

F A I T H

AND

B A P T I S M :

ILLUSTRATED FROM THE BIBLE.

YEA, LET GOD BE TRUE, BUT EVERY MAN A LIAR.

Romans, iii : 4.

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PREFACE.

I OFFER to the public this little treatise, not in a spirit of controversy, but in an earnest desire for the manifestation of Truth, on a subject of transcendent interest to every rational being. I claim no originality for the views it contains; in fact I have endeavoured to make a compilation of things that are old, rather than to elaborate things that are new. I have prepared it with my own hands, and published it at my own expense: but should it be instrumental in awakening in one child of Adam, an interest that shall result in his final salvation, I shall be compensated many hundred fold.

If by the presentation of what appears to me to be clear and unequivocal Truth, the feelings of any honest mind should be wounded, I sincerely regret it; even though it should be caused solely by their own errors and prejudices. But if I have made one unkind reflection, or one unpleasant remark not absolutely necessary to the end in view, I have erred unintentionally and beg pardon of every such party thereby aggrieved. I question no man's motive, no man's sincerity. If God's word admitted for a moment that the sincere belief of error could result in the attainment of Eternal Life, I should have spared myself this free-will-offering. But the Apostle says: "He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: *hereby know we that we are in him.*"—1 John, ii. 4.

The views presented are, I firmly believe, in entire accordance with God's word; which the reader will perceive is the only authority, the *only arbiter* that I acknowledge. If any person who differs with me should wish, in a desire after Truth, and in a spirit of courtesy to discuss them, I will meet him in any paper that will grant us full and equal privileges: or in my public ministration of the word, I will respectfully consider and answer any objections that may be handed me in writing, giving due notice of the same. And if I cannot sustain from God's word the doctrine questioned, I can and will adopt the only Christian alternative, acknowledge my error. I seek truth rather than victory, for I have no system to build up, but am humbly waiting on God's appointed means,

even his revealed will, and will heartily thank any man for every new light he may present me from the sacred volume; for most clearly am I convinced that "the Gospel of Christ" is "God's power unto salvation to every one that believeth."—Rom. i. 16.

It is by many supposed impossible for a Church to exist in harmony, with no other rule than the word of God: and that human by-laws are necessary. This is an error, and the prolific source of all error. If the apostolic laws be not enforced: if fleshly considerations, sympathies and partialities postpone the apostolic teaching to the gratification of fleshly feelings; there will be disorder and every evil work, terminating perhaps in the triumph of presumptuous ignorance. But if the word of God shall have free course and be gloried; as in the Master's personal ministry, so now, it will thoroughly purge his floor. And whilst it drives out the chaff of self-conceit, self-glorification, canting hypocrisy, and listless indifference; it will shed around the wheat the preserving influence of single-hearted devotion and love to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The experiment of a Church governed solely by the laws of the Lord Jesus Christ, is now in progress, and those interested in such a matter are respectfully invited to visit their humble Meeting House in North-street; not for a single visit, for that would not afford sufficient opportunity to judge: but for a few successive meetings, and they will perhaps be induced to believe, that he who died for his people; who redeemed them with his own precious blood, has left them also the instructions necessary to fit and prepare them for the realms above, even "all things that pertain unto life and godliness." Our visitors will, it is true, see a very small body; for though as the Master predicted, but few are willing to "enter in at the strait gate," the number is even considerably less than are contented to continue "on the narrow way that leadeth unto life." But if "when the King of Kings comes," it shall appear that we have been faithful to his laws; and rejoiced only in his truth; we shall lose nothing by the fact that our fidelity to his word and his institutions thinned our numbers; and drew upon us the enmity and slander of those who preferred the ebullitions of human presumption, to that wisdom which cometh from above, which "is *first pure then peaceable.*"

Baltimore, March 17th, 1841.

R. L.

FAITH AND BAPTISM.

Of every tree of the Garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for on the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die, (become mortal.)—*Genesis*, ii. 16 & 17.

Go ye into all the world, and preach (proclaim) the Gospel (Glad Tidings) to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.—*Mark*, xvi. 15 & 16.

THE Bible as a whole is acknowledged as a divine revelation by all who profess Christianity. It is only in part received as such by that chosen people, to whose custody the old Testament was committed; and who were constituted the primitive guardians of its purity. Whilst the descendants of Abraham acknowledge with unhesitating assent, the Law and the Prophets as the manifestation of God's Will, they repudiate the new Testament, and thus furnish the strongest proof that there could be no collusion between the Christian and the Jew: it being absolutely necessary to the justification of Israel in his past conduct and in his present position, that Jesus of Nazareth be an Impostor.

If under such circumstances it can be clearly shown, that throughout the old and new Testaments, there breathes one unchanging spirit, exhibiting the same peculiar distinctive attributes, whether speaking in the Garden of Eden, on the mountain of Sinai, on the Cross of Calvary, or in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost; it will afford to every candid mind of Jew or Gentile, the strongest proof, that the two Covenants emanated from the same source. And that the same Word, that gave light and form to the Material World, became incarnate, in order to save from Eternal Death, and fit for Everlasting Life the spiritual World.

As all in Adam die, and all in Christ are made alive, I have placed in contrast at the beginning, the Law which entailed the penalty of death on its violator, with the proclamation of Mercy, which rescues its recipients from the power of that penalty, and constitutes them children of God and heirs through Christ. The character of the first is not moral but positive. There was no merit in obeying it, except as it was God's commandment: there was no sin in breaking it, except as a transgression of his law. Whilst obedience could awaken in the heart of Adam no feeling allied to pride or vanity, it effectually exhibited his faith and homage, and preserved to himself a conscience void of offence. It was an efficient test evincing in its simplicity that it never could have originated in a human mind. Man in the original purity of his creation could not be a responsible being unless he had power to err: and without responsibility he could no more have glorified his Maker, than could the Earth which he inhabited, or the dust of which he was formed: where there is no law there can be neither transgression nor responsibility. When first animated by the breath of his Creator, man stood before Him rejoicing in conscious innocence, and looking to his Heavenly Parent with confidence and love. What precept asserting at once the prerogative of the Creator, and the entire dependence of the creature is most suitable to their relative position? Human wisdom would have suggested many grateful to the pride of man, without remembering, that "If thou be righteous thou givest nought to Him: thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art; and thy righteousness may profit the son of man," Job, xxxv. 7; but human wisdom would never have aspired to the moral sublimity of that single precept; obedience to which secured to the Creator all the homage and fealty that can be realized in a human bosom, whilst it preserved to the creature, all that child-like docility, without which the second Adam, the Lord Jesus, has declared that no man can receive the kingdom of God.

It seems thus manifest that God on the very threshold of his revelation, did declare that man's homage could only be acceptably rendered by obedience to a positive precept; the merit of which consisted solely in the fact that it was God's command, and the inducement to obey which sprung only from that humble faith which gives all glory to Him: this it will be readily perceived is what the Holy Spirit means by "the obedience of faith." Adam's dereliction shows the converse—the disobedience of unbelief. "Thou shalt not surely die," said the Serpent, and Eve in the exercise of her own wisdom, cast away her faith in God. An act so simple, she thought, could not be attended by such deleterious results, for "the Tree was good for food, was pleasant to the eyes, and to be desired to make one wise"—therefore she with her partner ate of the forbidden fruit, and stood guilty before the Lord. That voice, which had heretofore filled their hearts with delight, and to meet which they formerly hastened joyfully, now thrills their bosoms with new emotions, and the hapless pair are made to experience the novel and torturing sensations of shame and fear. Yet it is for no act of moral turpitude they fly and hide: the act in itself was trivial and sinless. Their crime consisted in their disobedience, their unbelief: its result was conscious guilt, and the consequent loss of all that filial confidence with which they had hitherto drawn nigh to their Father and their God.

It also appears from these facts, that man, in his primitive purity, needed no moral Law. That as Paul says, 1 Timothy, i. 9, "The law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient;" but that he who waits upon the Lord and rejoices in his approbation, will ever follow that which is true and lovely without the necessity of penal sanctions. But when Fear usurps the place of perfect love, and conscious disobedience makes him tremble before Him, to whom he had hitherto looked with filial confidence, man has become a creature of new emotions, sway-

ed by new feelings, and must be operated on by new motives : and in proportion as he recedes from God, his wickedness increases, until, as recorded in Genesis, vi. 5, "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart be only evil continually." Such had the world become, when Jehovah overwhelmed its inhabitants with the waters of the Deluge, saving only those who were in the Ark of his Covenant : and such had the world become again, when He gave his only begotten Son, that Spiritual Ark, that whosoever shall be found *in him*, might not perish but have everlasting life. For Malachi declares at the close of his prophecy, that it was necessary to send him or to "smite the earth with a curse."

The object of his mission is declared by the illustrious Messenger himself: Luke, xxiv. 46, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance [reformation] and remission of sins be preached [proclaimed] in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." The words in brackets in all the preceding quotations from the New Testament, are translations given by Dr. George Campbell of Aberdeen, one of the most learned and distinguished Ministers of the Presbyterian Church. These translations throw much light on the divine plan of salvation, and bear within themselves the strongest proof of their correctness: for it is evident that mere sorrow for sin, the meaning generally attributed to repentance, would avail nothing towards obtaining a Christian character without reformation; neither would a man ever be induced to reform without first repenting of his past course. The import of the word preach is established by the highest authority: the Lord mentions, Matt. xii. 41, "the preaching of Jonah," and the history of the Prophet shows that he simply proclaimed one fact, "the destruction of Nineveh in forty days," thus confirming the Doctor's statement, that the original word means to "cry, publish or proclaim authoritatively or by commission from another."

The outline and object of salvation is fully set forth in the following quotations: "The Grace (favor) of God, that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, *teaching* us, that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly *in this present world*; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works."—Titus ii. 11. Thus God's grace brings salvation, remission of past sins, and teaches the pardoned to live thereafter in all purity, looking in all hope for their second or eternal salvation. This first salvation is said in the same Epistle, iii. 5, to be accomplished, not by our own works, but "by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost": the former being of the free grace of God agreeably to the proclamation; the second requiring our conformity to the instructions delivered in the letters of the Apostles: the whole presenting a literal commentary on the commission as given in Matth. xxviii. 19: "Go ye therefore and teach [convert] all nations, baptising them in (into) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; *teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you*: and lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world, [conclusion of this state,] Amen." They were first to convert the nations to Christianity, and then teach them christian duties: the proclamation is also declared to be in force until the close of this dispensation. Therefore until that period shall arrive, every man who returns to God, in obedience to this proclamation, has the pledged word of the Lord for the fulfilment of all its promises, and thus puts his trust in him that is mighty to save, even the Lord Jesus.

Every man therefore that returns to God, is first pardoned and then taught. To pardon is virtually to restore to favor, and through it, "we receive the adoption of sons," Galatians

iv. 5, and the effect of this pardon is to restore to us a conscience void of offence towards God, with that humble confidence in Him, enjoyed by our progenitor before he disobeyed him. We are therefore exhorted through faith in our High Priest "to draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."—Hebrews, x. 22.

In the act of obedience (baptism) whereby the believing sinner returns to the favor of God, purified from all his past sins, there are the same peculiarities that distinguish the law violated in the Garden of Eden. It is not a moral but a positive precept. There is no virtue in the water, no merit in the action. It can awaken in the heart of the believer no feeling of pride. Trivial in itself, all its interest springs from the fact that God has attached to it his promise of pardon: It is thus in "the obedience of Faith" that the penitent sinner exhibits that child-like docility necessary to receive the kingdom of Heaven, and "is delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son." And thus mankind are saved by grace, through faith.

Paul has contrasted the two actions, the eating of the forbidden fruit and baptism, Rom. v. 18. Professor Stuart of Andover translates this verse, "therefore, as by one offence (sentence came) upon all men unto condemnation, so by one righteousness (sentence came) upon all men unto justification of life": But whilst the Professor acknowledges that the original requires this translation and contrast, "the one offence and the one righteousness," or act of justification, he makes the latter "refer more specifically to his (the Saviour's) great act of obedience unto death." This is making sad havoc with revelation: for if one single act availed to obtain justification for man, all his other sufferings were supererogatory: but Paul says that he was made perfect by sufferings, and that having been tempted, he is able

to succour them that are tempted." Moreover his birth, his life, his death, his resurrection and his ascension are all testified by his witnesses: "that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, and that believing, we might have life through his name," John xx. 31. If the Professor be right, the Apostle repeats without any supposable reason in three consecutive sentences the same identical fact; and also asserts in the verse in question, "that sentence came upon *all men* unto justification of life;" which is contrary to fact, for Jesus became the author of eternal salvation, unto *all* them that *obey* him," Heb. v. 9. But every difficulty vanishes, when it is seen that this one act of justification is baptism for the remission of sins. It obviates an unmeaning tautology: it accords with the universality of the justification, and sheds light on the whole argument.

