request, and offer a few brief “reasons” for my “faith and practice.” And since God has graciously permitted me to labor in the Gospel for your salvation, so may I now labor for your confirmation in sound doctrine, and your future usefulness in life. I will only add: “Search the Scriptures diligently,” and if my “reasons” accord with the testimony and word of God, then *abide* by them; and may the “*Love of Christ*” constrain you to live and walk accordingly.

Yours affectionately,

R. H. CONKLIN.



## REASONS.

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SOMETIMES it is said, that those denominations that practice *different* modes of baptism, discard immersion because it is less convenient, and more self-denying and crossing to human nature; while sprinkling, pouring, washing, &c., accord better with comfort, ease, and popularity. It is quite possible that there are some who thus regard immersion, and reject it for no better reasons.

The piety of such, we should regard in much the same light, as the piety of those who set up an exclusive claim to self-denial, based upon the *mere mode* of administering divine ordinances. So far as I am personally concerned, did our Saviour require it, I could be immersed every day in the year, and much of the time should count it a *luxury*, instead of a self-denial.

But to be rigid and self-denying in regard to a *single* duty, or *supposed* duty, while we are no more self-denying and consecrated to God, in other respects, than our neighbors, is not the most conclusive evidence of a *better* faith! He that "tithes the *mint*, the *anise*, and *cummin*," to preserve his consistency, should be careful and not "omit the *weightier* matters," such as "*judgment*, *mercy*, and *faith*."

But the real question now presented for our consideration, is not, whether immersion requires more self-denial, or is even the better mode of baptism. No: you inquire, "*why not adopt it as the exclusive mode, and become a Close Com-*

*munion Baptist, and thus end all controversy upon this subject?"* As this is quite a common question, I will now proceed to offer, briefly as possible, some of my "reasons" for a different course.

1. I dare not become a Close Communion Baptist by adopting such a course, because I must then virtually admit, and to be consistent prove, that immersion, total immersion, and *nothing but immersion*, is Christian baptism: while all who practice other modes, do so wholly without authority, and in opposition to the revealed will and instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now if I should assume that immersion only is baptism, I know not how to prove it, since I find neither *command*, *precept*, or *example* to confirm it. Indeed the word *immersion* is not to be found in the Bible! Nor is *plunge*, or *dip* ever used in connection with the ordinance of Christian baptism.—Should I affirm, as some have done, that the Greek word for *baptize*, signifies *immersion*, and *immersion only*, then I must do so in opposition to the decision of a vast majority of the intelligent and learned world. So well advised of this fact was the distinguished Dr. Carson, of England, one of the most talented ministers of the Baptist Church, that when endeavoring to prove that *baptizo* *always* signifies immersion, he frankly confesses that "*All the Lexicographers and Commentators are against him in that opinion.*" See Cox & Carson, p. 79.

Such a concession, while it does honor to the character and candor of Dr. Carson, exhibits also the presumption or ignorance of such as claim the *learned world*, in favor of immersion. I have consulted between twenty and thirty different Lexicons upon this subject, *not one* of which gives *dip*, *plunge*, or *immerse*, as the exclusive meaning of *baptizo*.

Now as our Saviour has enjoined no *express mode*, but

simply the *ordinance* of baptism, I dare not adopt an *exclusive* mode, lest I change the importance from the *ordinance* to the *mere mode of observing it*. Should our Baptist brethren insist that the examples recorded in the New Testament, when considered in connection with the language and circumstances, prove that immersion was the original mode of baptism, I simply reply: some of the examples recorded may seem to favor such an opinion, while many others disapprove the idea of immersion, thus leaving us to conclude that the sacred writers attached no *special* importance to the mode. True, the New Testament writers speak of baptizing "in Jordan" and "in the River of Jordan,"—of going "down into the water," and of coming "up out of the water," of being "buried with Christ in baptism;" still none of these affirm immersion,—*if* they *did* then would learned men have ceased to controvert them. Every Greek scholar knows that the prepositions here rendered "in," "into" and "out of" *might* have been translated "at Jordan"—"to the water"—and "from the water," without violating or changing the sense of the original. Indeed, if the reader will only turn to the case of the Eunuch, recorded in Acts 8: 38, 39, he will find in that very chapter the word "eis," "*into* the water," rendered *six times* "to" and "unto," and only this once "into," while the word, "ek" "out of the water" is twice as often translated "from" as "out of" in the first five books of the New Testament; and "apo" used in the case of our Saviour, Matt. 3: 16, *five times* as often.

But I ask for no "New Translations," truth requires none. The doctrine that cannot rest securely upon our good old English version, needs, I apprehend, something more than truth to sustain it: hence I dare not espouse it, but prefer to leave "in," "into" and "out of" as I find them, however they may effect the question in controversy. As they now

read, it proves nothing conclusive for immersion, since it is common among different denominations now to baptize "in rivers" and for the candidate to go down "*into* the water," and come "up *out of* the water," and still no immersion takes place. The same might have been true in the days of our Saviour, as every candid person must admit.

But had our Saviour designed to teach that any *particular*, or *exclusive* mode of baptism was necessary, would he have left the subject so indefinite that millions of his intelligent, honest, sincere, true disciples would mistake or overlook his great design, and practice a different form? To my own mind the conclusion is unavoidable,—Jesus never authorized an exclusive mode, and for me to insist upon one, would be to act without *precept*, or *example*; hence I cannot become a Close Communion Baptist.

2. I dare not become a Close Communion Baptist by adopting immersion as an exclusive mode, because I must then sometimes deny the true disciples of Christ both Christian baptism and the Lord's Supper.

I was once called to see a dying saint, who had never been baptized. She was intelligent, her mind was clear, and her hope in Christ firm. Her confidence and comfort gave evidence that the *grace* and *spirit* of God sustained her soul, and gave visions of future glory. But one thing lay with weight upon her heart,—*she had never been baptized*, and she now felt solemnly impressed with the duty,—“Repent and be *baptized* every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.” Was it the work of the adversary; or the Spirit of God urging this dying disciple to make a profession of her faith in Jesus by receiving his baptism? Never shall I forget that scene—that calm expression—that sweet composure which seemed entirely to possess her soul immediately on receiving from my hand the Christian ordi-

nance. My own soul, in the act of administration, cherished the assurance that God ratified the solemn transaction, and gave a double unction of his Spirit to sustain her in this eventful hour.

