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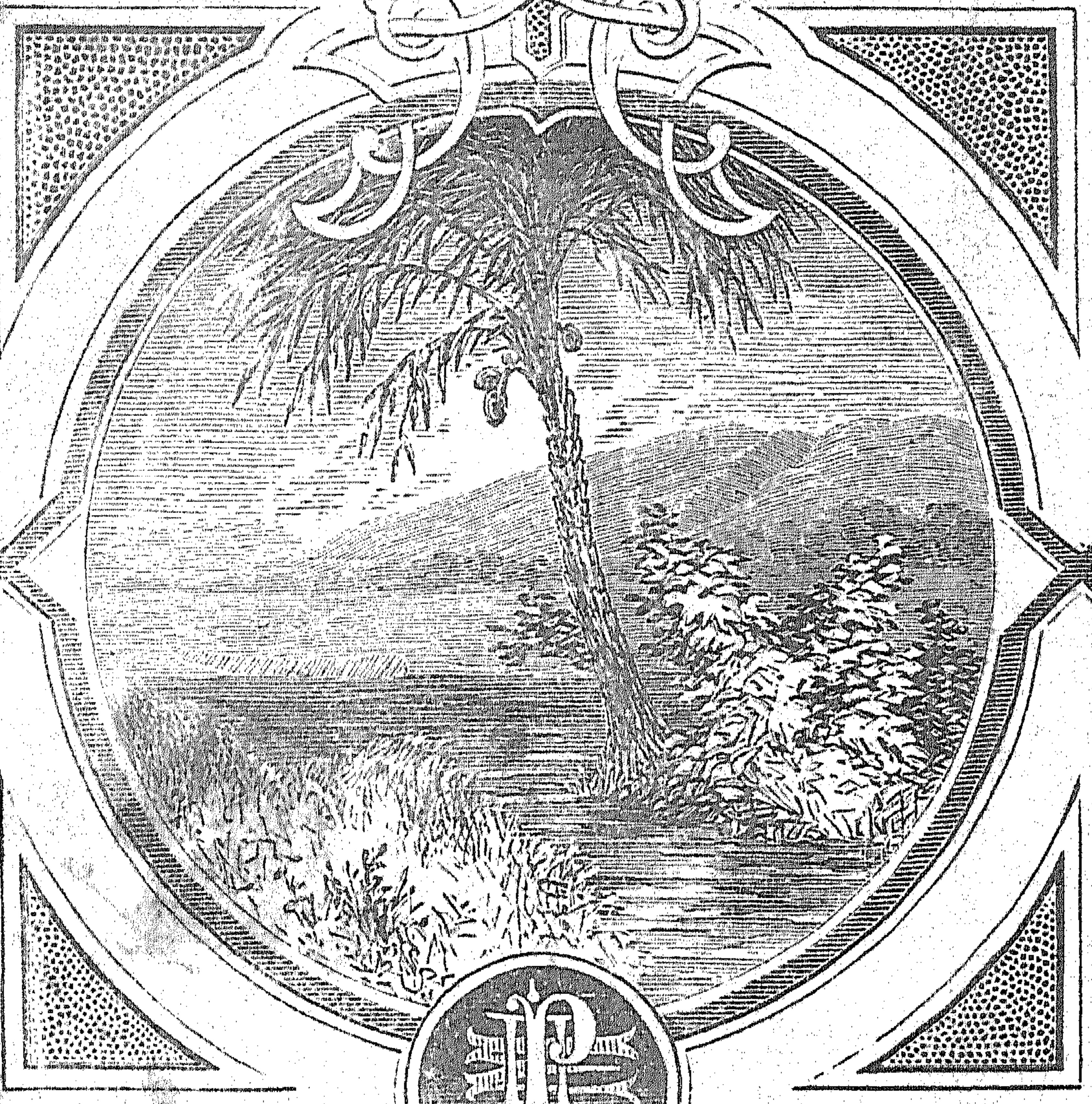
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THE TRACT BOOK SERIES



SPRINKLING THE BIBLE MODE OF WATER BAPTISM.
BY REV. SELAH W. BROWN.