Paul had stated in the preceding verses, that sin is not accounted of where there is no law; that the judgment of death came upon all men for *one* offence, but the free gift is unto justification from *many* offences, (all our past sins;) and that as by one act (in Eden) condemnation came upon us all, so by one act (baptism) this justification from many offences comes upon us all. That the former comes through Adam, the latter through the Lord Jesus: that the Law was introduced in order that sin might abound, but though offences abounded, yet grace, this justification from many offences, superabounded. It is in the contemplation of this free abundant grace, that the apostle seems to fear that its abundance, its freeness, and the fact that it was glorified by the numerous offences which it blotted out, should induce the impression that believers might continue in sin. In reply to his own question he denies the inference, and disproves it by reference to the object and *form* of the one act, through which they had been justified, even their baptism. He asks, how shall those who are dead to sin, live any longer therein? He tells them that in the watery grave, symbolic of the burial of the Lord, they had washed away their

sins, and had risen in the likeness of his resurrection ; thus declaring that as Christ had died to the world when he was placed in the earthly tomb, so mankind are bound to turn from sin, die to it, or reform, ere they descend into the watery grave ; and then as they emerge from that grave, cleansed from all their past sins, through faith in the truth of his word, they become a striking symbol of his resurrection, for they arise new creatures, no longer “ dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world,” “ but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord :” no longer “ strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world, but made nigh by the blood of Christ, and built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.” These new relations imperatively require newness of life : You were the servants of sin, but have become the servants of righteousness, for, says the Apostle, Rom. vi. 17, “ you have obeyed from the heart (understandingly) that *form* of doctrine which was delivered to you, being then made free from sin.” Baptism is here called the form of doctrine in consistency with the important events it symbolizes, and in harmony with the gospel that this same Apostle preached, I. Cor. xv. 1, “ For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures ; and that he was buried, and that he rose again according to the scriptures.”

It thus appears, that Baptism restores to the believer that conscience void of offence, which Adam possessed before his disobedience ; that this blessing results no more from the water, than the curse flowed from the fruit of the tree. That to obtain the blessing we must exercise that humble confidence in God, the want of which brought the curse upon Adam and all his race. The elements of the two covenants therefore exhibit the impress of the same mind, requiring of those to whom they were and are respectively offered, the

same child-like docility and cheerful obedience, in order to avail of their respective benefits.

This principle of docile obedience is prominently enforced in all God's dealings with the sons of men, under the old and new Covenants, as will appear in the course of our further progress. For faith in God means conformity to his positive commands and institutions: and so long as man thus seeks the favor of God, he will enjoy that peace, and evince that purity of life, which must ever spring from such an ennobling employment. The tree is made good, and then it results as the law of necessity that the fruit must be good also.

This principle in God's moral universe is like that of gravity in his natural universe. Properly apprehended, they display harmony and beauty in both systems, whilst without such apprehension, there will appear, at least in the former, darkness and chaos, or a gloomy fatalism. To illustrate: God says to Moses, Exodus, xxxiii. 19, "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy." If this declaration be isolated and regarded without reference to the fact, that he had previously made known how man could obtain his mercy, it will appear an arbitrary decree, that makes man irresponsible and God unjust. But when taken in connection with his declaration at the 33d verse of the previous chapter, "Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book," and with 30th Deuteronomy, in which by Moses, he tells Israel, that he has set before them "life and good, death and evil," and exhorts them to choose life: it appears evidently a developement of the same principle exhibited in his covenant with Adam; an assertion of his own just sovereignty. For it simply asserts that if man will not submit himself to God in obedience to his appointments, he shall not taste of his favor. For, says Jehovah, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." This cardinal principle is avowed, I. Pet. ii. 7, "Unto you therefore who believe

he is precious: but unto them who be *disobedient*, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being *disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed.*" It is therefore the decree of Jehovah, that the disobedient, who, like the Scribes and Pharisees, "going about to establish their own righteousness did not *submit themselves* unto the righteousness [justification] of God," shall stumble and be hardened by those very mercies, which humbly received, would have constituted them the objects of his present favor, and heirs of future glory. As He says by Isaiah, i. 9, "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel ye shall be devoured with the sword, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Thus it ever was and ever will be, that God's word is a pillar of light to the believer, but clouds and darkness to the disobedient.

CHAPTER II.

God's sovereignty and Man's obedience manifested in positive precepts and ordinances pervade the sacred record, and will be best understood in the examples it presents. The bible instructs by facts; unlike most, if not all other histories, it displays men's actions, not their motives, and the character of its various subjects is learned from their deeds, and not from the imagination of a historian who may present a hero or a driveller, a reprobate or a saint, according to the promptings of his own fancy or partiality. He who knows the depths and shallows of the human heart, neither justifies nor condemns one single individual for his intentions or his feelings throughout the sacred volume. "By their fruits you shall know them," is the prominent feature of the Divine history, as well as the positive declaration of the Lord Jesus, Matt. vii. 20. Paul also asserts, Rom. ii. 6, that God "will render to every man according to his *deeds*: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life. But to them that are contentious, and do not *obey* the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil."

Cain and Abel, as related in 4th Genesis, presented offerings to the Lord: the former was rejected, the latter accepted. It matters not to this argument, whether God had appointed the blood of a victim as the means of propitiation; and that Cain, conceived that the fruits of the Earth ought to be just as acceptable; though this view seems countenanced by Paul saying, Heb. xi. 4, that the sacrifice of Abel was more excellent than Cain's, through faith: it is a fact that Abel is accepted, and Cain condemned for their conduct in a positive institution. In a work entitled "Instruc-

tion in the Mosaic Religion," translated from the German by Mr. "Isaac Leeser, Reader to the Portuguese Jewish Congregation, Philadelphia," there is a translation of the 7th verse of this chapter, which renders beautifully clear a passage which is unintelligible in the common version. God says to Cain—"Behold if thou actest well, thou canst raise thy eyes; but if thou dost not act well, sin will rest at the door; unto thee is its desire, but thou canst rule over it."

In 6th Genesis God directs Noah to build the Ark, and "thus did Noah," says the record at the 22d verse, "according to all that God commanded him so did he." Paul recognizes Noah's faith in this act of obedience, Heb. xi. 7—and in I. Peter, iii. 21, it is said that the Ark and Flood constitute a type of baptism: they certainly correspond in their prominent features. The ark was God's appointed means of safety. Noah manifested his faith by building and taking refuge in it: the waters which destroyed a guilty world bore aloft the ark with its inmates in safety. And when Noah emerged from the instrument of safety, he rejoiced in a good conscience, resulting from the evident display of God's favor in his preservation amid the destruction of a guilty world. Baptism is the divine appointment for the remission of sins; through faith in that appointment the believer goes down into its waters, which like those of the Deluge, destroy guilt, wash away his sins. Purged by God's grace from all his past sins, he emerges from his watery grave with a good conscience, the natural result of his faith in the word of the Lord; and is thus translated from the *condemned* world into the kingdom of God's own Son.

In 12th Genesis, Abram is called: Paul says, Heb. xi. 8, that by faith "he obeyed, and went out not knowing whether he went." But the father of the Faithful must show amid severest trials his title to this illustrious appellation, that future ages might in view of Faith's triumph and reward, glorify the God of Abraham. He is commanded to offer up "his only begotten son, of whom it was said that in

Isaac shall thy seed be called." The Patriarch knew the voice of God, and without a murmur, or a hesitating doubt, he prepares wood for the burnt offering; and with the victim wends his way to the land of Moriah. He disputes not the command; he laments not the victim. For, says Paul, Heb. xi. 19, "he accounted that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." He doubted not God's power, and he trusted in God's truth. The promise was in Isaac as yet only a barren stem, and wherefore should he fear; for in his own emphatic language, "shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" But, says some cavilling sceptic, if Abraham was thus thoroughly convinced that God's promise in Isaac must be fulfilled, there was no merit in his obedience. True, and in the objection is contrasted at once the presumption of man's pride, and the faith of the humble. Man is entitled to no merit for believing God; to disbelieve him is an outrage offered to the divine Majesty, in violation of man's own reason: for the last he deserves punishment, and it is only the free favor of God that considers the first, not merit, but justification. Thus argues Paul, Rom. iv. 2 & 3, that Abraham was not justified by works, but that he "believed God and that it was counted to him for righteousness." And the justification by works spoken of, James ii. 21, regards them only as a manifestation of his faith; for, says the Apostle, "by works was faith made perfect." This is Faith: "giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able also to perform," Rom. iv. 21. It has nothing in common with excitement or enthusiasm, but results from a due knowledge, and rational appreciation of Jehovah's attributes, as revealed by himself, and is the natural associate of sound judgment and true philosophy. It is to such faith that the exhortation is addressed, I. Peter, iii. 15, "sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (reverence.)

By faith Israel passed through the Red Sea as by dry land,

Heb. xi. 29, "and were baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea," I. Cor. x. 2. In this last chapter Paul seems afraid lest the church should think that baptism would not only blot out their past sins, but avail to shield them from the consequences of subsequent offences. In order to expose this fatal error, he reminds them that though their fathers were baptised unto Moses, and through the waters of the Red Sea escaped from the Egyptians, yet when they turned to idolatry, murmured and tempted God; notwithstanding their previous deliverance, they fell in the wilderness as examples for our admonition; therefore the Christian should be warned and not presume on past mercy: for, says the Apostle, "let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." The same warning is given, II. Peter, ii. 20, "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse than the beginning." The warning and argument of Paul shows the great value attached to Baptism by the primitive churches. How happily also do the circumstances and deliverance of Israel on this occasion, coincide with Christian baptism! Before Israel is the Red Sea, behind are the hostile Egyptians. Helpless and hemmed in, the former can find no way of escape; the Lord only can save them. "Why criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward." Nothing but faith in God's word could make Israel expect safety from plunging into the sea: Paul says they were baptised in the cloud and in the sea; both were necessary to immerse them, and therefore the Apostle's particularity in mentioning both when speaking of their immersion; and the waters through which they passed safely, destroy their pursuing enemies.

Thus as Israel of yore, stands now the believing sinner: dead in trespasses and sins, he is utterly helpless: his enemies are all around him, and he can find no escape. Prayer is no privilege of his: for, says Isaiah, lix. 2, "your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his

face from you, that he *will not hear.*" But the proclamation of mercy commands him to go forward, and through faith in the word of the Lord, destroy in the waters of baptism his enemies, even those sins "which had separated between him and his God," and as he rises from the waters thus purified, he can join in Israel's song of triumph, "The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation."

In the 10th chap. Leviticus is recorded the fate of Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron. Consecrated at the same time with their father, Priests to the Lord; through carelessness or thoughtlessness they presented in the sanctuary strange fire, fire which he had not commanded; and fall the victims of their own disobedience. In the presence of their lifeless bodies, Moses says to the bereaved father: "This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified." Therefore to neglect or change in any particular, an ordinance of Jehovah, is to fail to sanctify and glorify him. The Lord Jesus says, Luke vii. 29, "and all the people that heard, and the publicans justified [honoured] God, being baptised with the baptism of John."

In Numbers, xx. 12, God says to his favored servant Moses (and Aaron), "Because ye believed me not to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the Land which I have given them." Moses is accused of unbelief because instead of speaking to the rock agreeably to God's command, he smote it twice. The water flowed abundantly, and the congregation drank; but the deviation from the letter of his command was denounced as unbelief, by "Him who seeth not as man seeth, and is no respecter of persons."