But, according to the theory that *immersion only* is baptism, and must *always*, in the order of time, “*precede* the Lord’s Supper,” we must deny *both* to all such as may be savingly converted to God upon a death-bed. Yes: souls redeemed by the blood of Christ, and regenerated by his Spirit, and just ready to enter the mansions of eternal glory, may ask the ministers of our condescending and compassionate Saviour, for that baptism which points to moral cleansing, and for those symbols which point to the broken body and shed blood of the “*Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world* ;” but all in vain! the cold, comfortless response must be given,—“*You are too late—the spiritual benefits of those ordinances are denied you!*” Laying aside for a moment, all *mere human creeds*,—“*all traditions of men*,” and religious dogmas, I ask, is *such* the *genius* and *spirit* of that holy religion which affirms “*mercy rather than sacrifice*” to be one of its cardinal distinguishing characteristics? I *dare* not, nay I *cannot* believe it; hence, I cannot adopt either the *theory*, or *practise* of *exclusive immersion*; therefore I cannot abandon my present faith and become a close communion Baptist.

3. I dare not build up division walls in the Church of Christ upon *mere inferences*.

*First*: Our Baptist brethren *infer* that *Christian baptism* is an indispensable qualification, or pre-requisite for the Lord’s Supper. Hence, *none* however, holy, or pre-eminently devoted to God, are permitted to approach the table of our Lord, *with them*, and receive the symbols of his broken body and shed blood, unless *first* baptized *in water*. *Secondly*: Our

Baptist brethren *infer* that *total immersion under water is indispensable* to the ordinance of *Christian baptism*. Now upon these two *inferences*, the *great division wall* of CLOSE COMMUNION is reared. I say *INFERENCES*, because our brethren can neither *know* or *prove* that either position is certainly true.

I am fully aware that our Baptist brethren express themselves with much confidence upon this subject: still very few of them I apprehend claim to *know* the truth beyond all doubt. Very few I apprehend, would make oath to the truthfulness of their creeds upon these points! But why not; if there is no reasonable doubt—no just ground of controversy. Our opponents may *believe*,—most *firmly* believe, and speak very confidently, and still *admit* the possibility of being mistaken. Should any lay claim to *absolute knowledge*, I would like to inquire, how such knowledge has been obtained.—*First*: do such claim superior *learning* and *ability* to investigate successfully the sacred oracles of truth? *Secondly*: or do they claim to be more *honest* and *impartial* in their investigations than others? *Thirdly*: or do they claim that God has favored them with *more light* than other Christians enjoy? I confess, to my own mind it would not appear very *humble* or *modest*, to assume either of these positions and still I see not how our Baptist brethren can avoid it, without admitting just what we claim, viz: that Christians of *other* denominations stand an *equal* chance with themselves for obtaining a knowledge of the *mind* and *will* of God upon the subject of gospel baptism. To differ, therefore, with our brethren, argues neither *ignorance*, *dishonesty*, or *spiritual darkness* and error.

I have said, that our Close Communion Baptist brethren *infer* that Christian baptism must *precede*, or is a *pre requisite* for the Lord's Supper. I do not deny the propriety of main-

taining this order in the administration of the ordinance, as a *general* rule, in the Christian church. But I *do* deny, and challenge proof to the contrary, that the Lord Jesus Christ ever ordained a *Law* in Zion requiring baptism before the Lord's Supper, or making it a condition or pre-requisite for the Supper. That baptism *ordinarily* preceded is quite probable, since it was generally administered immediately in connection with a declaration of faith in Christ, and consequently before there was any opportunity of celebrating the Supper. But who can point us to Divine authority for this order, as the *changeless, undeviating Law* of the church of Christ? Who will affirm and undertake to prove, that *even* the *Apostles* received *Christian* baptism, i. e. baptism in the name of the SACRED TRINITY, before they ever observed the Lord's Supper? Indeed, baptism in the name of the *Trinity* was never instituted until *after* the institution of the Lord's Supper. If we are told that the Apostles were previously baptized by John, then I need only refer to the fact, that individuals baptized by John, were *re-baptized* under the gospel dispensation, by the Apostle Paul, as may be seen in Acts 19: 1, 7: thus proving that John's baptism was not *Christian* baptism, because not in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In further confirmation of this position, I may urge, that the re-baptisms mentioned Acts 19, must have occurred some twenty-five years after the institution of the Lord's Supper. Now is it probable that these individuals had been "*disciples*" so many years, and yet had never *once* complied with our Lord's command, "*This do in remembrance of me?*" With all deference to the opinions of our brethren, I *infer*, they had many times observed the Lord's Supper, *without* Christian baptism.

The Spirit of the gospel is, "*mercy* and not *sacrifice.*"—Indeed, such has been the spirit of the *Divine* economy in

every age of the world. As an illustration of the principle take the Ritual Dispensation of the Old Testament. The Law of rites was *exact* and *specific*, and did not submit duty to human discretion, or mere expediency. But the spirit of that Law was "*mercy* and not *sacrifice*." Hence David, and those that were with him, in *extreme circumstances* could innocently "enter into the house of God and eat the shewbread," although unlawful to do so. 1 Sam., 21: 6—Matt., 12: 4. And under the reign of king Hezekiah, many of the Jews came to the feast of unleavened bread, and did eat of the passover, though ceremonially unclean and legally disqualified. Yet God *ratified* and *accepted* the offering: 2 Chron., 30. So the Israelites in the wilderness, on account of the great inconvenience attending the rite of circumcision, *wholly* omitted it, although a "*token*" of God's everlasting covenant with his people. And even the *Moral Code*, while it declares, on the Sabbath "*thou shalt not do any work*,"—still "*works of mercy*" may be done even on the Sabbath day.