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SPRINKLING

THE BIBLE MODE

OF

WATER BAPTISM.

BY REV. SELAH W. BROWN.

“Search the Scriptures.”

“So shall he sprinkle many nations.”

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SPRINKLING

THE BIBLE MODE OF BAPTISM.

“SO SHALL HE SPRINKLE MANY NATIONS.”

ISAIAH lii, 15.

THIS prophetic promise of the Old Testament has a twofold reference to the Gospel dispensation: 1. To the “Blood of Sprinkling,” by which we are justified and sanctified. 2. To the use of water in Christian baptism. In either case the allusion favors *sprinkling* as the Bible mode.

To constitute valid baptism, it must be administered, 1, with water; 2, by a Gospel minister; 3, to a suitable candidate; 4, in the name of the Holy Trinity. We believe that such an application of water, whether by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion, is true baptism. But while we admit that immersion *may answer* for one form of the ordinance, we “earnestly contend” that it is not the most convenient, neither is it the *scriptural* mode. We do not believe there is a precept nor an example in all the Bible that requires the plunging of the body under water as a religious rite.

With the great majority of Christian Churches, we honestly think that sprinkling or pouring is the true form. If, as our Baptist friends assert, immersion is the only mode, then not one in fifty of Christ's followers now on earth are baptized, and the great mass of those who have gone to heaven have gone without baptism.

I. CHURCH-HISTORY.

The argument from the practice of the early Christians, subsequent to the Apostolic age, weighs but little in thinking minds. It is admitted that history records the fact that some were immersed, but it also records so many superstitions connected with immersion that it is poor authority on the question of mode.

During the second and third centuries we find that sometimes salt was put in the water, and the candidates were fed with milk and honey, anointed with oil, and dipped three times. They were often immersed at midnight, and generally entirely **NAKED**, whether male or female. Mr. Robinson, in his *History of Baptism*, bears the following testimony: "The primitive Christians baptized *naked*. There is no ancient historical fact better authenticated than this." The learned Wall states the same fact: "The ancient Christians were baptized *naked*, whether they were

men, women, or children." After baptism it was the custom to dress the candidates in white garments, and crown them with evergreens.

Now if such were the foolish ceremonies connected with the ordinance, may not immersion itself be a ceremony added to the Church in those superstitious times? If in the very first Churches, established by the Apostles themselves, great errors were found, (relative to the Lord's Supper and Baptism, 1 Cor. xi, 19, 22; i, 14, 15,) what may we not expect to find in the dark and corrupt state of the Church two hundred years later? Let us not look to uninspired Church-history for argument, but to the holy word of God.

II. THE GREEK VERB.

It is confidently affirmed that the Greek term βαπτίζω, which in English is *baptize*, always means immersion. This bold and false assertion has been reiterated times without number by our Baptist friends, and as many times positively denied by Pædobaptists. We do not concede to immersionists the shadow of an advantage on the original word. If, when pressed hard with circumstantial evidence, they flee for refuge to that main position of theirs, we say with emphasis, *refuge there you have none*. Let us look carefully at the following facts:

1. It is a fact, that the forty-seven learned men who translated our English Bible did not render the Greek word βαπτίζω to *immerse* or *dip* in a single instance in the New Testament; on the other hand they did not translate it to *sprinkle*. They knew it might be translated to dye, to stain, to pour, to wash, to dip, to sprinkle, to plunge, etc., and knowing no English term which alone could express the various meanings of the Greek, they left the word without translating, merely giving it an English form.

2. It is a fact, that all unprejudiced Greek scholars unite in giving the term a variety of meanings.

3. It is a fact, that all Greek lexicons give the word a variety of definitions.

4. It is a fact, that Dr. Carson, the great English Baptist writer, in contending that the original word always means to immerse, *admits that he has all the lexicographers and commentators against him.*

5. It is a fact, that the Greek word βάπτω, with its derivatives, is used in many instances where it cannot possibly mean immersion. Thus, in Dan. iv, 33, the LXX. say that Nebuchadnezzar was "baptized with the dews of heaven." He might have been *sprinkled* with the dew, but was not *immersed*. In Heb. ix, 10, Paul speaks of "divers

baptisms," indicating more than one mode. Again, in Mark vii, 4, the word translated "washing" is *baptism* in the original, and this word applied to "tables" would render immersion rather difficult. Other passages will be noticed as we proceed.