This is that Moses who left the honors and ease of Pharaoh's court, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," who with inflexible integrity and disinterestedness upheld the honor of God, and watched over the welfare of the people;

and throughout his various trials seems to have offended only in this single instance, yet he is called to die : to relinquish the distinguished honor of conducting into the promised land, those whom he had borne as it were in his bosom through so many vicissitudes to its very borders ; not because of infirmity or decay, “ for his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated,” but because he had not rendered literal obedience to a positive precept. He questions not the justice or the propriety of his sentence, but urges on the people a strict obedience to the very letter of God’s law—“ What thing soever I command you, observe to do it ; thou shalt not add thereto nor diminish from it,” Deut. xii. 32. In the succeeding chapter he tells Israel that not even a wonder or miracle can excuse their following a Prophet away from the Lord : for such miracle would be only a trial from the Lord ; and that they “ must walk after the Lord their God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and serve him and cleave unto him.” In 30th Deut. how earnestly he urges Israel with his last words to turn in every trouble and distress to the Lord ! declaring that if they and their children will obey his voice, with all their heart and with all their soul in turning to him, that *then* he will gather and bless them, and circumcise their hearts to love the Lord their God that they may live. Moses here distinctly asserts that love to God, “ circumcision of heart,” is the *result* of obedience ; and also insists that this obedience is not hidden from them, neither far off : that they needed no one to ascend to Heaven, nor to travel beyond sea to bring it to them ; (no Rabbi to expound it, no human wisdom to adorn it ; no human traditions to illustrate or rather to mystify it.) For, says Moses, “ the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest *do it.*” “ And the righteousness of faith speaketh on this wise,” says Paul, 10th Rom. quoting this last passage from Moses, and adding, “ that it is the word of faith that we proclaim : that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

This doctrine is further illustrated in the actions and fortunes of Saul and David. Separate those two kings from the relation they respectively bore to the God of Israel, and judge them by their merits according to any human standard, and Saul will most probably find most grace in the judgment of man. He lost God's favor not for what mankind would call immorality and vice; for in his whole career there is no act of moral baseness, such as the adultery with Bathsheba, and the murder of the true-hearted Uriah. But because he perverted and disobeyed God's positive Institutions and commandments. In I. Samuel, xiii. 13, the Prophet tells Saul how foolishly he had acted, and consequently the kingdom, which would otherwise have been established with him, should now pass from him. The offence consisted in Saul's offering a burnt offering contrary to God's appointment. In I. Samuel, xv. Saul is ordered to smite Amalek, and to leave nothing alive of him or his. He complied, *except only* that he spared the king, and the best of the sheep and the oxen; intending to sacrifice these last to the Lord. In consequence of this deviation, the Lord says at the 11th verse, "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king, for he hath turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments." And at the 22d verse, Samuel tells Saul, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams, for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry." And further adds, that the Lord had rejected him, and given the Kingdom to a neighbor that was better than he. In I. Samuel, xiii. 14, Saul is told, "But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart." Therefore he is a man after the Lord's heart, who obeys his commands without presuming to add to, or take from them in any respect: and it was this docility that commended David to the favor of God.

This characteristic is prominent in the conduct of David; at least up to the time that the historian says that "he dwelt in the city of David, and went on and grew great." He never

engaged in any enterprise without first asking counsel of the Lord, nor did he ever deviate from that counsel in the least degree. His word and his deeds were in unison, both declaring "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." David was therefore a man after God's own heart, because he would, as the Ruler of his people Israel, fulfil all God's will; so says Paul, Acts xiii. 22.

But even David could in the midst of prosperity, and royal grandeur, forget God: as, with frail humanity in every age, the blessings of Heaven awakened more pride than gratitude in him. In II. Samuel, vi., and I. Chron. xiii. and xv. chapters, will be found recorded the conduct of the king in his first deviation from God's positive precept. He determined to bring to Jerusalem the Ark of the Lord. The law had (4th Numbers) prescribed the manner in which the ark should be carried; how covered; and had denounced the penalty of death to any one who touched the sacred symbol, unless he was a Priest of the house of Aaron. To none of these directions does David appear to have given heed, though he was loud in his *professions*; for it is said "David and all Israel played before God with all their might and with singing and with harps"—but what availed this display of worship and reverence according to *their own will!*—this crying "Lord, Lord," whilst they did not the things which he had commanded them. The Ark was placed not as the law required, on the shoulders of the Levites, but on a new car, no doubt built and adorned with royal magnificence. The oxen stumbled, and the unhappy Uzzah put forth his hand to sustain the Ark of God's covenant; and thus incurred the penalty and died the victim of God's violated law. The death of Uzzah resulted from the neglect of the command that the Levites should bear the Ark: for on their shoulders Uzzah would not have feared for its safety, nor consequently have profaned its sanctity: and in the circumstances is presented an illustration of the wisdom and necessity of attending to God's most minute directions. For it will always

be found, that wherever or whenever the duties which God requires of man become perplexed or unintelligible; it will arise from some change made by man in God's order; some inattention to matters deemed by his presumption unworthy of that respectful obedience which ought to be ever rendered to every direction that emanates from Eternal Truth. It is by such neglect, man causes his own difficulty, and having thus placed himself in a false position, he draws upon his own wisdom for extrication and direction: each succeeding effort only serves to increase his perplexities, and he too frequently takes refuge in an ignorant mysticism or a gloomy unbelief.

But David does not humble himself at this display of God's displeasure: frightened but not humbled, he turns away from the ark, and like too many of the present day, is not only incensed that his imaginations are not preferred to God's behests, but endeavors to cast the blame of his own delinquency on God himself, saying "How shall I bring the ark of God home to me?" But when he hears that the deserted ark is diffusing blessings through the house of Obededom, his humility and better reason return to him, and he clearly perceives "how to bring home the ark of God." He now remembers what he ought never to have forgotten—"None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the Lord chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him forever." And now, his pride all cast away, clothed in white linen, and girded with a linen ephod, the mighty monarch and distinguished warrior, in the presence of all his people, dances before the ark. When reproached for this humiliation by his wife; Saul's daughter; he evinces no mortification. His heart now right in the sight of God, readily and cheerfully responds—"It was before the Lord who chose me before thy father and before all his house."

That dark and mournful crime so vividly depicted in the parable of Nathan, which David committed, when, in the midst of boundless prosperity, he felt power and forgot right, and "despised the commandment of the Lord to do evil in his

sight," has been often quoted by scèptic and believer to the injury of the Truth. The former sneers at the man after God's own heart, without reflecting that it is only as a Ruler of Israel, in contrast with Saul, that the Divine Word thus honors him; and without seeming aware of the fact that the Bible in its historic parts, represents men as they are, not as they ought to be. If the annals of Israel had been written under human influence, either this crime of David would not have been spread upon the record; or would have been so dilated on, as to shew him altogether unworthy and vile; according as the author favored the Son of Jesse or the family of Saul. But Eternal Truth makes known in this event the all-important fact, that man is never secure from guilt, but especially when surrounded by worldly wealth and worldly honors, save when "his delight is in the Law of the Lord; and in his Law he doth meditate day and night."

On the other hand, professors have sometimes sought in the sins of David, some palliation for their own, and thus, (in the language of Peter,) "wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction." They seem not to have read the parable of the Prophet, nor his cutting rebuke, nor the punishment denounced against the royal criminal. Surely when they see him a fugitive from his own palace, cursed by him of Benjamin, ruthlessly pursued by his son, his affections outraged, his honors trampled on, and his glory departed, instead of drawing from it comfort amid their own misdeeds, it should rouse them to exertion—"to keep under their bodies, and bring them into subjection; lest that by any means they should be cast-aways." I Cor. ix: 27.

The error of Moses, the guilt of David, the idolatry of Solomon, the treachery of Judas, the denial of Peter, are all recorded as warnings of human frailty—to show the folly of trusting in an arm of flesh, and the absolute necessity of laying help on Him who is mighty to save: even that great High Priest "who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." These errors in

the wisest and the best men, also show why the Lord Jesus so strictly urged upon his disciples to call no man on earth Master [Leader], but to look directly to himself. And this is what Paul calls the glorious liberty of the children of God, (Rom. viii. 21,) and in which he exhorts the Galatians, v. 1, "to stand fast." Wherefore the believer who follows a human leader sells a far nobler birth-right than was bartered by the reckless Esau, and for a price beneath the value of a mess of pottage; even the smile of a man "whose breath is in his nostrils." The following passages establish this fact:

"All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field."—*Isaiah*, xl. 6.

"Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm."—*Jeremiah*, xvii. 5.

"Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord."—*Jeremiah*, ix. 23.

CHAPTER III.

A CAREFUL examination of the old Testament will show that the form or outline of Messiah's kingdom is as clearly typified and predicted as his blessed advent. In Heb. x. 1, it is said that the law had a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image: this shadow will be found, as Paul intimates, in the form of the tabernacle worship, and the reason thus manifested, why the unconscious Moses was so strictly charged to make all things according to the pattern showed him in the Mount. From Exodus, xxv. onward, there are given the details which show the following divinely appointed order. The court of the Tabernacle was accessible to all, and the first object at its entrance was the altar of sacrifice; in its position, freedom of access and atoning virtue, shadowing forth the cross of Calvary; the type and anti-type agreeing in the remarkable fact, that in each the victim was slain by the hands of those for whose sins he died. The many sacrifices on the one "which could not make him that did the service perfect (free from sin) as pertaining to the conscience," all symbolising that one sacrifice on the other, by which Christ "perfected forever (blotted out all their sins) them that are sanctified." Christ "loved the Church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word"—Ephes. v. 25. At the altar of sacrifice no prayers were offered, and no incense burned; prayers and praises were acceptable only within the sanctuary. When through faith in the sacrifice, the Priests approached the sanctuary, between it and the Altar they encountered the Laver, and there they must ever wash before they could officiate at the one or enter the other. So that no victim ever bled, typical of the Lamb of God, unaccompanied by the washing ty-

pical of that baptism which he instituted for the remission of sins. And as the many victims pointed to the one efficient sacrifice; so the many washings pointed to the one efficient cleansing granted to Faith in the waters of Baptism. The Tabernacle itself had no windows, and its many folded curtains excluded all light from without; signifying that he who enters the Church here shadowed forth, can bring no light with him, but must walk only in that which is there provided by God's express direction. The Altar of Incense stood immediately in the front of the veil covering the Most Holy, apt emblem of the thanksgivings and praises that it is the privilege only of those to offer who are children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth"—John, ix. 31. On the right hand was the Golden Table bearing the shew-bread, renewed on each returning Sabbath, type of that loaf which the Lord commanded his disciples to eat in commemoration of his death, until he shall come again. On the left the Golden Candlestick, emblem of that Spirit given to the disciples of the Lord, but "whom the world (those without) cannot receive because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him"—John xiv. 17. Behind the Altar of Incense hangs the veil covering the Most Holy. Within is the Ark, the Mercy Seat, the tables of the Covenant and the Cherubim: there the mild radiance of the Shekinah sheds the only light known to the sacred place; and as the cherubs with conjoined wings shadowing the hallowed ark, gaze with gentle interest on the Mercy Seat, they seem to ponder the interesting problem declared by God to Moses, Exodus, xxxiv. 7, I am the Lord, "keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression and sin, and that will by no means *clear the guilty*." Into that sacred presence entered only the High Priest once a year, and bearing with him the blood of the victim: thus procuring for each returning year remission of the sins of the people. "The Holy

Spirit this signifying, that the way into the Holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing"—Heb. ix. 8. Connected with the ritual of Moses, there were none but temporal blessings, and tho' through God's promises to Abraham, believers looked forward to the future in faith and hope; yet upon that future clouds and darkness rested, for they could not look beyond the veil. As the Lord says to his disciples, Matt. xiii. 17, "Many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which ye hear and have not heard them." The bodies of those victims whose blood was brought into the sanctuary by the High Priest, were burned without the camp, wherefore Jesus also suffered without the gate, Heb. xiii. 11, but "Christ is not entered into the Holy Places made with hands, but into Heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God for us," Heb. ix. 24. Accordingly when he expired, the purposes of the Mosaic ritual were accomplished: the veil of the Temple was rent in twain; the way into the Most Holy was laid open; and believers now draw nigh by this new and living way through the veil, that is to say, the Lord's flesh; by the rending of which, life and immortality were brought to light. The victim on earth has become the High Priest in Heaven, and "the end of the Law for justification to every one that believeth"—"For by one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified," and not only for past sins has he procured remission, but "he is able also to save them to the uttermost (in perpetuity) that come unto God by him; seeing, he ever liveth to make intercession for them." For "though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered, and being made perfect (as a victim and a priest) he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that *obey* him," Heb. v. 8. And thus the problem was solved, and angels and men could see how God might forgive sin without clearing the guilty; how "he might be just and

the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus," Rom. iii. 26— And in place of that worldly sanctuary, gorgeous in its splendor, imposing in its ceremonial, and served by a single family as Priests; now all the disciples of the Lord, "as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, a Holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ," I. Pet. ii. 5.

The Lord Jesus in John, iii. tells Nicodemus that his descent from Abraham could avail him nothing in the spiritual kingdom; for that flesh can only beget flesh; and that spirit must beget spirit, and therefore in order to *see* this kingdom he must be born again; that is, be born of God; and in I. John, v. 1, this same writer thus describes this second birth: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Faith therefore constitutes this new birth, and being entirely a spiritual exercise, is aptly described as spirit born of spirit. Faith is produced by God's testimony, as stated by the same Apostle, I. John, v. 10, "he that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son; therefore the believer is said to be born (begotten it should read throughout) of God." When thus convinced, he can *see* the kingdom, and stands as the Priests of old, before the Altar of Sacrifice: neither can enter the type or the anti-type, the sanctuary or the Church, until purified in the Laver; and thus the Saviour says: "Except a man be born of water and of spirit, he cannot *enter* the kingdom of God," John, iii. 5.