But is the gospel dispensation in its ceremonial arrangements, more intolerant and inexorable than the Hebrew Code? Does it *demand*, and accept of *nothing* but *exact*, and *perfect* conformity to the letter? When God requires us to *receive* a weaker brother, is the condition, under all circumstances, that he observe neither more nor less than the exact prescribed forms of the church? Did Paul act on this principle when he circumcised Timothy to satisfy the Jews?—Let the stickler for the *exact literal*, answer, not from *inference*, but absolute knowledge.

I will not question the wisdom or propriety of the general usage of the church upon this subject; nor advocate the right of individuals to live *out* of all church connection, and still enjoy all the privileges of those *in* the church. But



I must protest against dividing the household of faith, and binding good men's consciences upon mere *inferences*. I contend for a *principle* and offer the scriptural *precedent* to prove that even where the form of duty was prescribed, still circumstances justified a departure from the general rule.

Now so far as the *nature* and *design* of the Lord's Supper is concerned, I maintain that any intelligent Christian, in the exercise of gospel faith, can look through the symbols of *bread* and *wine* and discern the *broken body* and *shed blood* of our Lord: and having done this in "remembrance of Christ," i. e. ate and drank the sacramental bread and wine, he has, according to the original design, celebrated the Lord's Supper. Whether baptism was *before* or *after* would add nothing to his spiritual discernment, or faithful remembrance; therefore could not be an indispensable pre-requisite, or qualification for the Supper.

*Secondly*: That our Baptist brethren *infer* the *mode* of baptism, is just as certain, as that they do not *know*, and consequently could not unqualifiedly *testify*, or *affirm* to the truth of their position. But will our brethren first *infer* the *order* of the Supper, and then *infer* the *mode* of baptism, and then exclude us because *we* do not *infer* and *practice* according to their inferences? Can such be the law and order of Christ's church? Is such the law and condition of fellowship among the disciples of Jesus? I can never believe it; therefore dare not adopt it; hence cannot become a Close Communion Baptist.

4. I dare not divide the Church of Christ upon the mere question:—In what *way*, or *mode* shall an *external ordinance* be administered? Even were it conceded, that baptize properly means immersion, and that immersion was the common mode practised by the Apostles, I should not dare divide the disciples of Jesus with the question of *mere mode*, while

I had evidence that God equally blessed and prospered those who practiced different modes. I should then feel that *union* was more important than *mode*, and at least, in extreme cases, sacrifice the *latter*, for the *former*. God's blessing upon such, should be both testimony and license in favor of such liberty.

The common meaning of the Greek word "*deipnon*," is *supper*—an ordinary *meal*. But when this Greek word is applied to the "*Lord's Supper*," do our Baptist brethren insist upon the original meaning and say nothing short of a *full supper* will answer, because *supper* means supper, and not a morsel of bread and a swallow of wine?" The Lord's Supper was originally celebrated in the *evening*—in an *upper room*—in a *reclining posture*—with *unleavened bread*, and the *pure juice* of the grape, and by the *male members* of the church only. Yet there is no controversy about *manner*, or *mode* in regard to this ordinance, although we differ in almost every external particular from the practice of Christ and the Apostles. Any time and place, with any bread, and in any posture accords so far with the views and feelings of Christians generally that there is no contention. So in the ordinance of baptism—we agree that it must be in the name of the Trinity—that *water* is the proper element, and that *time* and *place* are of no great consequence, so far as *validity* is concerned. But alas! the body of Christ must be rent with the mere question of *mode*, "*how MUCH water shall be used, and how shall it be applied.*" The blessed Saviour receives *all* and smiles equally upon *all* who love him; but many of his professed disciples will not receive and *fully* fellowship *all* whom Christ receives. A Christian brother may satisfy God and his own conscience, so that he enjoys communion with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; still, the *mode* of baptism with a Close Communionist is the indispensable

condition of full fellowship! Would a disciple of Jesus approach the table of his Lord? The question is not how *holy* or *useful* he is, but “*have you been immersed*, and do you also refrain from communing with all such as have *not* been immersed by some immersed minister of the gospel?” Such is not my standard of Christian fellowship. Whom Christ receives I must and will receive, whether baptized *in* water, or *with* water, or by the Holy Ghost *without* water: hence I cannot become a Close Communion Baptist.

5. I dare not exalt compliance with a *mere external* ordinance, above uniform and consistent piety. I have only to be *immersed* by a Close Communion Baptist minister, and so live as to escape the discipline of the church, and by virtue of the *mode* of my baptism, I am entitled to rights and privileges at the Lord’s table, in the Baptist Church, that are denied some of the most eminently pious and useful servants of our Lord Jesus Christ. I may neglect family religion,—the closet—the souls of men, and live a loose, worldly, lukewarm, fruitless professor; while a Methodist or Presbyterian brother may be “*the salt of the earth*,”—“*the light of the world*,”—“*a living epistle, read and known of all men* ;” still *I* am admitted to the Lord’s Table, and *he* is rejected, and for the simple reason, *I* have been *immersed* and *he* has not. Thus the *form* of godliness is exalted above the *power* of godliness! Compliance with an external rite, instead of Christian character or moral worth is the basis of fellowship. The highest recommendation—even an humble walk with God, with all the gifts and graces of the holy gospel to adorn the Christian character of a brother beloved of God, will not satisfy a Close Communionist, “*he must be immersed*.” But I dare not exalt a *single act* of a man’s life—an act that the *vilest* may perform, and *still* be vile, above uniform consistent piety. *Moral worth*, instead of compliance

with mere external forms, shall ever be my standard. Weigh the *whole* man, instead of a *single* act, and you get his moral worth as God values him. While he attends to the "*mint anise and cummin,*" he must not omit the weightier matters, "*judgment, mercy and faith.*" But attention to "*judgment, mercy and faith,*" and the exemplification of all other traits of Christian character, *without immersion*, will not entitle a disciple of Christ to a place at the Table of a Close Communion Baptist.