III. THE GREEK PREPOSITIONS.

It is asserted that the Greek prepositions translated "*in,*" "*into,*" and "*out of,*" are conclusive proof of immersion. But we find the very same prepositions are translated "*to,*" "*at,*" "*from,*" "*by,*" and "*with,*" scores and hundreds of times. Thus the word *ἐν*, rendered *in*, is translated *at* in more than one hundred places, *with* in one hundred and fifty places, and *by* in about one hundred places, in the New Testament. The word *εἰς*, rendered *into*, is translated *to* or *unto* five hundred and thirty-eight times. The word *ἐκ*, rendered *out of*, is translated *from* one hundred and eighty-six times. The word *ἀπὸ* is rendered *out of* forty-five times, but translated *from* three hundred and seventy-four times.

Thus, looking at the original, we find the argument from these words is so feeble that it is abandoned by some of the ablest Baptist writers. Reid, a Baptist commentator, says: "No intelligent Baptist will base his arguments for immer-

sion on the prepositions *into* or *out of*." Dr. Cox says: "The prepositions are insufficient of themselves to determine the controversy." Dr. George Campbell, of Aberdeen, says: "We should not lay much stress on the preposition *in*, which may denote *with* as well as *in*."

If these prepositions may be thus translated we would read: John baptized "*at* Jordan," the Eunuch "*went down to* the water, and Jesus came "*up straightway from* the water."

IV. THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST.

JOHN TRULY BAPTIZED WITH WATER, BUT YE SHALL BE BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY GHOST. Acts i, 5.

Here we find two baptisms, water baptism and Holy Ghost baptism: John baptized with water, Christ baptized with the Holy Ghost. Now if we can ascertain the form or mode in which God baptizes with the Holy Ghost, we will know how man should baptize with water; for water baptism should resemble in form the Spirit's baptism. The sign should be like the thing signified; the type should agree with the antitype. Thus, if we are represented as being plunged into the Holy Ghost, then let us be plunged into water; but if the Holy Ghost is represented as descending, falling upon, and being poured out upon us,

then there is a beautiful propriety in having the water poured out or shed upon us.

Opening our Bibles, we learn that the mode of the Holy Spirit's baptism is always by AFFUSION, never by immersion. Thus we read of the Holy Ghost as *Descending*, Matt. iii, 16; Luke iii, 22, *Poured out*, Acts ii, 17; Prov. i, 2, 3; Ezek. xxxix, 29; Joel ii, 28, 29; *Poured upon*, Isa. xxxii, 15; Zech. xii, 10; *Sent upon*, Luke xxiv, 49; *Coming upon*, Acts i, 8; *Shed on*, Titus iii, 6; *Shed forth*, Acts ii, 33; *Shed abroad*, Rom. v, 5; *Falling upon*, Acts viii, 16; *Falling on*, Acts x, 44; xi, 15. These passages do not suggest the first idea of immersion, and yet the Bible calls this "BAPTISM."

Here we rest our argument. If God baptizes by pouring on, or shedding on, or letting fall on us the Holy Ghost, shall not we baptize by pouring, shedding, or letting fall the water on the candidate? Can we find a better model than God's mode? Shall we be complained of for trying to harmonize, as far as possible, the ceremony of water baptism with the baptism of the Holy Spirit? Nay, we prefer the *Divine pattern*, and surely we cannot err if we copy God's example.

And we have still another harmony. Not only does the *water* harmonize with the *Spirit*, but it agrees with the BLOOD in the mode of administration. The blood of the passover was *sprinkled*.