In Isaiah, xxxv. there is a beautiful prophetic sketch of Messiah's kingdom. From the 8th verse it reads: "And an high-way shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; *but it shall be for those*: the way-faring men though fools (unlearned) shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast go up thereon, it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and

everlasting joy upon their heads ; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

Thus the Prophet expressly declares, that though this highway is cast up for the unclean, yet the unclean shall not pass over it: before they enter on it therefore they must be cleansed. The ransomed of the Lord only, even those whose sins have been washed away, who have been born of water and of spirit, are admitted on this hallowed road that leads to Zion. This corresponds with the Lord's teaching : that it is through the strait gate you must enter on the narrow way. "Enter ye in at the strait gate: strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it," Mat. vii. 13, 14.

In Jeremiah, xxxi. 31, is described the prospective covenant quoted by Paul, Heb. viii. as the Christian covenant: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which my covenant they broke, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it on their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

In order properly to apprehend the new, it should be contrasted with the old Covenant. This last, Paul says, Gala. iv. 24, "gendereth to bondage." It was fleshly in its sign and in its services; temporal in its promises, "the man that doeth them (the works) shall live in them": and awful in its penalty: "Cursed is every man that continueth not in all

things which are written in the book of the Law to do them." It appealed not to their affections but their fears, and in its arbitrary ceremonial there was nothing to exercise the faculties of the mind. But the new covenant is emphatically the covenant of Forgiveness. It is through the blotting out of their past sins to be remembered no more, that mankind are brought under its obligations. God thus operates upon their inward parts, their affections, by his free unmerited mercy; he inscribes his law on their hearts, (their understanding, for this is always meant by the heart in God's word) by the manifestation of himself in the character of his beloved Son. Therefore no one can come under the new Covenant without first knowing the Lord in all the attributes with which he declared himself to Moses, Exodus, xxxiv. 6: therefore they shall not say to each other 'know the Lord,' for all must know before they can lay hold on his covenant. But under the old covenant, there were always many that did not know the Lord. Wherefore Moses directs, Deut. xxxi. 12, "Gather the people together, men and women and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: and that their children which have not known any thing, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God." Thus people might be under the covenant of circumcision without knowledge or faith. Circumcision was a seal of faith in one solitary instance. Paul says, Rom. iv. 11, that Abraham "received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith *which he had yet being uncircumcised.*" But the children descended from him inherited only the fleshly promises, and received unconscious the fleshly sign. And here is exhibited the same propriety that pervades all God's institutions: he devolved on the parents the duty of bringing their children under his covenant by express command; but the sign of the covenant was of that description, that the child when he should arrive at the proper age, would

know whether or not Jehovah's command had been attended to in his person. Each covenant therefore conforms in its institutions to its respective blessings; and they severally illustrate the Saviour's axiom, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh—that which is born of the spirit is spirit." Consequently it is contrary to the fundamental principle of God's new covenant for any one to claim under it a fleshly birth-right; that is through the right of their parents; for each one, must for himself lay hold on it by faith. The new covenant is prefaced with the significant declaration, "In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge, but every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge."—Jeremiah, xxxi. 29.

The New Testament contains the details of Messiah's kingdom on earth; and if under all circumstances they are found harmonizing with the various symbols and predictions of the Old Testament, the rational candid enquirer will see in that fact abundant proof of their divine authenticity; as also the strongest possible reason why this harmony so benevolently exhibited by Eternal Goodness for the removal of scepticism, should not be marred by any, even the slightest change from his established order.

The chronology of the New Testament presents in the order symbolised by the Tabernacle-worship: Faith, Baptism and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The four Evangelists, in their respective histories of the Lord Jesus, furnish the testimony to produce the first (Faith), and wrote them for that purpose, having been eye-witnesses themselves, or having received them from the eye-witnesses. Thus Luke tells Theophilus at the beginning of his, that he writes: "that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed." And John says at the xx. 31, "But these are written that ye might believe that

Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name." Matthew and Mark give at the close of their respective histories, the proclamation of mercy which the Lord sent by his Apostles to a condemned world; Faith and Baptism for the remission of sins. Luke records the same in different words, xxiv. 47: "and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached [proclaimed] in his name among all nations, *beginning at Jerusalem*."—Whilst John simply gives the substance of the commission, xx. 23: "Whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain they are retained." The testimony having been thus given with the proclamation setting forth the blessings and the sign of the new covenant, that all who believe may lay hold on the same; the party who believes has only to turn to the book of Acts to see how the Apostles carried out their commission. This book stands between the Testimony and the Apostolic Epistles to the believers, showing the behests of the Holy Spirit; like the Laver between the Altar of Sacrifice and the Tabernacle. It contains the sermons preached by the Apostles, and of course all that they required the sinner to believe; as their directions also make known all that the sinner must do, in order to lay hold on the new covenant. And let it be also remembered, that all that can now be said to sinners by divine authority in order to bring them under this covenant, is to be found in that brief narrative called the Acts of the Apostles: as all that can be said to the Church of Christ for their instruction and purification, by the same, is to be found in the twenty-one Apostolic letters, and the book of Revelation. Unfortunately this natural order of the New Testament has been almost entirely disregarded. What the divine Word says to the saint, has been addressed to the sinner, and vice versa: from such a course confusion and contradiction have ensued, as also the various creeds with which Christendom abounds. And that scandal to God's word, "that any creed can be sustained

by the Bible" has found utterance and acquiescence on the part of believers.

Paul tells the Church, I. Cor. ii. 12, "Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might *know* (not feel) the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we *speak*, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth; but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him." This last clause briefly exposes the absurdity of applying to the sinner the teachings of the Holy Spirit. A familiar example may illustrate the Apostle's meaning. If a natural man, one not born of God, and who therefore does not believe that Jesus is the Christ, should be told to bless them that curse him, and to requite his persecuting enemy with benefits; his natural sense of justice would rebel at the direction; it would appear foolishness to him. Neither would it elevate Paul in his estimation to hear him declare, I. Cor. iv. 11, "Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no dwelling place; and labor working with our own hands. Being reviled we bless; being persecuted we suffer it; being defamed we entreat"! He will rather wonder at the foolish enthusiasm which could prompt him to sever the ties which bound him to his early associates and the magnates of his own nation, for such an abject destiny. But let him believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and look with Paul's faith in a suffering crucified Saviour, to the glory of the hope that is set before him, and he will cheerfully "receive the things of the Spirit," and say with Paul: "Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen," II. Cor. iv. 17. Thus the Saviour says, "And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter that he may abide with you forev-

er ; even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world *cannot receive*, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him," John, xiv. 16.

The Lord Jesus is first manifested to Israel agreeably to this same order. He enters not on his ministry until he has been baptised in the river Jordan, declaring that act necessary " to fulfil all righteousness" [justification] ; and it is not until he has emerged from his watery grave, that the Holy Spirit descends upon him, and he is acknowledged by the Father's voice from Heaven, " This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," Mat. iii. 16, 17. Paul recognizes the paternal favor as conferred on the believer, under the same circumstances—" For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus ; for as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ," Gal. iii. 26.

During the Saviour's ministry on earth, it was only through his mouth that the Holy Spirit spoke. It was given to him without measure, but to no one else until after he was glorified, (had ascended on high) as John expressly declares, vii. 39. Therefore during his sojourn in this world, all the influences or power of the Holy Spirit were to be found in the words of the Lord, and he told his disciples, John, xv. 3, " Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."

Faith in all its characteristics, as already exemplified from the Old Testament, was required by the Saviour, and his reproaches to the Scribes and Pharisees are ; that they had substituted the traditions of men for his Father's Word rather than for what would be called immoral conduct : " Well hath Isaiah prophesied of you, hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." " Full well ye reject the commandment of God that ye may keep your own tradition," Mark, vii. 6, 7, 9. " Ye shut up the kingdom of Heaven against men ; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in,"

Matt. xxiii. 13. Two examples of Faith may suffice. In **Mat. viii.** the Lord marvelled and said that he had not found such faith in Israel as the Roman Centurion had just exhibited: and his faith was implicit reliance on the Lord's word: "Speak but the word only." Thus the greatest Faith, according to his own definition, consists in unwavering confidence in the word of the Lord Jesus." In **John, ix.** he made clay and anointed with it the eyes of the man born blind and told him to go wash in the pool of Siloam. No one can suppose for a moment that he would have obtained his sight, if he had refused to go and wash in the pool. Yet there was no healing virtue in the water or the clay: the blessing was realised through his belief in the word of the Lord, evinced in the obedience of faith; thus showing as did Abraham that he was "fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able also to perform." The humble spirit so indispensable to this obedience, is urged and insisted on throughout by the Saviour. He begins his lovely sermon on the Mount with the unqualified declaration, "blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven," **Matt. v. 3.** Dr. George Campbell renders this sentence, "happy the poor who repine not;" not because it is even as literal a translation as the first, but because he objects to the term "poor spirited." And seems, in his desire to avoid a disagreeable phrase, to forget that he makes the Lord award to the unrepining poor merely as such, a peculiar fitness to receive the Gospel; a sentence not countenanced by the Divine Word, nor confirmed by the facts around us. On the contrary a great recklessness about things future as well as things present often characterize the class in question. But to say that the kingdom of Heaven will be always received by that man who is not lifted up in spirit, not righteous in his own estimation, but stands chastened and subdued in the presence of the Almighty, is in accordance with scripture and sound philosophy. Neither does that poverty of spirit which realizes his own nothingness, when contemplating God's glory and condescension; and which is happily manifested in the Psalmist's

reverend interrogatory : "What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him?" bear any analogy to the character described by our term poor-spirited. On the contrary no man moves with more independence of spirit, among his fellow-men, than he who trusts in the shadow of the Most High: for says God, "to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at my word," Isaiah, lxvi. 2; and he who thus fears God, has nothing else to fear. It was this spirit in his humble followers, that wakened the only joyful emotion which the record mentions in the Master's care-worn bosom, during his earthly pilgrimage. "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes," Luke, x. 21.

CHAPTER IV.

IN 2d Acts is recorded the first sermon ever preached under the Gospel commission. It is short but conclusive; accompanied as it was by the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The Preacher's object is to establish only one great Fact: that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah. And the proof he offers is addressed solely to the understanding of his hearers. He refers to the Prophet Joel to show that God had promised to pour out his spirit, as it was now done in their presence: he shows that David had predicted the resurrection; he declares that he and his companions were witnesses of that resurrection, and that the miraculous outpouring of the spirit which enabled them (illiterate Gallileans) to speak in fifteen different languages, was the gift of the Lord Jesus, and proof positive that he was exalted to the right hand of the Majesty on High. "Therefore, says he, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ," [Messiah]. His hearers were convinced by the proofs exhibited, and the miracles displayed; and it is no wonder that they were pricked in their heart by the fact of having crucified the hope of Israel, the long expected Messiah. "What shall we do?" was the natural and anxious enquiry. Peter does not tell them to believe; the question asked showed that they did believe. He therefore responds: "Repent [reform] and be baptised every one of you in the name (by the authority) of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." "Then they that gladly received his word were baptised." What change was effected in those Jews by Peter's sermon? They were convinced that he, whom they thought an impostor, was the true Messiah. Why does this conviction prick them to the heart? Because they had cruci-

fied him: that this is the reason is evident from the fact that this is the only instance in the sacred volume where the Apostles caused grief by their preaching. And the grief here only lasted until Peter told them how their sins would be pardoned; and then it was changed into gladness. Thus the Faith that Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit bearing him witness, was belief in one fact—That Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah: the Glad Tidings connected with this fact was, that in virtue of all authority in Heaven and Earth having been given unto him, he promises to every believer the remission of his sins on being baptised for the same. Obedience the result of Faith: he who runs may read, as predicted by the Prophet. To believe that Jesus is the Messiah, and to obey him, constitutes Christianity. If believers have split into various sects it is not the fault of the Gospel, for that is simplicity itself. Well might Paul say to the Church, II. Cor. xi. 2, “For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the *simplicity that is in Christ.*”

In Acts, iii. Peter and John cure the lame man at the gate of the temple; the people consequently gather round them, and Peter takes the occasion to declare the Messiahship and resurrection of the Lord. Pointing to the wonderful miracle, he assures them that it had been achieved only through faith in his name; and adds: “Repent ye therefore and *be converted*, that your sins may be blotted out;” thus “be converted” is used as equivalent to “be baptised”: for it will hardly be contended that Peter would in the same city at the very commencement of his ministry vary his directions concerning the remission of sins, which constituted the Glad Tidings he proclaimed. Mr. Barnes, a Presbyterian divine, says in his note on this passage, that “be converted” does not give the sense of the original; but “the expression would be more appropriately rendered, “Repent and Turn.” This it will be perceived

is equivalent to "be baptised," for it is in the obedience of of faith only, that man turns to God.