6. Because I cannot believe that the *mode* of administering an ordinance is more important than the *union* and *fellowship* of Christ's true disciples. With me it is a law of consistency to put things *most* important, *first* in order. Adherence to this rule will unite in one indissoluble bond of union the disciples of Jesus, notwithstanding different views relative to externals. Suppose we apply this rule by way of testing the relative importance of the *mode* of baptism and *union* of God's people. *First* : Failing to be immersed does not prevent the Christian from enjoying the presence and blessing of God. But the spirit of disunion and division does. *Second* : Baptism without immersion does not prevent or stop revivals of religion. But disunion and contention among Christians does. *Third* : The mode of baptism does not furnish occasion to unbelievers for reproaching the religion of Christ. But division does. *Fourth* : The *mode* of baptism does not place insuperable obstacles in the way of the salvation of sinners. But division and strife among brethren does. I might pursue this train of thought, and illustrate the tendency of disunion ; but it is unnecessary, every Christian can judge from the feelings of his own heart as to the relative importance of the two. Our Lord informs us that a "house divided against itself cannot stand," and that division would ruin even the kingdom of Satan. How absurd then

—yea, *profane* and ridiculous for men to represent *sectarianism* as a benevolent and wise provision of the Almighty for the greater purity and extension of our holy religion! Does disunion originate from a *good* or a *bad* cause? If from a *bad* cause, then I ask, is it from *above*, or beneath—from Heaven, or of men? Does a *bad* tree bring forth *good* fruit, and a *corrupt* fountain send forth sweet water?

Angels *are* united. Saints in Heaven *will* be united.—Who then will assume that they may be lawfully and righteously divided on earth? Yea, that the purity and progress of undefiled religion demands it? I dare offer no such apology for the existence of differing, discordant *sects*, but charge their *birth* and *being* to the sinfulness of *man*, rather than the wisdom of God.

But do we hear the inquiry still, “How can the *household of faith* be united?” I reply: put things of *most* importance *first* in order, and churches will then *cease* to exalt mere *externals*, which the vilest *may* observe, above *vital* godliness. Our Baptist brethren do not *pretend* that immersion produces any particular change in moral character, any more than baptism by any other mode. Neither do they regard immersion as certain evidence of piety in the candidate, any more than baptism by the application of water *to* the candidate. Nor yet is it claimed that Christians who have been baptized by immersion exhibit more of the spirit of Christ than other Christians. Why then make the *mode* of baptism a *division* question, if it is not a condition of salvation—does not effect a *saving* change of moral character—is no certain and reliable evidence of piety, and is not followed by clearer demonstrations of a *living faith* than are found in the *life* and *practice* of those who differ as to the form of administration. Hence, believing as I do, that the *union* and *fellowship* of God’s children on earth, is *more* important

than *any* mode of baptism, I dare not adopt an *exclusive* mode, which denies a Christian brother or sister a place at the table of our Lord, with us: therefore I cannot become a Close Communion Baptist.

7. I dare not sanction a practice which will exclude many of the most eminent ministers of Jesus Christ, and the godly members of their charge, from the Christian church and its ordinances for doing what cannot be construed into an *immorality*. That all who *receive* Christ, and are received of Christ, have a *divine* and gospel right to all the means of grace and privileges of Christ's church, seems to me so obvious that proof is wholly unnecessary. Hence to *exclude* them from such privileges for doing what neither offends God, nor violates their own consciences, but accord, as they conceive, with the *Word of God* and Christian duty, is little less than waging war with the gospel of Christ. Will our Baptist brethren maintain that "*mixed Communion*" is an immorality or sin against God? If so, then all such members of Baptist churches as have been guilty of sitting down to the Lord's Supper with Episcopalians, Methodists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, &c., must repent and forsake, or finally perish! I can conceive of no *middle ground* if "*mixed Communion*" is *sinful* and excommunication for this sin is *right*, then Christ *approves* the act, and the judgment day will exhibit its ratification and approval.

But *will* the Lord Jesus Christ as final Judge thus sanction the act of excommunication? Do our brethren believe it? And are all such persons as have been excluded from Baptist churches for communing with other denominations "*apostates*," doomed to perdition? I think our Baptist brethren will affirm no such thing. Indeed, even to *talk* of sinning against Christ by communing with his own dear disciples, appears so inconsistent with the *spirit* and *design* of Chris-

tianity, that serious refutation would seem wholly unnecessary.

And still, some of the most spiritual, godly members of the Close Communion Baptist Church, have been *solemnly* and *formally* excommunicated from the church and its ordinances, for no other alleged offence than "mixed communion." Even though he were a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, and his *faith* and *works* attested his Divine mission, still, when guilty of "mixed communion," the hand of fellowship must be withdrawn. Much less then may *unimmersed* ministers and church members presume on approaching the communion table with our Baptist brethren, when such severity is exercised towards their natural members. But I dare not withdraw fellowship from a Christian brother for doing what never can be proved an *immorality*, or an offence against God, or man : hence I cannot become a Close Communion Baptist.

8. I dare not adopt and sanction a practice that renders me grossly inconsistent with myself. Our Baptist brethren admit that ministers of other denominations *are* ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ, authorized to preach the gospel, and of course administer its ordinances. Hence, our brethren invite unimmersed ministers to their pulpits, and frequently exchange with them. Indeed, I have known instances where ministers of other denominations preached *preparatory* sermons on communion Sabbaths to Baptist churches. But they were not permitted to sit down with their *hearers* and commemorate that Saviour's dying love, who had been the theme of their sermon. They could receive the *word* from his *mouth*, but not the *bread* from his *hand* ! The minister was qualified to present the word of *life*, but not the symbol of our Saviour's *death* ! What incongruity.

Why not be consistent, and maintain that unimmersed

ministers of other denominations have no heaven ordained right, either to *preach* the gospel, or administer or partake of the Lord's Supper? Will not the same preparation that qualifies a minister to preach the gospel, also answer for the sacramental Supper? Is not he that is called of God to *preach* the gospel, also called to administer the ordinances of that same gospel? Who then will deny him the right to participate in those ordinances? I dare not; hence I cannot become a Close Communion Baptist.