Exod. xii, 22; Heb. xi, 28. The blood of atonement was *sprinkled*, Lev. xvi, 14. The blood of the dedication of the first testament was *sprinkled*, Heb. ix, 18-22. The blood of Christ is the "*blood of sprinkling*," Heb. xii, 24; 1 Peter i, 2. Thus we have the threefold harmony of the SPIRIT, the WATER, and the BLOOD, described by John: "There are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three are one." 1 John v, 8. And these three bear witness to one mode of administration, and that is SPRINKLING.

V. JOHN'S BAPTISM.

MATT. III, 5, 6; MARK I, 5; LUKE III, 21.

Here we have "all Judea," "all the region round about Jordan," "all the Land of Judca," "they of Jerusalem," and "all the people;" and three times it is said "all the people were baptized." According to historians the population of Palestine at this time was not less than six millions.

Taking the very lowest estimate of the number of persons John must have baptized during his short ministry of about one year, it seems strange indeed that any one can believe that these multitudes were immersed. If he had stood up to his

waist in water, and kept plunging and plunging, day after day, week after week, and month after month in breathless haste, he could not have immersed a hundredth part of them. If our Baptist friends insist on the rendering "in Jordan," we answer, John himself says the baptisms were "*with* water," not *in* water. (Matt. iii, 11.)

"But," says the immersionist, "John baptized where there was 'much water' in order to dip the people." We answer, "much water" was absolutely necessary for other purposes vastly more than for baptism. We must remember John was in a very warm climate, "a thirsty land," where streams, springs, and wells of water were very scarce, and where not a drop of rain falls from May to October. As an abundance of water was needed for drinking, washing, and cooking, and for the various beasts of burden as well as for man, it is no wonder John selected a place of "much water" for his large mass-meetings. For such vast multitudes to congregate where there was not plenty of water would have been extremely inconvenient.

In Exod. xv, 27, we read, the Israelites "came to Elim, where were *twelve wells of water*, and threescore and ten palm-trees; and they encamped there by the waters," not that they might immerse the people, but that they might have the

water for drinking, cooking, washing, etc.; and for precisely the same reason we believe John took his station in Enon.

If you saw a notice of a Methodist camp-meeting, and the advertisement should say that the camp-ground was located near a fine stream or large springs of water, you would not think that they meant to dip or plunge the people in the water. And so, we think, John's "much water" was not for the purpose of immersion.

VI. CHRIST'S BAPTISM.

MATT. III, 13-16.

Christ's baptism is triumphantly quoted as a clear case of immersion, but we just as triumphantly appeal to it as a positive case of sprinkling.

ITS DESIGN.

Let us notice the DESIGN of the Saviour's baptism. 1. It was not a baptism "unto repentance," for he had no sin. 2. It was not to show his faith in the world's Redeemer, inasmuch as he was that Redeemer himself. 3. It was not Christian baptism, for that was not instituted till after the resurrection of Christ. 4. It was not a sign of regeneration, for no such change had taken place in his heart. 5. It was not as our example; if

it was, it is an example of *procrastination*; for notwithstanding his early piety, our Saviour waited till he was *thirty years of age* before he was baptized.

There is a key which will unlock the mystery, though it is often overlooked. In the very words of Jesus to John, we learn the design of our Saviour's Baptism. He says: "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to FULFILL ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS." To understand these words we must remember that Christ lived and died under the old Jewish or Mosaic law, and that he *fulfilled* that law in various particulars. His language is, "I came not to destroy the law but to fulfill." Matt. v, 17. It was to fulfill this law that he was circumcised, and kept the Jewish Passover and the Jewish Sabbath.

Now the question is, What was there in the Jewish law which required an application of water to Christ? Turning to the Old Testament the whole matter is explained. We find the *Priests* of the Mosaic dispensation were consecrated to their office by the application of water and anointing with oil. (Exod. xxix, 4, 7; Lev. viii, 6, 12; Num. viii, 7.) To this law our Saviour undoubtedly refers when he speaks of fulfilling all righteousness. Hence we say, and say confidently, the baptism of Christ was a PRIESTLY

CONSECRATION, or public induction into his office as Priest and Minister.