In Acts, viii. the record shows that "Philip went down to Samaria and preached Christ unto them;" the same great fact proclaimed on the day of Pentecost. It seems here however to have caused unalloyed joy: they had not crucified the Lord Jesus, and therefore the proclamation of Philip told them only of pardon and peace through faith in his name, and consequently "there was great joy in that city." The 12th verse gives the result of their faith; the cause of their joy—"they were baptised both men and women." Simon Magus also believed and was baptised; but when he *saw* the Holy Ghost given by the laying on of the Apostles' hands, he offered to buy the gift of God with money. Simon had been in the habit of practising sorcery and deriving from it both profit and distinction: it is therefore not to be greatly wondered at, that his former habits should for a moment overpower his recent confession, and that the thought of the distinction and the profit that would accrue to him from the possession of a power actually miraculous, made him forget that the kingdom into which he had just been introduced, "was not of this world." The whole transaction displays as much ignorance as guilt on the part of Simon; and it is worthy of remark that notwithstanding the severity of his rebuke, Peter recognises the fact of his past sins having been washed away, for he tells him, "Repent therefore of *this*, thy wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the *thought of thine heart* may be forgiven thee." This one sin is all he charges against him, all he directs him to pray for: Moreover none but a baptised believer in Jesus is ever directed by the Apostles to pray after the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. After these things Philip is directed to join the Eunuch; *told* by the Spirit to join himself to the chariot in which he sat returning from Jerusalem. He was reading the Prophet Isaiah, but the question he propounds to Philip shows at least, that he was not skilled in the scripture. In reply Philip preached unto him Jesus: how he preached

him is not stated in words, but is strongly exemplified in facts; as soon as they come to water the Eunuch *asks for baptism*.—Who told the Eunuch any thing about baptism? Philip preached unto him Jesus; and who can preach Jesus without the proclamation of his mercy—“Repent and be baptised for the remission of your sins”?

In the succeeding (9th) chapter of Acts is related the conversion of Saul of Tarsus; and in the 22d chapter the same event is rehearsed by himself. The remarks offered will refer to both statements indiscriminately. Saul was a chosen vessel to the Lord. The persecutor was chosen to suffer great things for his name's sake. When Saul obtained authority from the High Priest to persecute the disciples at Damascus, he was firmly convinced that Jesus was an impostor, doubly impious in assuming the name and honors of that glorious Messiah, to whose advent, Saul still looked with joyful expectancy; and therefore he conceived that it was doing God service to destroy a heresy so opposed to all that was true and venerable in his eyes. His conversion consisted in repudiating error, and in receiving the Truth. He left Jerusalem believing that Jesus was an Impostor; he entered Damascus convinced that he was the Messiah. This conviction was produced by testimony operating, not on his feelings, but his senses; for he *saw* a light from above shining around him, and *heard* a voice saying, “Why persecutest thou me?” It is the same description of testimony that produced faith in the other apostles previous to the Saviour's death; but not so remarkable as some, such as raising the widow's son from his bier, or calling Lazarus from the grave. The belief then that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah converts the persecuting Saul into one of the most devoted followers of the Lord; “in all things approving himself as a minister of God, in much patience in afflictions, in necessities, in stripes, in imprisonments,” cheerfully yielding himself to the persecutions and contempt which he had formerly wielded against the followers of the Nazarene: his unreserved devotion to the Lord, now proving the

sincerity with which he had formerly persecuted him. The first question which Saul asked when convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, evinced his sincerity and the healthiness of his faith—"What shall I do Lord"? And if ever a man was to be pardoned in any way different from the terms of the proclamation, this would appear to be the occasion. But the Master here evidently shows that he will have his own institutions honored: he therefore replies, "Arise and go into Damascus, and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do." Saul obeys, and Ananias, of whom there is no mention made, but in connection with this transaction, is sent to tell him what he must do. The narrative says, that Ananias was a disciple, a devout man according to the Law—therefore a Christian Jew, and what would be called in these days, one of the Laity. Yet he is sent to instruct this chosen vessel and to introduce him into the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus. Accordingly he says to him, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Thus though Saul had been chosen, had seen the Lord and "heard the voice of his mouth," his sins remained upon him, until he was buried with Christ by baptism unto their death, according to his own figure in 6th Romans.

The history of the introduction of the Gentiles to the Kingdom of Messiah, is recorded in 10th Acts. Up to this time it appears never to have entered into the minds of the Apostles, that the Gentiles were to be made partakers of these blessings and privileges. On the contrary all their prejudices were opposed to, and all their feelings revolted at such a measure; and in those prejudices and feelings the apostle Peter largely participated, as the record shows. To this apostle had been given the Keys of the Kingdom, and he had thrown the gates wide open on the day of Pentecost, but then it was only to the Jews. God now requires him to do the same for the Gentiles. A heavenly messenger directs the Gentile Cornelius to send for Simon Peter, who, says he, "shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do." He obeys, and whilst his messengers are on their

way, God prepares Peter to receive and return with them, by a vision thrice repeated, showing that what God is pleased to cleanse no man should call common. The spirit also *said* unto him, go with the messengers nothing doubting. Peter went taking with him certain brethren from Joppa. When they arrive at the house of Cornelius, they find him with his kinsmen and near friends there assembled. Peter frankly acknowledges that he has come because God had showed him that he must not call any man common or unclean, and asks why he had been sent for. Cornelius in reply relates God's message to himself, upon which Peter preaches unto them Jesus. He tells of his miracles, his crucifixion and his resurrection—that he was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead, and that whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. Whilst Peter yet spake, the Holy Spirit fell on all them that heard. It will not be contended that this outpouring of the Holy Spirit was necessary to make these Gentiles either believe or obey; for Cornelius had already said, (33d verse,) "Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." Faith and obedience could not be more fully expressed and tendered. Peter and his brethren of the circumcision were astonished at this gift of the Spirit to the Gentiles, and the first words that break from the lips of the till then doubting Apostle, show why the Spirit was given. "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptised, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" This question explains the state of the Apostle's mind. His vision and the narrative of Cornelius appear insufficient to remove his doubts and prejudices; but when he saw the Holy Ghost poured out upon them, *he consents to baptise them*, for he had already done every thing else that he could do for them, and baptism alone was wanting. It is therefore as clear and as indisputable as language can render any fact, that on this important occasion, the Holy Spirit fell on them to convince Peter that he ought to grant them baptism for the remission of their sins.

It is also remarkable that the first fruits from the Gentiles should be a man of such purity as Cornelius; "a devout man, one that feared God with all his house," poor in spirit, and "whose prayers and alms had come up for a memorial before God." In commanding such a man to be baptized for the remission of his sins, God surely gives the strongest proof that he requires his institution to be honored, for that he "will have mercy on whom he will have mercy." On Peter's return to Jerusalem, the brethren contended with him about his conduct on this occasion; and were only satisfied, when informed of all the circumstances, with the pouring out of the Holy Spirit; in view of which Peter asks them, "What was I that I could withstand God?" He appealed also to the six brethren, who accompanied him, and who, as the narrative shows, could testify as positively to the baptism of the Spirit as they could to the baptism of Water, both being equally visible. Moreover the angel had said to Cornelius of Peter that "he shall tell thee what thou oughtest *to do*;" and the only thing that Peter directed him *to do*, was to be baptised in the name of Jesus. It is also worthy of remark as exemplifying the Apostolic practice; that Peter did not himself baptize these Gentiles, but devolved that duty on the disciples (the Laity of the present day) who accompanied him. Yet in face of testimony such as this, the institution of Baptism has been changed by some, entirely disregarded by others, and attended to by scarcely any, according to its primitive form and signification: and professed believers, with all the infatuation of Eve of old, still listen to the declaration of the tempter, "Thou shalt not surely die."

The Baptism of the believer into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, after the ascension of the Lord Jesus, harmonises beautifully with the offices in which they are respectively revealed to man. The Father gave the testimony to prove that Jesus was his beloved Son in whom he was well pleased: therefore it is said, I. John,

v. 10, "he that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son." The Son "bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins should live to righteousness, by whose stripes ye are healed," I. Peter, ii. 24. And also, "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them," Hebrews, vii. 25. The Holy Spirit as has been seen, was to guide the disciples into all truth. The world cannot receive him, says the Lord, (John, xiv. 17,) "because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you." Again, at 26th verse, "he shall *teach* you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." Therefore without God's testimony, man could not believe on his Son: without the Son's suffering and mediation, the believer could not be reconciled unto God; and without the guidance of the Holy Spirit, he could not walk worthy of his vocation; could not work out his own salvation with fear and trembling. Thus there is no discrepancy in the two declarations of the Lord: "No man can come unto me except the Father who hath sent me draw him"—John, vi. 44—"I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me," John, xiv. 6.

The new Covenant, as already quoted from Jeremiah, xxxi. 31, was to win the love of all who laid hold on it, by the forgiveness of their sins. This feature is beautifully illustrated by the Lord's parable of the two debtors, (Luke, vii. 41,) where he shows that to whom much is forgiven the same loveth much, and to whom little is forgiven the same loveth little. Therefore to obscure in any way the fundamental doctrine of the forgiveness of past sins, or to point the believer to any other Mercy-Seat than the institution of the Lord Jesus, must necessarily either chill his love, or transfer it to some other object, to the robbery of him who claims it as his due, above Father, Mother, Sister

brother, wife or child. For if a Man or Woman believe, no matter how erroneously, that they have received remission of their sins, they will turn with great love and confidence to that Party, through whose instrumentality they think they have received it. Hence Paul exhorts: Colossians, ii. 8—"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the God-head bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power; in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." Hence the Apostles ever preached [proclaimed] Jesus, and asked no creed but the confession of his name. In all his institutions there is still presented Christ and Christ only. Baptism is a burial into the likeness of his death, presenting also the figure of his resurrection. The commemorative feast, established in his church, consists of the symbols of his broken body and shed blood. The day on which his church meets to partake of those symbols, is sacred to his triumph over death, by his glorious resurrection—"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew [openly publish] the Lord's death until he come." Thus every thing in the Kingdom on Earth is beneficently arranged, to animate his people with love and gratitude to their great King, and to prepare them to sing that song that shall wake the echoes of Eternity: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing." "Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

As to the mode of baptism, let it suffice to say:

That Luther, Calvin, Beza, Simon the Jesuit, Dr. Whitby, a graduate of Oxford, Bishop Taylor, Dr. Hammond, Dr. George Campbell, Dr. Macnight, all paido-baptists, with many, if not all other truly learned men who have written on the subject, have left the declaration in their works, that Baptism in the original means a dipping or immersion.

If the reader of the New Testament will substitute for the words 'baptise' and 'baptism' wherever used, the words 'pour' or 'sprinkle,' or their substantives, he cannot fail to perceive that such construction is frequently senseless and incongruous: but if he will use the words 'to immerse' or 'immersion,' he will readily perceive that they harmonise in every instance with the sense and figure.

The Greek Church, although they had adopted infant baptism before their separation from the Latins, still use immersion. The reason is obvious and conclusive: it was in the Greek language the Commission to the Apostles was written; and for a Grecian Priest to use the original word, and then sprinkle or pour, would present the same absurd contradiction that would be exhibited by an English priest pouring or sprinkling, whilst he should at the same time say 'I immerse thee.'

CHAPTER V.

IN II. Thess. 2d chap. is recorded a distinct prophecy, showing that, before the Lord's second coming, there would be a great falling away from the truth, and that the man of sin would be revealed, "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."