9. I am unwilling to sanction a practice which some of our devoted missionaries have not dared to carry out among the heathen. I am aware that some of our Baptist brethren have denied that their missionaries ever practice "mixed communion." But I have the communications from *missionary brethren, on the field of labor*, which certify to the fact, beyond all controversy. Yes, while our Close Communion brethren at home excommunicate their members for uniting with Christians of other denominations in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, some of their dear missionaries, imbued with the spirit of their Lord, have been constrained by a sense of love and duty to commit the same offence! Could they do less and not cast a stumbling block before the heathen world? What a comment upon Christianity would Close Communion be for the heathen! The ambassadors of Jesus Christ—King in Zion, sent to ignorant, lost men, with the benevolent, holy religion of the Bible; and yet these servants of the Most High God will not unite in celebrating a sacramental Supper in honor of their common Lord! Well might the heathen in tone of solemn rebuke say, "go, be reconciled and united among yourselves, and then come and preach *brotherly love to us*," or, "physician, heal thyself." My soul revolts at the thought of dividing the disciples of Jesus under *any* circumstances; but more especially



at the table of our Divine Redeemer. This, however, is a legitimate result of that system which assumes that immersion *only* is baptism, and must always precede the Lord's Supper. Such is not my faith; hence I cannot become a Close Communion Baptist.

10. I am unwilling to sanction a practice that is a great grief to a vast majority of my brethren and sisters in Christ. The distinguished Robert Hall, of England—one of the most eloquent men, and brightest luminaries that ever rose in the Baptist church, remarks as follows: "It frequently happens that the constitution of the church continues to sanction *strict* communion, while the sentiments of a vast majority of its members are decidedly in favor of a contrary system." Such is the testimony of Mr. Hall when pleading for *open* communion. I doubt not there are *tens of thousands* in the Baptist church who mourn over the *anti-scriptural* practice of excluding from the Lord's table *true believers*, simply because unimmersed. These, with *hundreds of thousands* in other Christian churches, constitute an overwhelming majority of the Christian world—all of whom regard Close Communion with feelings of grief. We are all grieved that, while we are guilty of *no crime* that prevents or interrupts our communion and fellowship with the gracious Saviour, or which even our Baptist brethren construe into an *immorality*, still we are *turned away* with the *unbelieving world* as *unworthy* of a place among *them* at the table of our common Lord. This practice has filled the heart of many a *husband* and wife, parent and child, with bitter grief, as the dividing line, based upon the mere question of *mode*, has passed through families, in all other respects united and happy. Can it be that any *true* principle or practice of the gospel church is such a grief to enlightened Christian piety? Are the views and feelings of a vast majority of the

intelligent Christian world all wrong upon so *plain* a subject—a subject wisely and benevolently adapted, even to the comprehension of the *weakest* and most humble disciple of Jesus? I must believe the *wrong* is with our Close Communion brethren. A practice so discordant with Christian *charity*, so at a variance with Christian *experience*, and so opposed to Christian *fellowship*, to say the least, looks too *suspicious* and *doubtful* to receive my sanction; hence I cannot become a Close Communion Baptist.

11. I am unwilling to sanction a practice that has always been a great stumbling block to young converts. I never yet conversed with a convert on the subject who was at once prepared to endorse Close Communion. Even where their minds are made up and settled upon immersion as their only mode, still they start at the idea of excluding all but Baptists, when they come to the communion table! Indeed our Baptist brethren know full well the difficulties and trials incidental to Close Communion when converts are invited to unite with the church. How can it be otherwise? A regenerated soul, filled with love to God and his people, is by spiritual birth and moral affinity, in fellowship with all who bear the image of Jesus: and I am persuaded that nothing but special training can ever change the instinctive promptings of his moral new-born nature. Begotten in the image of God, he loves the image God-like, and is unwilling to form religious connections where the operations of love are limited by *sectarian* bounds: hence the common declaration—"I can never become a *Close Communion Baptist*."

12. I dare not sanction a practice which *virtually* says, "*stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou*:" Is. 65: 5. I know our Baptist brethren utterly disclaim this sentiment; yet I do say "*Close Communion*," to my mind *virtually* implies it. In all kindness, I would ask

our brethren, why do you exclude us from your communion, if not for neglecting or omitting some part or portion of Christian duty performed by yourselves? Do not the whole world know that Baptists profess to obey Christ *more perfectly* in the ordinance of baptism than other church members, and that *this obedience* is the very foundation of restricted communion? In other words, they affirm, we do not obey Christ in the ordinance of baptism; therefore they cannot extend to us the hand of church fellowship. Hence, our *alleged* disobedience is the ground of our exclusion. This they must admit, or concede that it is not *our* duty to be immersed. If then we are *excluded* for *non-compliance* with duty, and Baptists are admitted on the ground of compliance, what is this but setting up claims to privileges based on superior obedience, or piety: and is not this *virtually*, or in *effect* saying, “*stand* by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou.” This is what I dare not do; hence I cannot become a Close Communion Baptist.

13. I dare not sanction a practice which is, at least, in part, continued for *denominational*, or *sectarian* purposes. Heaven forbid that I should impute, *unjustly*, to our brethren improper motives. But what are we to think when the *leaders* and fathers in the Baptist church utter such sentiments as follow: “*The tendency of mixed communion* is to annihilate, *as such*, *all the Baptist churches in christendom.*” Again: “Do you wish to promote the dissolution and ruin of the Baptist denomination, *as such*? If you do not, take heed to your ways.” Such were the *views*, and such is the *language* of the great Mr. Fuller; p. 24, 25. Will the Baptist church, “*as such*,” *disavow* or repudiate them? If not, then can we but *infer*, that one great object of Close Communion is to *retain* and *maintain* the *identity* and *distinct peculiarities* of the Baptist denomination, “*as such*.”