That such was the design of our Lord's Baptism appears from the following reasons: 1. Christ was a Priest, a "Great High-priest," and as such he was the great antitype of all the Priests of the old dispensation. 2. The Jewish priests were required to enter upon their office at the age of *thirty* years, (Num. iv, 3,) the very age Christ had attained when he commenced his ministry. (Luke iii, 23.) 3. The Jewish priest was first consecrated with water, then anointed with oil; Christ was first consecrated with water, then anointed with the Holy Ghost. (Luke iii, 21, 22; iv, 18.) The Jewish priest entered upon his office immediately after his consecration. Christ commenced his public ministry immediately after his baptism. (Luke iii and iv.) 5. Christ refers to his baptism as his authority for his ministry among the Jews. (Matt. xxi, 25.) In view of these considerations the fact is established beyond the shadow of a doubt, that the baptism of Christ was a Priestly Consecration.

THE MODE.

Turning again to the Old Testament, we learn that the Levitical priests were consecrated by **SPRINKLING**, (Num. viii, 7,) and the High-priest

was consecrated by a WASHING, ("with water," not *in* water.) Exod. xxix, 4. Probably it was a ceremonial washing of the hands and feet. (Exod. xxx, 18, 19.) Now let us review the argument. 1. Christ was baptized to fulfill the old Jewish law, which required a ceremonial consecration before he entered upon his office. 2. This consecration was performed by sprinkling, or washing the hands and feet. Therefore Christ was baptized by the application of a small quantity of water to some part of his person.

Appeal, we know, is made to the preposition translated "out of," which we have already seen (see Section III) is translated "from" in more than three hundred places in the New Testament. But granting the immersionist his "in" and "out of," what has he gained? Absolutely nothing, for "in" does not mean *under*. Jesus might have come up "out of" the water, and yet not been in more than ankle deep. In fact there are ancient paintings still preserved in the sacred edifices of Italy which represent John pouring water with his hand on the bowed head of the Saviour as they both stand in the edge of the river.

VII. THE BAPTISM OF THE THREE THOUSAND.

ACTS ii, 1-41.

That twelve persons in half a day could have immersed the three thousand converts of the day of Pentecost is an *utter impossibility*. There was neither TIME, PLACE, NOR PREPARATION for such an immense immersion.

1. There was not *time*. From Acts ii, 15-40, we judge the baptisms could not have commenced before noon. This would leave but six hours of the "same day." To immerse a single person decently, and with due solemnity, requires at least three minutes. Now if we suppose the twelve apostles to stand in water for six hours in the severe and exhaustive labor of immersion, we have then only one thousand four hundred and forty baptisms, and that is short of even half the number baptized on that day.

To say that the "seventy" assisted is being "*wise above what is written,*" and contrary to probability; for the seventy are mentioned but once in the Bible, (Luke x.) Their office was but a temporary one, and they never received a commission to baptize. Besides, it is expressly stated that Peter stood up "*with the eleven.*"

2. There was no *place*. There was no river, nor stream large enough for immersion, in or near Jerusalem. The Jordan was twenty miles away. The brook Kedron was but a winter torrent, dry nine months in the year, and always dry at the time of "wheat harvest," when the day of Pentecost occurred. The public "pools" were in the hands of those who but fifty days before had crucified the Saviour, and of course they would not suffer them to be used by the disciples of the despised Nazarene.

3. There was no *preparation* for immersion. The immense crowd came together in great confusion, not even thinking of such a thing as baptism; hence they were entirely unprepared for being dipped in water. If immersed they must have been plunged in their clothing, without a change of raiment at hand, and then left to return to their lodgings with their garments dripping with water. And what renders immersion still more unreasonable, is the fact that many of the three thousand were *strangers* from different lands and nations, who merely happened to be there at the time, and hence so much the less prepared for being plunged in water.