The idea of man opposing and exalting himself above God, seems absurd in the naked proposition; yet a little reflection will suffice to show, that however startling the theory, the practice is a matter of every day occurrence. It will not be denied, that man cannot physically oppose God, and therefore this prediction can allude only to authority to be usurped in his spiritual kingdom; and it must also be conceded, that he who would legislate in the church of God, modify her laws, or change her institutions, does exalt himself above God, in the only way possible for man to do so; for he says by his actions, that God's laws and institutions are imperfect, and that he is wise enough to improve the works of infinite wisdom. Thus did Saul, when Samuel charged him with stubbornness and rebellion; thus did Jeroboam, when he set up the golden calves in Bethel and in Dan, to keep God's people from Jerusalem; and thus did the Scribes and Pharisees, when, as the Saviour reproached them, they made the word of God of none effect through their tradition. Wherever this presumptuous spirit is manifested, either in the heart of a believer or in a congregation of believers, for each is called by Paul the temple of God; this disposition to add to or take from God's laws, there is displayed the mark of the beast, the work of the Son of Perdition. Paul confirms this statement, Gal. i. 8:

“ But though we, or an angel from Heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, *let him be accursed.*” It has been argued that the man of sin was only revealed in the fourth century, in the day of Constantine; and that Paul alluded to the Pagan Emperors of Rome as the power that until then restrained him. But Paul says that he was secretly at work at the time he was writing, and that the Thessalonian Church *knew* what withheld him. It is hardly probable that the church knew any thing about the emperors as guardians, either directly or indirectly, of christian purity; but if they had seen Paul’s letter to the Galatians, they would readily perceive the secret working of the man of sin, in the innovations attempted by false teachers, and the restraining power in the Lord’s commissioned apostle. But when the apostles were removed from their laborious warfare, and the miraculous gifts had ceased, the restraining power was taken out of the way. Accordingly, in the second century, some churches had already instituted the Easter festival, with other innovations, showing the man of sin to be openly at work in their midst: whilst in the lawless fancies of Origen, and the old wives fables of Cyprian, abundant proof is furnished of their utter disregard of Paul’s injunctions, I. Tim. vi. 20: “ Timothy keep that *which is committed* to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings and oppositions of science, falsely so called, which some professing, have erred concerning the faith.” The description of Israel in Judges xvii. 6, will present but a too accurate view of the more prominent churches at the period in question: “ In those days there was no king (law) in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”

The man of sin is evidently that presumptuous principle which is manifested by each and every man who desires to legislate in the church of God; and his coming is described at the ninth verse, as “ after the working (energy) of Satan

with all power, and signs, and lying wonders." Dr. Macnigh translates this last clause "with all power, and signs, and miracles of falsehood." If God pardons sinners only according to his Son's proclamation, then it follows that every power, sign, or miracle, whether it be a dream, a vision, or a spiritual operation within him, on which man relies for pardon, is to be classed with the lying wonders described in the passage last quoted. But the apostle goes on to show why believers would be deceived—"because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." They had not that docility, that meekness, that poverty of spirit, which ever yields the obedience of faith, walking humbly with God. ("If any man will *do* his will, he shall know of the doctrine," John vii. 17). And because they submit not themselves in the love of the truth, Paul adds, "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." This is in accordance with God's predestination, as has been already shown—That the disobedient shall stumble and be hardened by the very freeness of his mercy. The Lord says, Ezek. xiv. 3: "Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their face; should I be inquired of at all by them"? "I, the Lord, will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols." God changeth not; as it was then, so it is now. He who inquires at his holy word with reverence, in order to honor and obey it, "may run and read, and though unlearned, shall not err therein." But he who inquires in order to bend *it* to suit his own preconceptions; to support a creed already adopted, even the idols which he has set up in his own heart, will, in the language of the prophet, "Grove for the wall like the blind; stumble at noon-day as in the night." Let the theological student ponder it well, for Paul says, it is thus decreed: "That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

There is, perhaps, no event in scripture more frequently appealed to, nor less profitably considered by those who wish to attain to the future world without denying themselves in this, than the mercy shown to the thief on the cross : fearful have been its delusions to a numerous class of such enquirers at God's word. He received mercy, even at the twelfth hour, it is true, but he found his pardon in the *word* of Jesus—find yours in that same word of truth and life, and then, and then only, you may dismiss all fear. What avails to you the word spoken to the dying thief? The same almighty word called Lazarus from the dead! Go to the tomb of a departed friend and call, and see if he will hear that word of power, and come forth. It is just as rational to expect the latter, as to found your hope of pardon on what was spoken to the former. Under no dispensation, in no part of his holy word, has Jehovah ever intimated that his creature, man, may rejoice among his enemies, and serve his own desires in this world—may reject the gracious offers of salvation made through his beloved Son, and devote the energies and vigorous affections of his life to all that is opposed to the purity and goodness manifested in that Son ; and yet, when stricken with coward fear, when induced by that awful agony which springs not from repentance, but from impending punishment, he may in the last moment cheat divine justice by a remorse, so tardy, so thankless, so unworthy. Paul says, “ Be not deceived, God is not mocked ; whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption ; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting,” Gal. vi. 7.

Yet to the humble inquirer the pardon of the thief is full of interest and instruction. The twenty-third chapter of Luke presents, in all the unadorned simplicity of truth, the circumstances which attended that awful event, which will constitute the historic theme on which cherubim and seraphim, with the ransomed and glorified people of King Jesus

will delight to dwell, when all the glories of time, with the heroes, statesmen, and monarchs that have glittered in time's ephemeral pageant, shall have passed into eternal oblivion. Amid the mocking soldiery and the deriding rulers of his Father's chosen people, hangs upon the cross Jesus of Nazareth: He, the manifestation of God's moral character, even "the brightness of his glory," receives the gall and vinegar, and in his agonies beholds his disciples and the women that followed him standing afar off. Faith and Hope have left them; they had "thought that this was he who was to redeem Israel," but they saw him apparently powerless, dying the victim of his relentless enemies. In that wild scene, exhibiting God's justice, Christ's love and man's guilt, "when he trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him," there is but one bosom that acknowledges Jesus as the Messiah; there is but one eye turned in faith to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world; there is but one voice that cries "Lord remember me when thou comest to thy kingdom": It is the dying malefactor! A miracle of faith, a miracle of mercy! What comfort or consolation ought such an event bring to the heart of one who, from childhood, has daily heard of and daily rejected the offered mercy, not of a despised, deserted, dying Nazarene, but of an ascended King, showing indubitable testimony of the fact, that he is now at the right hand of the Majesty on High? Reason and common sense would rather say, that such a party would more probably have been found among the mockers and deriders of the Saviour, than with the penitent thief putting his trust in him, amid circumstances so unpropitious. Therefore, even if this rescued brand had lived under the present dispensation, a reasonable share of common sense would preclude any man from presuming on the mercy vouchsafed to him; but he lived under a different dispensation, and as a descendant of Abraham was entitled to the covenant blessings, when he acknowledged the Messiah

sent of God ; and this he did, not only under circumstances so unpropitious, but, so far as the history shows, at the very *first opportunity* presented to him. Moreover, as has already been stated, he had for his pardon the Lord's *word*. That word can be found now only where he left it, in the proclamation given to his apostles, ere he ascended up on high. It is not in heaven that you should look for it there, nor in the deep that you should dig for it ; it is very nigh thee, even where he left it, unrecalled and unchanged, and therefore "whosoever will, may come and take of the waters of life freely."

The evil effect of inquiring of God's word in order to sustain an adopted theory, is manifest in the pertinacity with which theologians wrest the scripture, in order to build up one of their imaginations—infant baptism. The Saviour says, Mat. xix. 14, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." If the kingdom of heaven be sinless, then little children are sinless, for such as they compose it the Lord himself hath declared. Paul asserts, Rom. iv. 15, "Where no law is, there is no transgression ;" and John says, I. Epis. iii. 4, "Sin is the transgression of law." But the wildest theorist has never yet pretended that infants can transgress or be amenable to any law, human or divine. No transgression no sin, say the apostles, and thus with their Great Master bear testimony to the innocence of children. Baptism is instituted by the Lord for remission of sins. Surely nothing but a strong delusion could persuade mankind to take from the penitent believing sinner this gracious institution, this balm for all his fears, and confer it on those who can neither believe nor sin.

This ready credulity in matters of human arrangement, and determined scepticism as to the Lord's appointments, are further manifested in the importance attached to an ordained ministry, set apart by the imposition of clerical hands. There is but one solitary instance in the New Tes-

tament of *office* having been conferred by the imposition of hands, and that was the deacon's office, created only "to serve tables;" to take care of and properly distribute the funds cast into the treasury of the Lord, for the benefit of all his people, as is shown in 6th Acts. The construction of the original (Greek) also shows, that in this case it was the people themselves, not the apostles, that laid hands on the deacons, by whom also they were chosen. This last observation is made on the best living authority known to the author, but if even successfully controverted, does not affect the general argument. The word "ordain," used in connection with elders, in the New Testament, simply means in the original to "appoint"; nor is there in the sacred volume one defined instance of the ordination of apostle, bishop, elder, or preacher, by the imposition of hands. Peter and John laid hands on the converts of Samaria, as Paul did on Timothy and many other disciples, to confer the *gifts* of the Holy Spirit. But in no case were the apostles' hands, or those of any one else, ever laid on for any other purpose than to impart spiritual gifts, except in the case of the deacons already mentioned, and that by the church at Antioch in 13th Acts, when by the immediate direction of the Holy Spirit, they thus separated Paul and Barnabas to the work to which He had called them; and here it is sufficiently evident, that no office was conferred. On the other hand it is stated, Acts, viii. 1, that in the persecution of the church at Jerusalem, they were all scattered abroad *except the apostles*; and at the fourth verse, that "they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word." It is also shown, Acts, xi. 19, that these same scattered disciples constituted the church at Antioch. As has been already seen, mere disciples baptised Paul and Cornelius. And yet on the slender testimony first alluded to, and in the face of these palpable facts, whole congregations of various names, will neither administer the ordinances of the Lord, nor assemble to celebrate the day of his

resurrection, if they should be without a minister set apart by the imposition of hands. Strange delusion! That they who cannot perceive the form of baptism, in the action of the Lord and the Eunuch going down into and coming up out of the water; in Paul's expressive figure of burial by baptism; and in the meaning of the original word, as acknowledged by every candid scholar, even among the Paido-baptists: Who cannot discover its necessity in the proclamation of the Lord Jesus; in the preaching of Peter on the day of Pentecost, and in his directions to the Gentile Cornelius: Who smile at the idea of a mere *form*, like baptism, being important or essential to obtain the favor of God,—Have nevertheless keenness of perception to discover in the meagre testimony already displayed, the absolute necessity of the mere *form* of the imposition of hands, in order to qualify a disciple of the Lord to administer his ordinances and to preach his word. Nor is this all: there is a large body of professors, intelligent, moral, and useful members of every community in which they are found, who reject water-baptism entirely, and defend the rejection, by saying that Peter, acting as he did under the immediate direction of the Holy Spirit, was in error on that point: Who refuse to break the loaf and drink of the cup as enjoined by the Lord Jesus; for though it was instituted by him and partaken of by his apostles, and together with baptism acknowledged as obligatory by all Christians until the middle of the seventeenth century, yet deeming themselves in possession of the Holy Spirit, “and having thus attained the substance, they think it unnecessary to attend to the shadow which doth not confer grace.” But whilst they reject the forms instituted by the Lord and practised by his apostles, they attend with all deference to those established by themselves, even to the form of their garments and the form of their speech. And although they can persuade themselves that the apostle Peter, attested as he was by signs and wonders which God did by his hands, was en-

tirely mistaken when he baptised with water for the remission of sins; yet it never seems to occur to their minds that George Fox, who could give no evidence of his divine influences, beyond his own say so, might more reasonably be suspected of error than the Apostle Peter; especially as the other apostles bore testimony to Peter by witnessing his conduct and finding no fault with it: which last they were ready enough to do, when they thought him wrong, as is abundantly evident in Acts, xi. 2, and Gal. ii. 14.

“The Prophet that hath a dream let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my worth faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord,” Jere. xxiii. 28.

The Lord Jesus, Matt. xxiii. 8, says to his disciples, “But be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your Master even Christ, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your Father upon the earth, for one is your Father who is in Heaven.” Dr. George Campbell, treating of the title Rabbi with its Greek equivalent, says in his 7th Dissertation, 2d part, 6th section, “It is indeed evident to me, that in the ordinary Hellenistic use, it corresponds nearly to the English word Doctor. Both are literary titles, that relate to no other sort of merit, but learning; and both are solemnly conferred with certain ceremonies, which we call graduation, by those who are accounted the proper judges. Joseph and Mary we are told found Jesus in the temple sitting in the midst of the Doctors. Besides, we are accustomed to hear the words Jewish Rabbies and Jewish Doctors used synonymously.” These remarks are made by a distinguished Preacher and author of the Presbyterian Church, who nevertheless allowed himself to be made and called Doctor of Divinity. It is not more plainly written, “Thou shalt not steal,” than it is “Be not ye called Rabbi (Doctor of Divinity,) and call no man your Father (Pope) upon the Earth.” Is it not passing strange that any and every *form* forbidden by the Lord or invented by man, seems acceptable to mod-

ern professors, whilst no form or institution established by himself is honored according to his own appointment ?

“ And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say” ? Luke vi. 46.

“ Therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation ; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him ; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will ?” Heb. ii. 1.