I have no doubt but the tendency of "mixed communion," or of liberal Christian charity and brotherly intercourse and fellowship of saints, *is* to destroy different sects, *as such*. But that *fraternal intercourse*, even at the *Lord's table* should destroy any *good* organization, I shall be very *slow* to believe. If communion tables are reared on principles that require us to sacrifice *higher* and *holier* considerations, then may God *hasten* their fall, even though they carry down with them the sects that reared them. What a startling admission—"mixed communion," or for one Christian church to commune with another, will "promote the *dissolution* and *ruin*" of the former! Therefore, to prevent this catastrophe, one Christian church must exclude the other! This I can never do; hence cannot become a Close Communion Baptist.

14. I am unwilling to sanction a practice that some have felt constrained solemnly to *renounce* in a dying hour. Death is a *crucible*, and many times develops the *true* state of the heart, when all other circumstances and trials fail. This fact accounts for disclosures, confessions and changes, that frequently occur when men approach the hour of dissolution. While *bad* men open the dark caverns of the human heart and reveal the complicated, untold depravity of former years, the *good* man, borne onward and upward by dying grace and visions of glory, lingers to leave his last testimony for God and the economy of grace. Now the *shadow* gives way to the *substance*, as the *earthly* is dissolved into the *heavenly*. The sum of all is, "Christ formed in the hope of glory." One tenure only links him to earth—and *that* tenure is LOVE. And it is the power of *that love* which frequently induces the dying saint to witness against established usages and traditions of men.

Some years since, in Roxbury, Vermont, Mr. R——, an

aged member of the Baptist church, when on his death bed, solemnly renounced Close Communion, and received the Lord's Supper with his Congregational brethren, the Deacon of the church consecrating and administering the bread and wine. Another instance is given by Dr. Pond—Prof. in Bangor Seminary;—See Pond. on Bap. p. 154–5. Other similar examples might be given if necessary.

Need we marvel that the true disciples of Jesus, as they get nearer heaven, are more inclined to love and fellowship those whom they expect to meet in heaven, and with whom they expect to dwell and commune eternally? Heaven will admit no *sectarians*,—*no, not one*. There will be no discordant spirits to say, “I am of Paul, and I am of Apollas, and I am of Cephas;”—but *Christ* will be *all* and in all. Hence, should I embrace the theory and practice of Close Communion *now*, I must abandon it *then*, or never sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets and martyrs and glorified saints, in the kingdom of God! Yea; in anticipation of that glorious event, I might feel constrained in a dying hour to renounce a practice so unlike the spirit and intercourse of heaven; hence I cannot become a Close Communion Baptist.

15. I cannot sanction Close Communion because I deem it not only wholly without authority, precept, or example, but contrary to the express law and condition of Christian fellowship. The *unity* or *oneness* of Christ's church is based on *faith*, and *not* upon the belief of certain *doctrines*, or conformity to certain *rites*, or the mere *mode* of observing those rites. Hence, our Saviour prays in John 17 : 20, 21., that *all* who believe in him may be *one*. Accordingly we hear the Apostle Paul say in Rom. 15 : 7—“him that is *weak* in the faith *receive ye*,” &c. Now can we “*receive*,” the disciples of Christ, and all become “*one*,” while some *exclude*

others and deny them fellowship at the Lord's table? In Rom. 15 : 7, the Apostle Paul is still more emphatic, "*wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.*" But did Christ receive us upon condition of *immersion*, or upon condition that we embrace the distinctive doctrine of Calvinism, or adopt the 39 Articles? If no such conditions are imposed by the Lord Jesus Christ, then why do men exclude their Christian brethren from fellowship, for not believing and practicing more than Christ required as a condition of life eternal?

Perhaps we shall be told by our Baptist brethren, that they *do* "receive" and fellowship us as *Christians*, but not as *church members* or persons in FULL communion with them. This is plausible. But will our brethren inform us which they regard as *most* important and essential, *CHURCH fellowship*, or *CHRISTIAN fellowship*? In other words, which does our Lord demand, that we should receive and fellowship men because they belong to *him*, or because they belong to the *church*? Let reason and conscience answer! What an absurdity! *Faith* may unite us to *Christ*, constitute us spiritual members of *his family—heirs* of God, and joint-heirs with Christ: and yet faith cannot secure for us the fellowship of our brethren in the sense of sitting down with them to the Lord's table! *Immersion* must be added to faith—*total immersion*, as the indispensable condition and qualification of fellowship. Such is not my creed; hence I cannot become a Close Communion Baptist.

16. I dare not adopt exclusive immersion as the mode of baptism, and Close Communion as a consequence, because then in effect, as I conceive, I must sometimes reject the Lord Jesus Christ in the person of his disciples. The Saviour is so identified with his disciples, that whatever treatment *they* receive, Christ accepts as unto himself. If Christians *belong*

to Christ, and possess *his* spirit, why should he not *virtually* be in their stead, and feel personally every honor and insult offered them? Why not in the judgment day declare to the world: “*Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the LEAST of THESE MY BRETHREN, ye have done it UNTO ME.*” Hence our Lord says again: “*He that receiveth YOU, receiveth ME, and he that receiveth ME, receiveth HIM that sent me.*” By this I understand, that Christ accepts, in his own person, whatever is offered his people.

Now, what is implied in *receiving* the disciples of Christ? Do we receive them even while we deny them a place with us at the table of our common Saviour? Shall we be told that it is because they have never been properly baptized or immersed? What then! Are they not Christ’s brethren—not even the *least*? Do they not *belong* to Christ—possess his Spirit—do his will, and thus represent him on earth? Does it accord, then, with the *mind and will* of Christ to exclude them from his table, under *any* circumstances, or for *any* reasons that do not affect their fellowship and communion with Christ? If not, then to exclude *them* is to discard Christ in the person of his own disciples. Hence, the Apostle declares, 1 Cor. 8: 12; “*But when ye sin so against the BRETHREN, and wound their weak consciences, ye sin against CHRIST.*” Now, firmly believing as I do, that Close Communion is a great grief to Christian brethren, and inflicts a serious *wound* upon the *consciences* of *many*, and also that in effect it rejects Christ in the person of his true disciple, I cannot become a Close Communion Baptist.