Thus as we advance in the investigation of these baptisms the difficulties of immersion increase,

until we are convinced that it is utterly impossible that the twelve apostles immersed three thousand unprepared candidates in one afternoon, and that in a city where water at that time of year, was husbanded with care and used with economy. But, admit our simple and clearly scriptural mode of baptism by sprinkling, and they all could have been baptized without difficulty; just as Moses consecrated a vast number of Israelites fifteen hundred years before. (Heb. ix, 19.) We regard the day of Pentecost as a remarkable fulfillment of the words of our text, "So shall he sprinkle *many nations*," for no less than fourteen different nations were represented on that occasion. (Acts ii, 3-11.)

VIII. THE BAPTISM OF THE EUNUCH.

ACTS viii, 26-39.

This case has long been regarded by immersionists as a strong argument for dipping. It is quoted on every occasion. But, admitting that the Eunuch went into the water, which, as we have shown, (see Section III,) cannot be proved from the original, there is not the faintest shadow of proof that he went under the water, but we have scripture for believing that he was sprinkled.

It puts a new phase on this story to remember

what Philip found the Eunuch reading a prophecy recorded in Isaiah lii and liii, and that we find but six verses between the passage he was reading at the moment Philip met him, and the text "so shall he sprinkle many nations." Philip, in his explanation of "the same scripture," no doubt explained the nature and design of baptism, and hence it was perfectly natural for the Eunuch to ask, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" that is, "I believe in Jesus of whom you and the text speak, and if he is to '*sprinkle many nations,*' I belong to one of those nations, what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Now is it reasonable to think that the Eunuch was immersed when he had just been reading of *sprinkling*? Besides, we must remember he was on a journey, and not a word is said of a change of raiment.

IX. THE BAPTISM OF PAUL.

ACTS ix, 18, and xxii, 16.

Here we find Paul smitten blind, and then led to Damascus, where he remained three days without eating or drinking. Then Ananias finds him in the house of Judas, and though weak, and exhausted from his long fasting, he was immediately baptized. Not a word is said of his leaving the

house or the room, or changing his raiment. There is not the slightest hint or probability that he was taken out in his feeble state and plunged in water. Ananias simply commands him to "arise and be baptized." Where is the immersion in this case ?

X. THE BAPTISM OF CORNELIUS AND HIS FRIENDS.

ACTS x, 44-48, and xl, 15, 16.

How minutely every part is recorded, but not a word or hint of leaving the house, or of plunging into water, or any thing like immersion. Peter preached in the house, the Holy Ghost fell on them all, then immediately, before there was any mention of leaving the room, Peter inquires, "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized ?" Now remember they had just been baptized with the Holy Ghost, and the form of the Spirit's baptism would indicate the mode of the water baptism. We read the "Holy Ghost *fell on them,*" was "*poured out*" on them ; how natural that the water should FALL or be Poured out. We have no idea Peter baptized them by immersion when God had just baptized them by pouring.

XI. THE BAPTISM OF LYDIA.

ACTS XVI, 13-15.

“Lydia was by a *river*,” says the immersionist. Yes, but she went there to pray, and not for the purpose of baptism. But, being by the river, she heard Paul preach, and was immediately baptized, and not a word is said of any change of raiment.

And thus it is in every case of baptism in the New Testament. Wherever men and women were converted there they were baptized. Whether by the river-side or the road-side, in a house or in a desert, in a porch of a temple or in a jail, in the city or in the wilderness, no mention is ever made of leaving the spot or of changing apparel. This is strong presumptive evidence against immersion and in favor of sprinkling or pouring.

XII. THE BAPTISM OF THE JAILER.

ACTS XVI, 30-34.

Here we find the Jailer converted in the prison, at the midnight hour and immediately baptized. Can any one believe that Paul hurried him and his family from the jail in the dark midnight to immerse them in some cold stream, and then brought them shivering back to the prison?

And more than this, when the morning came Paul refused to be "thrust out *privily*." (Verse 37.) Would such language have been honest when, during the night, he and the Jailer with the whole family had been out "privily" hunting up a place for immersion. "But is it not said he brought them out?" Yes, out of the "*inner prison*" or dungeon, but not out of the jail.

Some tell us there might have been a *bath* in the prison, but the greater probability is there was not. We do not generally find the luxury of a bath in prisons. We think it will be difficult to make this a case of immersion.

XIII. THE BAPTISM OF THE ISRAELITES IN THE RED SEA.

1 COR. X, 1, 2; EXOD. XIV, 19-22.

How the Israelites could have been immersed when marching on "DRY GROUND," with no water, before, behind, over, or under them, is a great mystery to some people. Undoubtedly the "*strong wind*" sent the spray of the sea on them, but this makes another clear case of sprinkling. The Egyptians were the only ones that went under the water that day, and they were all drowned, a clear case of immersion.

XIV. "ONE BAPTISM."

EPH. IV, 5.

Never has there been a Scripture more clearly misapplied and perverted than when this is referred to water baptism. Even Dr. Carson says, "the idea of water is not in the word." Often is the influence of the Holy Ghost called a baptism, and certainly if there be any "ONE BAPTISM" that is pre-eminent, it must be the BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST.

XV. THE SUPPOSED RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN BAPTISM AND A BURIAL.

ROM. VI, 4; COL. II, 12.

These texts figure largely in Baptist psalmody and Baptist argumentation, from a supposed allusion to immersion. But any thing more fallacious in argument, more erroneous in exposition, and more false in symbolism, could not well be imagined. A careful reading of the text with the context, will let all the water off from this stronghold and leave it high and dry. That these words have no reference to the *mode* of water baptism may be seen from the following considerations.

1. Christ was not buried by being lowered into

the ground and covered with earth as we bury in modern times. He was carried into a sepulcher or vault, which was a room in the rock. What similarity can there be between such a burial and plunging a body down into water. Where is the likeness to the "liquid grave" and "watery tomb" of which we hear so much.

2. Read the whole chapter and you will see that the apostle is speaking of a spiritual DEATH, a spiritual BURIAL, a spiritual RESURRECTION, and a spiritual LIFE. He makes a comparison: as Jesus Christ died and rose, so we die to sin and rise to holiness. Our old wicked life is dead, and not only dead but buried, after which we live a new life. And this Death, and Burial, and Resurrection is publicly manifested "by baptism" no matter in what mode. Our baptism by any form is a profession that we are living this new life. That this is a true exposition, mark the phraseology. We are baptized "INTO DEATH," not into water. It is "THE BODY OF SIN" that is buried and not the body of flesh. We are raised to "NEWNESS OF LIFE," not out of water.

3. If we take the "burial" in a literal sense instead of a spiritual, then what becomes of the other figures of "Planting," (Rom. vi, 5,) "Crucifixion," (Rom. vi, 6,) and "Circumcision," (Col.

ii, 11, 13.) If one is literal, so are the others; but the truth is, *all are spiritual.*

In view of these considerations, it is no wonder that the Rev. Mr. Robinson, a Baptist historian, and the Rev. Mr. Judson, a Baptist missionary, both admit that this passage has no reference to the MODE of baptism.

Here we pause in this discussion and review the ground. We honestly think we have clearly shown the following facts, namely: 1. The argument from church-history is so connected with superstitions that it is poor authority on either side. 2. The Greek verb translated *baptized* is as good authority for sprinkling as for immersion. 3. The Greek prepositions translated *in, into, out of,* are translated *to, at, from, by, with,* etc., scores and hundreds of times in the New Testament. 4. Water baptism should agree in form with the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and this is always by AFFUSION and never by immersion. 5. John could not have immersed the vast multitudes that came to his baptism. The "much water" spoken of was for other purposes than of immersion. 6. Christ's baptism was a *priestly consecration* administered by sprinkling. 7. The twelve apostles could not possibly have immersed the three

thousand on the day of Pentecost. They had neither *time*, nor *place*, nor *preparation*. 8. The Eunuch had just been reading of *sprinkling* when he asked Philip for baptism, hence was sprinkled. 9. In the case of Saul, there is not the slightest hint or probability that he was taken from the house when weak and exhausted with three days' fasting and plunged into water. 10. Cornelius had just been baptized with the Holy Ghost by *pouring*, hence we believe he was baptized with water by the same mode. 11. Lydia's baptism, like all others in the New Testament, was on the spot where she was converted, and without a change of raiment. 12. The Jailer's baptism was in a prison and at midnight, a hard time and place for immersion. 13. The Israelites were baptized in the Red Sea, but it was on "dry ground," with no water before, behind, over, or under them. 14. The "one baptism" of Eph. iv, 5, is the baptism of the Holy Ghost. 15. The "Liquid Grave" and "Watery Tomb" of which we hear so much is found to be so dry that at least two Baptist writers have admitted there was no water there; and the "burial" with Christ is found to be a burial of the "Body of sin."

SERIOUS OBJECTIONS TO IMMERSION.

1. *There are difficulties attending the administration of baptism by immersion which render it extremely inconvenient, and in many cases absolutely impossible.*

The religion of Christ is designed to embrace the whole world; hence baptism should be adapted to the condition and circumstances of all times and places and persons. But immersion is not so adapted.

1. It cannot be administered to the thousands who find Christ on a death-bed. 2. It is impossible in the case of one who is confined in chains and forbidden by law to leave his cell. 3. It is impracticable in besieged cities, where thousands are shut in for months with a limited supply of water. 4. It cannot be administered by many aged and feeble ministers. 5. It is not safe in the case of one who is subject to heart disease. 6. It is not adapted to a time of drought, like that which took place in Palestine in the days of Ahab. 7. It is not adapted to dry, parched, and desert countries, such as Arabia or parts of Africa, where streams of water are rare, and often unknown, for many miles around. 8. It is not only difficult, but dangerous in frozen regions, such as

Iceland, Greenland, Lapland, Labrador, and the northern parts of Sweden, Norway, Russia, and Siberia. In these lands the winter lasts nine months of the year, and the lakes and rivers are frozen many feet deep. Woodbridge, in his *Universal Geography*, says of these regions, "During the winter the inhabitants remain crowded together in small huts. If the cold air suddenly enters the house, the vapors fall in a shower of snow. Every part of the body must be covered in going out or it is instantly frozen. The air when breathed seems to pierce the lungs. The cup often freezes to the lips if it be touched in drinking." Can it be that our heavenly Father requires immersion of all the millions who live in those regions of terrible cold? No, no! Christ says, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light," and so they are if we follow the text and "*sprinkle many nations.*"

2. *Immersion is not calculated to compose the mind.*

It is common for persons to go down into the water trembling, shivering, sighing, and agitated; the heart palpitating, the countenance pale, and the breath hurried. Sometimes fainting takes place in the very act of immersion. And then

when the candidate comes up out of the water it is "not in the serene dignity of a newly consecrated disciple, but in *spasms for breath.*" All this disturbs devotion, and unfits the mind for the calm performance of a religious rite. We think God has chosen a more simple and easy way for baptism.

3. *Instances not a few are known where persons have greatly injured their health, and even lost their lives, by being plunged in cold water in immersion.*

Dr. Hibbard, in his work on baptism, relates an instance of a young lady who was immersed one cold day in winter. He says: "While the shivering group stood upon the frost-bound shore, her slender form, exposed to the keen arctic winds, was let down through the ice into the cold liquid element below. She afterward stood upon the shore clad in her icy garments while several more were immersed; and then, with a body benumbed with cold, and quaking under the effects of such unnatural treatment, she was conveyed to her chamber, whence, after a few weeks' rapid decline, she was removed in a hearse to the lonely domicil of the dead. Her friends regarded her death as the consequence of her exposure at baptism."

SPRINKLING, which we regard as the true Bible mode of baptism, is not liable to the objections. It is suited to all times, places, seasons, and climates. It can be performed in bleak winter as well as in mild summer. It is always easy, safe, and practicable. It is suited to the aged, feeble, sick, and dying. It can always be administered in God's house, the very place dedicated to the administration of God's ordinances.

Finally, let us all remember that outward signs and emblems are useless unless we have the inward reality. Water baptism availeth nothing without the new heart. God grant that we may all be baptized with the illuminating, comforting, sanctifying influence of the Holy Ghost.

THE END