It is but too evident that the professing world give to their respective churches that love and reverence which belong only to the Lord Jesus Christ. The institutions or means through which mankind are persuaded that they attain to peace with God, are chiefly the appointments of the various churches ; and consequently their love and gratitude are rendered to the churches, whilst the name of Jesus is used rather as a talisman, than intelligently acknowledged as “ the only name under Heaven whereby we can be saved.” His example at the Jordan, where he told his Harbinger it became him “ to fulfil all righteousness,” is rarely alluded to, and his proclamation of Mercy is fallen almost entirely into disuse. When the anxious sinner now enquires what he must do : he is told to mourn, to weep, to pray, to do any thing but to trust in the *word* of Jesus. The very term Glad Tidings has become a misnomer ; those who formerly received the Gospel, did it with gladness and joy : Now to hear that “ God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them,” makes the penitent believer tremble, as did Israel of old at the awful display on Sinai. Who points the sinner to the King’s proclamation, and replies to his anxious enquiries as

did Peter on the day of Pentecost? "Repent and be baptised in the name of Jesus for the remission of your sins." Paul rebuked the Corinthians, who were disposed to assume another name than that of Jesus, with the question: "Was Paul crucified for you, or were you baptised in the name of Paul?" He places thus together the cause and the means of remission: the Cross and Baptism. What professor now would feel his rebuke, or perceive the point of his question? Alas how few can testify of their own knowledge, that they have in any way or in any name ever been baptised!

"I have not sent these prophets yet they ran; I have not spoken to them yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in my counsel and had caused my people to hear *my words*, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings. Behold I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord," Jere. xxiii. 21, 22, 32.

CHAPTER VI.

MAN'S ever restless thirst for power caused the early adoption of that fatal dogma, that to the church was committed that binding and loosing power, which was given to the Apostles only, and can be found on earth now in their writings alone. The infallibility of the church was the natural offspring of the first fiction. It was plausibly argued that the laws of the church being divine, were infallible: this every believer willingly acknowledged, and so long as the church is regulated only by those divine laws, of her infallibility there can be no doubt. But when she ventures to add to or take from those laws, she departs from her only means of infallibility and ceases to build on the only true foundation, Jesus Christ. The infallibility therefore is in the laws, not in the church, composed as it is of fallible men. The laws handed down by the inspired Apostles are the offspring of the Divine Mind; any change made in them is the offspring of Human Wisdom. And it is written, "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God; for it is written, he taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain," I. Cor. iii. 19. Thus Paul calls "the Church of the Living God the pillar and ground (*abode* is a happier translation and fully as literal) of the Truth," I. Tim. iii. 15. The Church therefore is not the controller but the guardian and exhibiter of the institutions and laws of her great Head. Paul tells Timothy who appears to have set in order the church at Ephesus under his special direction, "Hold fast *the form of sound words*, which thou hast heard of me in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus," II. Tim. i. 13. "And the things that thou hast *heard of me* among many witnesses, the same commit to faithful men, who shall be able to

teach others also," II. Tim. ii. 2. Thus in the very form of words Timothy was enjoined to teach only the things which he had heard of the Apostle. Paul says to the church at Corinth when reproaching her with certain innovations: "What! came the word of God *out* from you? or came it *unto* you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord," I. Cor. xiv. 36. In this last clause Paul has furnished the true test of every church's spirituality and infallibility; the acknowledgment of the apostolic writings as the commandments of the Lord. The messages sent to the seven churches in Asia recorded in the 2d and 3d chap. Revelation, fully sustain this view: and the delusion seems awful that can plead the power and infallibility of the church in the face of the Spirit's declaration to the church at Laodicea, acknowledged as a church by the unerring word of the Spirit: "Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve that thou mayest see," Rev. iii. 17.

It is also evident that the churches are all entirely independent of each other, nor can there be found in the New Testament a single sentence to countenance the opposite principle. Their intercourse, according to scripture, consisted merely in acts of kindness and courtesy towards each other, and towards each others' members, as circumstances demanded or as opportunity was presented. But that presumptuous spirit which prompts one church to interfere with the domestic concerns of another; to arraign at her own bar for judgment her sister churches, seems never to have been manifested by any church of which the sacred record speaks, though some were guilty of many other errors.

Such a spirit would have quailed before the straight-forward enquiry of Paul: "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth," Rom. xiv. 4. Nor can any man give a sound reason for any other connection between the churches than that indicated in scripture. It is not necessary to the purity or peace of the churches: for being contrary to scripture it must sully the first, and its direct action will ever tend to mar the latter. Foreign policy and foreign interests seem out of place amid the simple duties of the household over which the Lord Jesus presides. They should meet as one family around one table, and offer sacrifices acceptable through one Lord; thus honoring the king, holding forth the Word of Life, and fitting and preparing the church in the appointments of the Lord, for the glory that is yet to be revealed. It was undoubtedly the ambition of various leaders in the various primitive churches that prompted this deviation "from the simplicity that is in Christ." Such leaders wanted a wider field in which to display their talents and attainments, than a single congregation could afford: they were anxious also that the church should have more importance and respect and splendor in the eyes of the world; and to attain to these objects, so desirable in their estimation, but so contrary to the pure religion of the Lord Jesus, nothing would tend more readily than a confederacy of churches throughout the world operating together in councils by their delegates. Hence the formation of the Catholic [Universal] church; and thus the term Catholic testifies to the first schism or heresy in the body of Christ. Before the use of this prefix it was "the House of God," "the Church of the living God," "the body of Christ," "the Church of Ephesus," "the Church in Pergamos," "the Church in Thyatira," all under one law, and thus animated with one spirit. All built on one foundation, yet all independent of each other, as is evinced in the distinct messages sent to the seven churches, where this catholic principle could not fail to have

been noticed if it had ever been contemplated by the Holy Spirit. Paul describes the church as "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself, being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord," Eph. ii. 20. But Catholicism, a principle never taught by Apostles, Prophets or the Great Master himself, is the foundation of the Catholic Church as the prefix plainly shows; and the principle in question has usurped the honor that is due only to the Lord. The same may be charged against every church wearing any name but that of Christ. Their bond of union is to be found in the distinguishing prefix, not in the name of the Lord. Nor will it help them to plead that they have drawn their names from the sacred volume; that they are Episcopal, Presbyterian, Baptist churches. The true church was founded not on Episcopacy, Presbyterianism or Baptism, but on the Rock Messiah, and "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ;" and whilst those various features are necessary to the beauty and harmony of the body, they can neither one nor all with any propriety usurp or fill the place which belongs to the Great King who instituted them, and appointed their respective places in his kingdom.

As has been already intimated, this Catholic principle, more or less adopted by nearly all churches, has led to the assembling of councils, conventions, synods, associations, conferences, yearly meetings, &c.: and inasmuch as God has never directed any such assemblies, and of course can have committed nothing to their care, those who appointed and composed them, had of necessity to devise the rules and laws under which they acted, and propose the subjects on which they should legislate; and thus that wider field for the display of human policy and human power already alluded to, was attained, by "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." When the style "Catholic Church" was first assumed, it was done evidently in con-

tradistinction to those who still retained the primitive style used by the apostles ; and this schism rendered necessary the first creed ever known, and which manifests in its tone the schismatic spirit which led to its adoption. " I believe in God, in Jesus Christ, in the Holy Ghost, in the Holy Catholic Church." Each member of this new church was bound to profess the same belief, the same confidence in the Catholic Church, that he places in the God who created him, the Son who redeemed him, and the Spirit who had revealed to him the mind and will of God for his guidance. But when it is remembered that this creed was composed and adopted by the first schism, its presumption is the more startling ; for it was equivalent to saying, "that as we believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, so do we believe in ourselves. Such being the ground assumed, it is no wonder that the glory of the Lord was obscured by the glory of the Church ; that the love and devotion due only to the former, was transferred to the latter ; and her right to legislate in the kingdom of the Lord Jesus established and concurred in. And thus is seen in one of its phases that principle, " which opposeth and exalteth itself above all that is called God."

The term Protestant, seems still more incongruous than that of Catholic. The religion of Jesus calls its confessors *to do and to suffer*, not to *protest*. Peter tells them, " But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye ; and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled, but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts ; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear," (reverence,) I. Peter, iii. 14. There is nothing like protestantism in these directions, nor in any of the apostolic writings. The term, however, is sufficiently appropriate, as descriptive of a schism from the Catholic Church.

Neither does the word Reformation harmonize with the great principles of Christianity. The Church of Christ is

often rebuked in the sacred volume, and urged to reformation, it is true : but then the rebuke is, that she does not hold fast the word as delivered by the apostles, and the reformation urged is, that she do her *first* works. Scripture reformation can, therefore, only be urged with any propriety on a church that was in her incipient state “ the pillar and abode of the truth,” and whose bond of union was the Messiahship of the Lord Jesus, not the sectarian prefix of Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran, or any other designation of human invention. The moment a church enacts a single law to bind the conscience of a believer, she has passed the rubicon. That law was necessary, in her opinion, to better or improve the Divine law ; and if the church may exercise her wisdom in the most trivial act of legislation, the same principle will warrant her legislation in weightiest matters. The same principle which prompts the aberration of an inch, will be with equal propriety the sole arbiter as to the distance she may wander. The Catholic here is more consistent than the Protestant : the latter insisted that the Bible alone contained the whole Christian law, and at the same time adopted the institutions and legislation of the former to a certain extent. In doing this, Luther surrendered the whole ground ; and the controversy between the Catholic and Protestant, from his day to the present time, has consisted in an effort, not to prove either right according to God’s word, but for each to show that the other is most in the wrong. This is reformation without amendment ; a human reform carried on by a human reformer, as the term reformation necessarily implies. The tie which binds reformers together, is not the simple truth as it is in Jesus, so much as their joint opposition to the errors of their antagonists ; and their bond of union is as unscriptural as that of the Catholic. A modern reformer describing his own experience, says : “ Infant baptism and infant sprinkling, with all infantile imbecility immediately expired in our minds, soon as the *Bible alone* was made the

only measure and standard of faith and duty. The foundation of the Paido-baptist temple being instantly destroyed, the whole edifice leaning upon it became a heap of ruins. We explored the ruins with great assiduity, and collected from them all the materials that could be worked into the Christian Temple; but the piles of rubbish that remained were immense." So writes Mr. Alexander Campbell, of Bethany, Va. in the preface to his Christian System, pages 9 and 10; and thus avows the same principle on which Luther acted. But why should either of them turn from the pages of the Bible, acknowledged by both as the only measure and standard of faith and duty, to explore the ruins they had caused, in order to collect any materials to work into the Christian Temple? Such a course may result in the display of much sagacity in selecting from such materials, but surely it evinces a considerable portion of the presumption which it undertakes to remedy, and it cannot fail in a great measure to give to the Reformer a large portion of that influence and honor which belong to the word of God only. This last is fully exemplified in the pages of Mr. Campbell's Harbinger, where the reader will find but too many instances of those who profess to acknowledge the Bible alone; with that Bible in their hands, writing to Bethany to enquire about Christian duty. The unhappy effects of this homage on Mr. Campbell, are seen in his swerving from the high ground which he originally assumed of the Bible alone, to the avowal of the insufficiency of God's word to govern his people, without some aid from human legislation. The facts, however, will show the change, and speak for themselves. In his preface to the Christian System, already alluded to, Mr. Campbell says on the 6th page, that in the year 1809 "originated a project for uniting the sects, or rather the Christians of all sects, upon a clear and scriptural bond of union,—upon having a *'thus saith the Lord,'* either in express terms or in

approved precedent, for every article of faith and item of religious practice.”

In March, 1829, Mr. Campbell says in his *Christian Baptist*, “I cannot give my voice in favor of appeals to any tribunal, but to the congregation of which the offended is a member; neither to a council of churches specially called, nor to an association. The old book, written by the apostles, has compelled me to hold this dogma fast, and I can I know show that it is superior to every other course. I will grant, however, that this plan will not suit a denomination or a sect, but it will suit the kingdom over which Immanuel reigns.”

In November, 1840, Mr. Campbell says, in his *Millennial Harbinger*, vol. 4th, new series, pages 503 and 504, “That no community called a church, is absolutely independent of the Church of God, but amenable to the whole church for the administration of its affairs.”