17. As a minister of the gospel, I dare not adopt immersion as the exclusive mode, and become a Close Communion Baptist, because I must then, as I conceive, either depart from the *rules of the church, or Lord it over God’s spiritual heritage.* God’s spiritual heritage is his *people, the flock* of Christ pur-

chased with his own blood, and embraces *all true believers*. Ministers of the gospel are *under shepherds*—in Christ's stead—called to *watch over, feed the flock*, and labor for its spiritual increase. He must study the *mind and will* of Christ concerning his flock, and endeavor faithfully to carry out the design of the Great Shepherd, *from* whom emanates all authority, and *to* whom all are accountable.

Now suppose the Lord Jesus Christ on earth again, engaged in his benevolent mission as when he dwelt among men. It is a beautiful, bright sabbath morning, and ten thousand saints of every creed are among the vast multitude who have convened, and now listen with breathless interest to the "gracious words that proceed out of his mouth." "The word is a "savor of life unto life," and hundreds bow in humble submission to the King of kings. The Saviour decides to hold a communion season with his disciples before his return to his mediatorial throne. But who are to be the guests at his table? Each pious heart, instead of examining his *neighbor*, and judging of *his* fitness, is absorbed in the anxious thought, "*shall I be an invited guest?*" Creeds, and denominations, and *modes* of rituals are almost forgotten; while love, and gratitude, and admiration sway all hearts touched by the grace and Spirit of God. But hark! the Saviour invites—how runs the invitation? Is it "come all ye *orthodox* professors of religion? Or "come all ye *immersed* christians? Or "come all ye church members in *regular standing*? What! will Jesus exclude from this "feast of love" some who have just now been baptized with his own Spirit, because they have not also been *immersed*? Or will ecclesiastical standing furnish a passport to his table, while the lambs of his flock, whose hearts burn with the ardour of *first love*, are all excluded? Would he, who said to Peter, "*feed my lambs,*" now deny them that spiritual



sustenance, deemed so essential for the stronger members of his fold? Shall "mercy" or "sacrifice" dictate the invitation on this sacramental occasion. But hark—we hear him say "All you who *love honor* and *obey* me, as your only *Lord* and *Saviour*, DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME." Then taking bread and blessing it, he presents it to his disciples saying "*take, eat, this is my body*," and passing the cup, he adds "*this cup is the new testament in my blood. . . drink ye ALL of it*." No godly husbands and wives separated on this occasion. No pious mothers shut out from the Lord's Table, while their children are invited guests; but families united, throng the Saviour's sacramental board. No separation of converts, all alike dear to him who died equally for all. There is neither *Jew*, nor *Greek*, *bond* nor *free*, *male* nor *female*, but *all ONE* in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Now every gospel minister is a *servant* and ambassador of Christ, and as such must carry out the *spirit* and *design* of the *mission* of Christ. Hence, to *dictate*, or *prescribe* laws and usages, conditions and restrictions, never imposed by the Lord Jesus Christ, is "*Lording it over God's heritage!*" If the gospel minister, when standing at the head of the Lord's Table, in Christ's stead, solemnly believes that, if Christ were present, instead of *gospel faith*, *creeds* and *modes* of administering ordinances would be the bond of fellowship and condition of communion, why then, to be consistent, he will invite to the Sacramental Supper, every class of sinners, self-deceived formalists, and designing hypocrites: *provided*, they are *accredited* church members, and have complied with the external rituals of the churches to which they belong. But if, on the other hand, he believes Christ would exclude *only* the UNWORTHY, *then* his invitation will welcome the *worthy*—the true disciples of Jesus, because they belong to Christ.

But it may be urged that an invitation, based simply on *Christian character*, without reference to the *mode* or *rite* of baptism, or distinctive doctrinal views, would lead to *innovation* and *disorder* in our churches. Now this is exactly what I charge upon the opposite course,—it leads to innovation, disorder, and still worse, to a gross corruption of Christianity. The Lord's Supper was instituted for the benefit of *believers*, and believers only, and any invitation that offers it to *unbelievers* is an innovation, a disorder, a gross perversion of the ordinance. Now suppose we invite "*the members in sister churches in good and regular standing*;" does not such an invitation base privilege upon church-membership instead of Christian character, and thus open the door for the vilest of men, *provided* they are *in the church*? All that can be urged against an invitation based on Christian character is, that it does not sufficiently guard the communion table against *heresy*, and the approach of persons connected with no evangelical church. Suppose the objection well founded, I then enquire, which is the greatest evil, an invitation which permits *good* men to come to the Lord's table *out* of the usual order, or an invitation which permits *bad* men to come because *in the church*? My own convictions of duty to Christ and his church, compel me to say that I would rather commune with good men *out* of my own ecclesiastical connection than with bad men *in* my own ecclesiastical connection, because with the former Christ himself holds sweet communion, but with the latter Jesus holds no fellowship whatever.

But let us see if the objection is well founded. The invitation reads, "*all you who love, honor and obey me, as your only LORD and SAVIOUR, do this in remembrance of me.*" *First*: Now can it be said, that such as reject the vital and fundamental doctrines of Christianity, "*love honor and obey*" Christ as "*Lord and Saviour?*" If not, then the church is

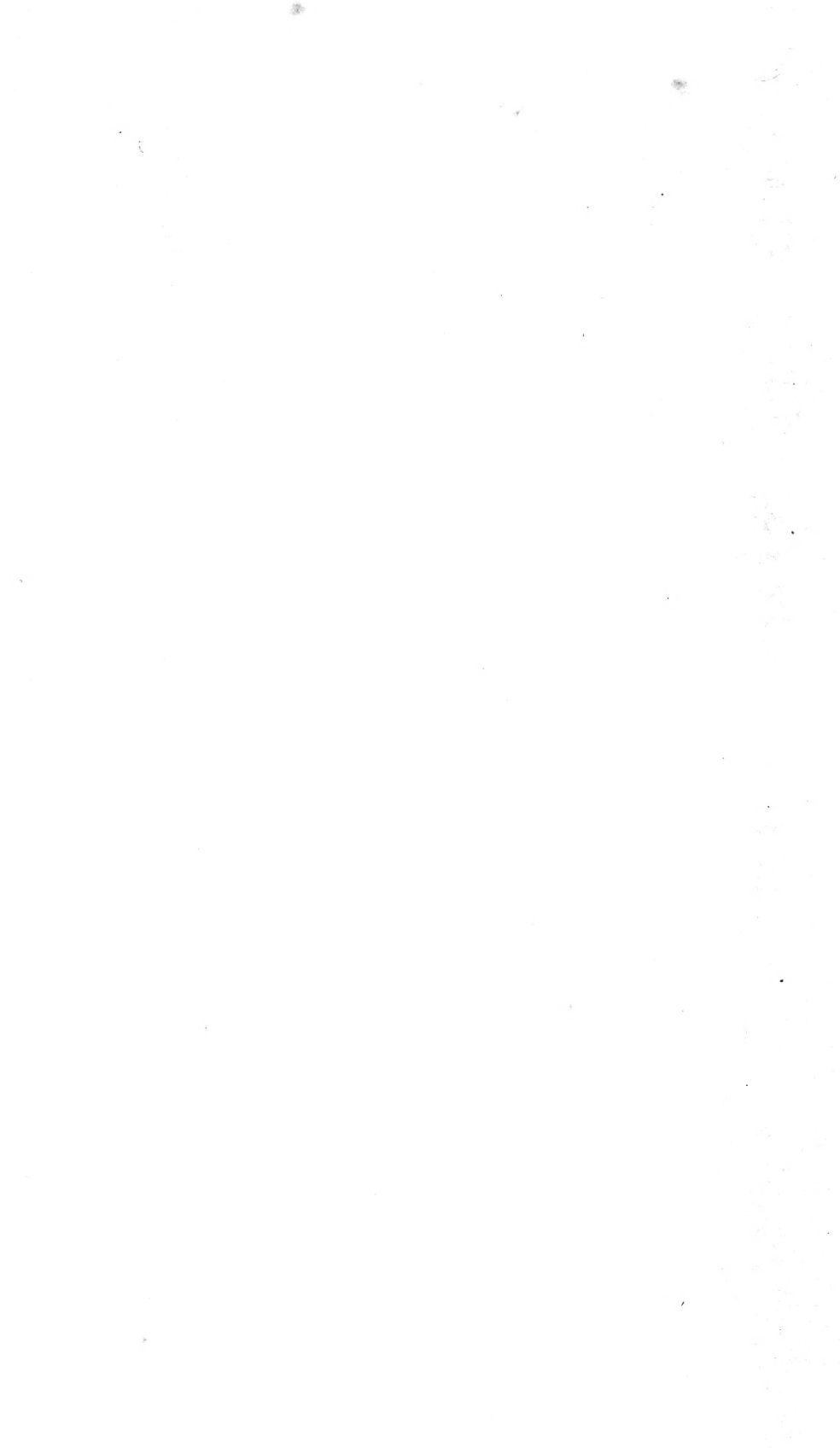
safe from destructive heresies, so far as our invitation is concerned. *Second*: Will *Christians* who “love honor and obey” Christ as “*Lord and Saviour*,” refuse or neglect to identify themselves with the church of Christ? Let those believe it who understand *obedience* to mean “*neglect of duty*.” In all our churches sufficient intervals occur between communion seasons to give converts an opportunity of connecting themselves with the church of Christ, and let those intervals witness the ingathering of such as give evidence of piety, and not leave them out of the *fold* of Christ *three* or *six* months by way of experiment, and then exclude them from the essential means of grace because they are not *in* the church! This removes the last objection, unless we meet with *extreme* cases, or exceptions to the general rule. That extreme cases do occur, none will deny. Now if in extreme cases the people of God might omit circumcision, although a token of God’s covenant, and a *seal* of the righteousness of faith; and David and they that were with him might eat the shew bread, though unlawful to do so, and many of the Jews celebrate the feast of unleavened bread, while ceremonially unclean, then who will undertake to prove that no case can occur where water baptism may be dispensed with as a pre-requisite for the Lord’s Supper? I contend for a *principle*, and not for a general *practice*, and that principle is “*mercy rather than sacrifice*”—a principle absolutely essential to a religion of mercy. If our opponents deny the relevancy of the examples I have given, then I point them to the apostles, and challenge the shadow of evidence that they were baptized in the name of the Trinity before they celebrated the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper! It is in vain to say they had previously been baptized by John! Would our opponent now accept water baptism, as *valid* when the name of **Father, Son and Spirit** were omitted in the admin-

istration? If not, then the apostles were not qualified for the Supper according to modern conditions.

Some sixty years after the apostles, a few Christian Jews were passing through an Eastern desert, when one of their company suddenly sickened, professed faith in Christ, and desired baptism. As water could not be obtained, they baptized him with *sand*. Now suppose he had desired the Lord's Supper? Which would have best accorded with the spirit and genius of a merciful religion, to deny him, or comply with his request? What would the Saviour do in like circumstances if on earth again? Let him believe it who can, that the compassionate Jesus, in such extremity would refuse a dying disciple the symbols of his broken body and shed blood, simply because unbaptized! Call it an extreme case, and still it decides a principle, fatal to the *theory* and practice of Close Communion.

And now, dear brethren, I humbly submit my "reasons" for your consideration. While I am accountable to God for what I have written, *you* are equally answerable for the use you make of my "reasons." I have endeavored to write in the spirit of brotherly kindness and Christian charity, and I beseech you prayerfully to consider the thoughts presented, and if they accord with Divine revelation—with the genius of our holy religion, and especially with the law of Christian brotherhood, then *abide* by them, though it cost you self-denial, sacrifice, and even martyrdom. Never let the "*traditions of elders*," "*ecclesiastical usage*," or mere *church policy*" lead you to adopt, what is repugnant to the spirit of Christianity. And may the God of all grace direct and establish you in the truth, and finally give you an inheritance among the sanctified in his kingdom.







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