“Nor can a majority oppress a weak minority, without the right of appeal from its decision. The brethren in the case before us, (he having only heard *their* statement,) on refusal of a hearing from the party that excluded them, have on all the principles of justice, a right to appeal to another community or communities agreed upon by both; and on refusal of such a reference, the church refusing cuts herself off from the communion of all other churches of Christ,” &c. &c. Mr. Campbell’s attention being called to this evident discrepancy between the Baptist and the Harbinger, he appears desirous to sustain the two opposite views; for he acknowledges no error in either, but says in reply, *Millennial Harbinger*, new series, 5th vol. page 44, “In arraying the Christian Baptist against the Harbinger, they again demonstrate a want of correct conceptions of our views of an appeal. In the *Christian Baptist*, in the passage copied, certain questions from the *Religious Herald* were discussed. I then objected, and still object, to Baptist Associations and Councils as proper tribunals to decide matters of belief, matters of opinion, and cases of discipline.” This sounds very much like objecting to the Pope

and approving popery. Surely the declaration could not be broader; no appeal "*to any tribunal, but to the congregation of which the offended is a member.*" But the immediately preceding clauses in the same essay, read thus: "But for my part, I do not love even an image of the beast. I have no objection to congregations meeting in hundreds at stated times to sing God's praise, and to unite their prayers and exhortations for the social good. But whenever they form a quorum, and call for the business of the churches, they are a Popish calf or muley, or a hornless stag, or something a-kin to the old grand beast with seven heads and ten horns." And on the succeeding page, still in the same essay: "Every Christian community must settle its own troubles. No appeal from one congregation to another; there is no need of it, for no intelligent Christian congregation will ever cast out a person who could be an honor to any community." It would appear from these plain passages, that Mr. Campbell can hardly understand his own views of appeals. But on this subject Mr. C. also says, in 6th vol. *Millennial Harbinger*, p. 359, in his letter to Bishop Otey, in August, 1835: "We constitutionally can recognize no authority or government over us out of our respective communities. We have one King, one Lawgiver, one Judge, one Head, who is in Heaven. His apostles inherited his spirit, and have taught us his laws, and all we are brethren. All our communities are co-ordinate and independent of each other."

In *Millennial Harbinger*, 5th vol. new series, page 54, Mr. Campbell says: "The right of prayer is not more natural, nor necessary, nor expedient, than the right of appeal. There is no government, or state, or family, that can subsist without it. It was a part of every religious institution before the Christian; and if it be no part of it, it is a perfect anomaly in all social institutions."

This it will be allowed is sufficiently dogmatical, and evinces no small removal from the scriptural bond of union promulgated in 1809. Mr. Campbell owes it to his readers and to

himself to say, that he is wrong either first or last; and to explain how he has so suddenly discovered an error of such long standing, and so often urged, by the sole aid of a passage of Scripture, so familiar as that of 15th Acts; which, save that in such case it would lack Mr. Campbell's approbation, will afford the same warrant and authority for every council, synod, or association, that has ever subsisted during the Christian era, that it does for Mr. Campbell's council or judicatory of elders.

The Christian Institution is the manifestation of God's moral attributes to man in the person of his Son. Its founder disarmed Death by a voluntary submission to his power, and thus obtained for his subjects eternal life. It requires those subjects to give blessing for cursing, good for evil; and a crown of glory is promised to them by a crucified King, whose crown on earth was a crown of thorns. It is like no other institution, has nothing in common with those of this world, and stands alone in its duties, in its hopes, in its honors, and its King. It is an anomaly to all intents and purposes, and perhaps the greatest misapprehensions have sprung from overlooking this evident fact.

The manifest errors of the wise and learned, should teach mankind to look to God's word only for spiritual guidance; to learn there his will, and to do it as fast as he learns it, is man's noblest as well as safest course. Nor should he be impatient, or attempt by any legislation of his own to anticipate desired blessings. The Master says: "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much," Luke, xvi. 10. It is actual, not comparative fidelity, that will obtain the favor of God. Isaiah, xl. 31, says: "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint." This patient waiting on the Lord in his own appointments, is happily enjoined and illustrated, James, v. 7 :

“Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.” God has given to man his institutions and laws, as he has given seed to the husbandman, and as the latter casts his seed into the earth through faith in God’s appointed season; so the believer must be found ever in the patient use of, and attendance on, God’s laws and institutions, and in due season he will reap if he faint not. The sacred historian says, that whilst the cloud rested on the tabernacle, Israel abode in their tents; and only when it was lifted did they journey. As it was then, so it is now; God’s opportunity will be ever most surely found in man’s humble obedience. Let his people, instead of impatiently yearning after even what is good in itself, seek for it in the quiet paths which he has marked out; and they will see him, in his own good time, make bare his holy arm in the face of all nations, and enrich them with every promised blessing.

In the 19th Psalm, David beautifully contrasts God’s natural with his moral universe; claiming for his law the same perfection and adaptation to its design, as is exhibited in the arrangement of Nature around us. And just in the ratio in which spirit excels matter, must the Bible, displaying the mind and will of God, excel the Natural universe, “shewing forth his handy work.” It would therefore be less presumptuous in a mortal, to attempt to change the seasons, to control the movements of the planets, or to place another sun in the firmament, than to alter or in any way interfere with those moral arrangements appointed by Jehovah, to rescue his creature man from the pollution and slavery of sin, to introduce him into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God, and thus make him meet for the society of heavenly intelligences. The same humble, but diligent spirit is necessary to make progress in the knowledge of both systems, but whilst physical circumstances compel its adoption in the natural, it must be the result of Faith in the spiritual system; and unhappily as it was in Eden, so it is now; the last homage that man seems willing

to offer to his Creator and Redeemer, is that meek, humble, and confiding reliance on his word that is so justly due to his Truth, his Power and his Mercy.

If a student or enquirer should propose to investigate and disclose the operations of the natural universe, as Theology does those of the moral universe—the Bible; he would neither make progress nor proselytes, because his errors would be physically manifested. No matter how ingeniously he might construct his creed or theory, nor how daringly he might assert that he had compressed into a few articles or propositions all the material arcana of nature: No matter how resolutely he might enjoin on his hearers, that in conformity with his theory, they may sow one description of grain and reap another: that seed-time is the period for harvest, or vice versa, that God's institutions, the early and latter rain, are by no means necessary; that if God pleases he can give mankind all the fruits of the earth without labor, and if he does not please all the labour in the world cannot obtain them; therefore they should make no effort, but sit still and wait. No matter how plausibly he might defend and urge such views; mankind would smile at his self-conceit, and turn away from his presumptuous folly. For their every day experience contradicts his wild fancies, and shows that under his directions the earth would yield them nothing but mortification and disappointment. And yet it is to contradictions as great in the spiritual system, mankind not only listen with complacency, but yield a ready credence; and fondly suppose that the laws of that natural world, which God made by his own Word, will be more rigidly respected, than the laws of that moral world, to display and open which to the guilty and condemned, that Word became incarnate and expired on the cross. When the corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and the mortal shall have put on immortality, he will probably soon comprehend the harmony of nature, and rejoice in the handywork of his Creator: but in all the freshness and vigor of Eternal Life, he will never cease to study the mind and feed on the wisdom of God

as manifested in his sacred word; which will then contain all the essence of history, and remain the only memento to the redeemed, of the glories and follies of a perished world.

“He that cometh unto God, says Paul, must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” But the party who comes to the sacred volume, with his mind made up as to the system it ought to declare and support; neither exhibits the faith enjoined by Paul, nor that docility which the highest authority has pronounced indispensable to its right apprehension. He is like a man who should first resolve in his own mind that a certain theory concerning the natural universe is the true one, and then study the operations of nature, not to learn whether his theory be correct, but to try nature’s merits by his theory. Such a party would approach not in the character of a learner, but in that of a Master, and no such anomaly is found among the disciples of Nature. It is reserved for the professed followers of the humble Nazarene, to avow the wild inconsistency: that the bible contains the wisdom of Jehovah, manifested in his various dealings with mankind for the space of four thousand years, and that they have condensed into two or three pages the essence of that wisdom; exhibiting it in a creed or set of opinions which few, if any, can understand and explain, and which no further progress in the knowledge of God’s word must presume to contradict, at the peril of incurring their anathema. And in face of the well known fact that the most diligent and best qualified students of Nature, after devoting their lives to the study of her laws, have confessedly made but trifling progress, in comparison with what still invites their investigation; those who profess to believe that the Bible is the moral universe of Him, who laid the foundations of the Earth, “when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy,” can yet believe that man, “who cometh forth as a flower and is cut down, who fleeth as a shadow and continueth not,” may thus scan that sacred volume, alter or disarrange the order of its institutions, or modify in any way its high behests!

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; *having a form of Godliness but denying the power thereof*; from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth,” II. Tim. iii. 1.

THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL.

A FEW remarks addressed especially to the children of Israel will close this little work: for it is the writer's intention to send it to at least two individuals of that interesting nation, in the hope that they will give it a candid perusal. For he can honestly say with Paul, "My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved:" and he has read with much interest some essays on the Mosaic writings by one of the gentlemen alluded to; as well as some candid admissions of the lovely character of the King of Saints highly creditable to the other. In every descendant of Abraham is presented a proof of the faithfulness of God: a pledge of the truth of that sacred volume, wherein Jehovah has declared the end from the beginning, and as such he should awaken a kind feeling of interest in every Christian heart. To all therefore of the House of Israel who still remember the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, whose hearts turn towards him who led Israel like a flock, who bore them as on eagle's wings, and took them unto himself to be his people: whose bosoms warm at the recollection of that Divine presence which hallowed the mercy seat between the cherubim, and of that awful voice which bade their fathers know him for their God: To all such the writer respectfully says: Turn to the passages referred to and read them in the holy volume; observe the types as presented in the Old, and the anti-types in the New Testament; the identity of the two dispensations, as it regards the nature of Faith, and its peculiar obedience; the requirement under both of the same spirit—to do justly, love mercy, and *walk humbly* with God: both manifesting the same doctrine and design, in scenes so different, and under circumstances so opposite. Here the Royal David declaring: "The law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul, the testimony

of the Lord is sure making wise the simple." There—Jesus of Nazareth wielding that Law and Testimony to rebuke the Tempter, and triumphing over Satan in the sole power of God's word. See Matt. iv. 1. But there also appears but too much assimilation between your own Scribes and Pharisees at the time of the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, and the Theologians and Doctors of Divinity of the present day. The traditions of your Elders vastly exceeded in volume all the writings of Moses and the Prophets; and many things not found in these writings were enjoined by them as religious duties. Mysticism was the order of the day, and it seemed generally conceded that man could not understand the Giver of Speech when speaking; but must have a Rabbi to interpret to him the communications of his God.

Modern Theology, in its standard works, exceeds in volume even your traditions. The institutions of the Lord Jesus have found much less reverence than was shown by your Doctors to those of Moses. The mysticism is perhaps greater, and the same intense necessity exists for a Doctor of Divinity, or a regularly ordained minister to expound to man God's revelation; even that revelation which he gave through the lips of the Galilean fishermen, in order as the Apostle Paul says "to destroy the wisdom of the wise, and to bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."

The Prophet Isaiah seems to describe both parties and both periods—see 29th chap. 11th v. :

"And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver unto one that is learned, saying, Read this I pray thee: and he saith I cannot, for it is sealed: And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this I pray thee; and he saith I am not learned. Wherefore the Lord saith, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precept of men, therefore behold I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even

a marvellous work and a wonder, for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid. Wo unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say who seeth us? and who knoweth us? Surely your turning things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay; for shall the work say of him that made it, he made me not; or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He hath no understanding?"

When and how could the wisdom of your wise men perish? David had declared in Psalm, cxviii. 22, "The stone which the builders refused has become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes." Guided by their own desires and blinded by their own prejudices, your builders, the Doctors of the Law, in spite of the Prophet's warning, fulfilled the Prophet's prediction: their wisdom perished and their understanding was hid when under such circumstances they rejected the headstone of the Corner. At the 26th verse of the same Psalm, is written, "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord." This was the joyous shout with which the multitude hailed the entry into Jerusalem of the Mighty King, the Prince Messiah: coming unto Zion as described by Zachariah, "Meek and sitting on an ass, even the foal of a labouring beast." And the Lord Jesus declares at Matthew, xxiii. 39, after lamenting the blindness of Jerusalem, and foretelling her impending desolation, that henceforth her children should see him no more, until they shall raise that same joyful shout, "shall say, "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

It is that same rejected Messiah who still stretches out to you his gracious hands, and urges you to consider your ways and turn unto him. You have no altar, no priest, no sacrifice. In the plaintive language of your own Prophet: "There is no healing medicine in you." And yet you stand aloof from the Star of Jacob, and reject the Leader from the loins of Judah. "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die." Harken to the voice of Isaiah, announcing the doctrine of King Jesus: "Seek

ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy on him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." How beautifully do the prophet Isaiah and the apostle John harmonize, in the fulness and freeness of mercy, in the predicted Messiah of the former, and the glorified Messiah of the latter :

"Ho! every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not?" Isaiah, lv. 1. "And the Spirit and the Bride say, come; and let him that heareth say, come; and let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take the waters of life freely," Rev. xxii. 17. Both breathing the very spirit of the proclamation: "Go ye into all the world, and proclaim the glad tidings to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved."