

The Ancient Mode Of Baptizing, By Immersion, Plunging, Or Dipping Into Water; Maintained And Vindicated; by John Gill

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Water; Maintained And Vindicated;
by John Gill
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Thou hast given a standard to them that fear thee;
that it may be displayed because of the truth
— Psalm 60:4
SERMON 60

Against the Cavils and Exceptions of the Author of a late
Pamphlet, intituled, The manner of Baptizing with Water cleared up
from the Word of God and right Reason, etc.
TOGETHER WITH SOME REMARKS
upon the Author's REASONS for the Praactice
of a FREE or mix Communion in Churches.
CHAPTER 1.
Some Remarks upon the Title of the Book,
and the Author's method of writing.

THE controversy about baptism, both with respect to its mode of administration, and proper subjects, has been of late so diligently searched into, and thoroughly discussed, that it may well seem needless to trouble the world with any further writings upon that subject, it being in a great measure only actum agere, to do he same thing over again, which has been well done already; but those of a different persuasion from us, being continually thrusting their crambe millies cocta upon us, and repeating the same things over and over again, though they have been sufficiently answered already, makes it necessary for us, in the defense of truth, and for the honor of Christ in his ordinance, to reply. A late anonymous author has thought fit to let the world know what a talent he has in that part of the controversy, which concerns the mode of

administering this ordinance, by publishing a tract, whose title page runs thus, *The Manner of baptizing with Water, cleared up from the Word of God, and right Reason, in a plain free Debate upon that subject, between Mr J.P. and Mr B. W. June.3 6th, 1726. Published for instruction in righteousness. How he has acquitted himself in the management thereof, and what improvements and discoveries he has made beyond others, is our present business to consider.*

It seems our author has not thought fit to say any thing concerning the subjects of baptism, but has confined himself to the mode of administration of it; whether it was because he did not care to engage in that part of the controversy, or whether he thought that it has been sufficiently handled already, and this not so, is what I do not pretend to determine; therefore seeing he has not thought proper to take notice of it, I shall not think my-self concerned to say any thing about it. From the title page we are given to expect, that the manner of baptizing with water shall be cleared up to us; for it seems we were all in the dark before about it, or at least, there were such mists and fogs beclouding our apprehensions concerning this ordinance, that there was no seeing clearly into it, until the publication of this treatise, by which the author fancies these are dissipated, and the affair let in a clear light; but I hope to make it appear, before I have done, that instead of giving more light, he has darkened counsel by words without knowledge. The title also promises that this shall be cleared up from the word of God, and right reason. By the word of God, I suppose he means the written word of God, the scriptures of truth, which indeed are the only rule of our faith and practice; and from whence, under the conduct of the blessed Spirit, all our light in faith and worship springs; but what he means by right reason, needs explaining, and is not so easy to determine. If he means a just and strong way of reasoning, one might justly expect to find somewhat of it in this his performance; but the case being otherwise, I shall not, at present, farther inquire what else he designed by it; but only observe to him, that we ought to believe and act in matters of faith and worship, upon the sole credit and authority of the great God, as he has revealed his mind and will in the sacred writings.

The method which our author has taken, in order to set this matter in a clear light, is dialogue-wise, or in the form of a conference between two persons, or to use his own words, in a plain free debate. What moved him to take this method does not indeed much concern me to know, but yet I cannot forbear thinking, one reason might be, that he might have the opportunity of making his antagonist speak what he himself pleased; for it would have betrayed his weakness yet more, to have produced such arguments and objections which he was not, in his own way, able to solve: though at the same time it is an instance of his disingenuity, not fairly to⁴ propose those arguments which are made use of, nor give them their full weight and force, which he ought to have done in handling a controversy honestly and faithfully; as well as making his friend speak

such weak and ridiculous things as never were, at least publicly, made use of in this controversy. Had he had a mind to have made a trial of his skill and his talents and abilities this way, why did not he take out the arguments of some such writers as Tombs, Danvers, Keach, Stennet, or Gale, and fairly propose them in their own words, and give an answer to them? But this would not have answered his design, which seems to be, exposing to ridicule and contempt the ordinance of baptism, by plunging or dipping; and would, moreover, have been a task too difficult and laborious for him. Perhaps he also thought, this method best to conceal himself from being known to be the author of it; but if it is truth he is in search of, and bearing a testimony to, why should he be ashamed of it? why did not he put his name to his book? This is such a poor, mean, and cowardly way of writing, as manifestly betrays either shame or fear to appear publicly in the cause he has espoused; if he thinks he is fighting the Lord's battles, why does not he appear like a man, in the open field, and not lie scouting behind the hedge? But perhaps this is to keep off a full blow that he is afraid might be given to him. But to go on, this debate or conference is represented, as managed by two persons, under the fictitious names of Mr J. P. a plunger in water, and Mr B. W. a baptizer with water; for it seems, according to our author, that plunging in water, and baptizing with water, are directly opposite to each other; but unless he can tell us, how a person can be baptized or dipped into water, without being baptized with it, they will not appear so opposite as he imagines, but of this more hereafter.

It is scarce worth my while to take any notice of the time when this conference was held, unless it be just to remark, that it would have been as well for the credit of the author, the good and peace of the churches of Christ, and the glory of his name, or better, if it had never been, or at least, if it had never been published; but it seems it is published for instruction in righteousness; but if any are instructed by it in that way, in which our blessed Lord thought it became him and his followers to fulfill all righteousness, it will be contrary to the design and intention of the author; though I am credibly informed, that two persons have been already convinced by reading his book, that plunging or dipping the whole body in water, is the right way and mode of administering Baptism; such is the force of truth, that it will break out and appear, in spite of all opposition made against it. I have nothing more to observe here, but only, that seeing the author has not thought fit to discover his name, the reader is desired to observe, that I shall call him by the name of Mr B. W, which is what he has been pleased to assume to himself; and so proceed to the consideration of this wild, jumbling, and confused debate, in the best order and method into which I am capable of ranging it: Though I should have observed to the reader, the terms or articles agreed upon in this conference. As,

1. "That whatever was spoke, should be tried by the written word of God, and that only." But I thought from the title page, that right reason was to be joined to the word of God, in the management of this debate; but perhaps the mode of baptizing, the thing debated, is to be tried by the one, and cleared up by the other.

2. "That in all they should use plainness of speech, without any cunning craftiness; granting unto him that spoke, the liberty of explaining his own words, and meaning;" but if cunning craftiness is not made use of, and a handling the word of God deceitfully, in this debate, by Mr B. W. I am much mistaken.

3. "That all be done with the spirit of meekness, and true christianity; without passion, prejudice, bitter reflection, or railing accusation." How Mr B. W. has conformed and acted agreeably to this article, may be very easily observed, when he calls baptism, as administered by plunging, a superstitious invention; and a pleading for it, fathering foolish lies upon God, p. 23 and will-worship, p. 24. The last article is, "That they both should keep within the bounds of brevity "and civility; the one must not be tedious in speaking, nor the other troublesom in interrupting:" Which terms being agreed upon, to work they go, and what they made of it, is now our business to inquire..6

CHAPTER 2

The first argument for dipping or plunging in water, as the right mode of baptizing, taken from John's practice, and our Lord's example, in

Matthew 3:16 with the objections of Mr B.W. thereunto, considered.

MR B. W. introduces his antagonist in p. 6 producing the instance of Christ's being baptized by John in Jordan, in favor of plunging or dipping in water, as the right and only mode of baptizing: the text cited is, Matthew 3:16, And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; from whence he argues, that he had been in it, seeing he could never be said to go out of that wherein he had not been. To which Mr B. W. replies:

1. That the words signify no more than that he went up from the water; as, says he, persons of your judgment have been often told. It is true, it is kind in such learned Gentlemen as Mr B. W. that they will condescend to instruct such poor ignorant creatures as we plungers are commonly represented, and as I suppose this author takes us to be; but when they have done their part, we

are left without excuse, and cannot say, that we have not been told to the contrary; though it is prodigiously affronting, that after all the pains they have taken to instruct us, yet that we should strenuously insist on the justness of our translation, as we think, to be a little more serious, we have just reason to do. The reason of this low criticism is, because the preposition *apw*, and not *ejk*, is here made use of, but *apw* signifies out of, as well as from, and answers $\mu\zeta$ to the Hebrew which also is of the same signification; and the rather it should be rendered so here, not only because it suits best with the scope of the place, but agrees with that parallel text in

Acts 8:39 where *ejk* is made use of: So that there can be no foundation there for this trifling criticism. But if Mr B. W. should question whether the word *apw* is ever used in this sense, let him turn to the Septuagint in

Psalms 40:2 which he seems to have some regard for, and there he will find it, where David says, the Lord brought him up out of an horrible pit, *ki* *apw* *phlou* *iluov*, and out of the miry clay. But,

2. He adds,⁷

“Supposing the translation very right, I wonder, says he, where “dipping, overwhelming, or plunging, can be seen therein!”

What a prodigious deal of strong reasoning is here? And I as much wonder too, where washing with water, either by pouring or sprinkling, can be seen therein. He goes on,

“you say, he went out of the water, therefore he had been in it; but if you had said, he had been dipped, overwhelmed, or plunged, I should have denied the consequence.”

It seems, however, that he is willing to grant, that Christ’s going into the water, and being there, is a necessary inference and consequence, justly deduced from his coming up out of the water; though he is unwilling to allow plunging to be so, for otherwise I doubt not, but that he would have denied the one as well as the other; and I hope he will be willing to grant, that Christ went down into the water, in order to be baptized, and that he came up out of it as a baptized person; therefore he is desired to observe, that we do not infer plunging merely from Christ’s going down into the water, nor from his coming up out of it, but from his going down into it in

order to be baptized, and from his coming up out of it as a baptized person; for that a person may go into water, and come again out of it, and not be plunged into it, we know as well as he; but that a person should go into water, and be baptized in it, as Christ was, without being dipped or plunged into it, is what we deny; and if those circumstance, of John's administering this ordinance in the river Jordan, and Christ, when baptized, coming up out of the water, are not demonstrative proofs of plunging, yet they are at least strong presumptive ones, and such as I challenge him to produce the like, in favor of this ordinance being administered to Christ, by washing with water, either by pouring or sprinkling. If plunging is not a necessary inference from what is revealed concerning Christ's baptism, I am sure sprinkling or pouring of water can never be; and I will leave it to any impartial man of judgment, to use his own phrase, whether there is not a greater probability, to put it upon no other foot, of Christ's being baptized by immersion, when he went into the river Jordan to be baptized, and accordingly was baptized there by John, than there is of his being baptized in that river only by an affusion or sprinkling of water upon him: So that he has but little reason, with that air of assurance, and in that dogmatical way, to say,.⁸

“that John baptized in Jordan is true, but he never dipped nor plunged any in his life;”

as he does in p. 10. And here I cannot forbear mentioning a passage of those excellent divines, John Polyander, Andrew Rivet, Anthony WaLeus, and Anthony Thysius, who at the same time that they are endeavoring to have the mode of baptism, either by plunging or sprinkling, accounted an indifferent thing, acknowledge this instance of Christ's baptism to be an example of plunging. Their words are these,

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“Whether baptism is to be administered by a single or a trine immersion, was always judged a thing indifferent in the christian church; as also whether plunging or sprinkling is to be used, seeing no express command is extant concerning it; and examples of sprinkling as well as of plunging may be found in scripture; for as in

Matthew 1:1 Christ went into the water, and came out of it, as also the Ethiopian, Acts 8. So, many thousands are said to be

baptized in one day, in the city of Jerusalem, Acts 2. Likewise many in private houses, Acts 16 and 18;

1 Corinthians 1:16

where such a going into water was scarcely possible:"

Which, by the way, is a mistake in those great men, for none of the texts alledged, though they prove a baptism of whole households, yet they do not prove that it was administered in their houses; for most of them plainly shew, that this was performed before the apostles entrance into them; and if it had been done there, it would be no proof or evidence that it was done by sprinkling, seeing proper accommodations to baptize by immersion might be had, even in a house: Though there is no reason, as I have hinted, to suppose it was done there; all that I produced this passage for, is to show, that though those valuable writers were fond of these instances, as evidences of sprinkling; yet they could not but acknowledge, that the baptism of Christ, and of the Eunuch, were examples of plunging. But to return: I desire, when our author insinuates, that Christ's being plunged by John in the river Jordan, when he was baptized by him, is a human conjecture, which he is not willing to build his faith upon; I desire, I say, that he would consider whether his suppositions that Christ went ankle or knee deep into the water, and was baptized by pouring or sprinkling water upon him, and that the multitudes baptized by John in Jordan, went down some little way into the water, from whence, being baptized, without any such thing as stripping, and shifting, and plunging, as his words are, "they.9 straightway came up, and went about their business," are not human conjectures; and whether, seeing things are so, he may not be justly numbered among those who build their faith upon human conjectures, which he seems to be resolved against. And if nothing but conjectures can be formed from Christ's baptism, concerning the mode of it, I persuade myself, that to every thinking and unprejudiced person, the conjecture, if it must be called so, of Christ's being plunged, when baptized, will appear more probable, and much preferable to that of his having water poured or sprinkled on him. As for his rejecting the observation which some have made on

Mark 1:9 and saying, that it might as well be let alone, I do not much wonder at it, it no ways agreeing with his notion of baptism. The observation is this, that whereas it is said in

Mark 1:9 that Jesus was baptized of John in Jordan, it might have been rendered εἰς τὸν Ἰορδάνην, into Jordan, as the preposition εἰς is frequently translated. Now to say, that he was poured or sprinkled of John into Jordan, would want sense, but to say, that he was plunged or dipped into Jordan, runs very smooth, and is very good sense; for a person cannot be said to be baptized, or dipped in a river, without being baptized or dipped into it; and indeed this is the meaning of all those scriptures which speak of John's baptizing in Jordan, as

Matthew 3:6,

Mark 1:5. And whereas he says, that the Holy Ghost intends by it a baptizing in Jordan; he ought to observe, that this cannot be without a baptizing into it; to which, I suppose, he will readily reply, that this is taking for granted that the word properly signifies to dip or plunge; and he may take it for granted that we will do so, until he, or somebody else, can give us an instance where the word is otherways used; which I believe he, and greater masters of the Greek tongue than himself, will never be able to do. But,

3. Mr B. W. not only represents plunging, as urged from Christ's baptism, to be a mere non sequitur, and an human conjecture, but also attended with nonsense, and very gross absurdities; as when he says, p. 9

“By the same way of reasoning, you may as well persuade an impartial man of judgment, that Christ is under water still, because it is said, that he went into the place where John at first baptized, and there he abode,

John 10:40.”

As if Christ's going to Bethabara, a place where John had formerly baptized, and Christ had dwelt in, was a parallel case to his going down into the river Jordan, to be baptized by John there. But I am persuaded,.10

that the very mention of this, without making any further remarks upon it, will much more expose our author to the scorn and contempt of every impartial man of judgment, than our way of reasoning, for plunging, from Christ's baptism, ever will do us. He goes on in a trifling manner, to shew how weak and ridiculous our method of arguing from John's baptism is, "they were baptized in Jordan, says he; therefore they were plunged over head and ears;" which he fancies is as absurd, and as inconsequential, as if one should say, the staff stands in the corner, therefore it rains; or because, says he, it is said that John baptized in the wilderness, therefore in baptizing he thrust the people into thorns and briars."

What he means by all this ludicrous stuff I cannot tell, unless it be to banter the ordinance of water-baptism in general, and so join forces with the Quakers, utterly to explode it; for what he seems here to direct against the mode of baptizing by immersion, may be retorted upon any other, and particularly his own; thus, they were baptized in Jordan, therefore they went ankle or knee deep into it, and had water poured or sprinkled on them; which is equally as filly and ridiculous, as if one should say, "the staff stands in the corner, therefore it rains;" or because it is said, that John baptized in the wilderness, therefore in baptizing, he put the people knee deep into thorns and briars, and scratched their faces with them. But away with such ridiculous impertinencies as these. Could not the man distinguish between the place where John was preaching the doctrine of baptism unto repentance, and the place where he was administering the ordinance of it, the one being in the wilderness, and the other in the river Jordan, as he might have been informed, if he had more diligently consulted the text he has reference to, in

Mark 1:4, 5. But what he fancies will most affect us, is, that John is said to baptize with water: now says our author, if "baptizing and. plunging signify the same thing, then John might have said, I plunge you indeed with water;" all persons, adds our author, but those of your judgment, would readily conclude, that such an expression wanted sense;" that is, because he looks upon us plungers, as he is pleased to call us, no doubt, as persons exceeding illiterate, and who are altogether unacquainted

with language; whilst he, and those of his persuasion, must be considered as the only men of sense and learning; but if this penetrating man, this man of sense, can tell us, how a person can be plunged in water, without being¹¹ plunged with it, what a prodigious discovery would he make to the world! and if it would want sense to read the words, “I plunge you indeed with water;” then pray let them be read, I plunge you indeed in water, and I hope they will not want sense then; aye, “but, says Mr B. W. John tells us himself, that he baptized them with water; and, says he, lest plungers should not observe this, all the four evangelists take notice of it,”

Matthew 3:11,

Mark
1:8,

Luke 3:16,

John 1:26.

I confess I have consulted all those texts, and find the words to be read thus, I indeed baptize you, ejn udap, in water, only in

Luke 3:16 the preposition ejn is omitted, which some, as Pasor and Schmidius think, in the other texts, is an Hebraism, or an Attic pleonasm, and then the sense and reading will be, either way, the same as what I have given; but then here is another prodigious absurdity behind, which those of a different persuasion from us think we are inevitably thrown into by this reading, and that is, that then we must be obliged to read the other part of the text thus, he shall baptize you in the holy Ghost and in fire; and this our author seems to have regard unto, when he says, “It is impossible that any impartial man of judgment can so much as imagine, that by being baptized with the holy Ghost, a being plunged in the holy Ghost should be understood; for the Lord himself tells us, that by baptizing he means pouring;” for the proof of which, he mentions

Isaiah 44:3 and

Acts 10:44.

That the donation of the Spirit is sometimes expressed by pouring, sometimes by sprinkling, I frankly own; but this which John has reference to, is the extraordinary donation of the Spirit on the day of pentecost, as is manifest from

Acts 1:5. and therefore another word is made use of, as being more expressive of the glory and greatness of that dispensation; and when we consider the account that is given of it, by the inspired writer, as that there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, which filled the house where they were sitting; and that cloven tongues, like as of fire, sat upon each of them; and that they were all filled with the holy Ghost; it will not seem so very strange, incongruous, and disagreeable to say, that they were as if they had been dipped or plunged all over therein. I am persuaded our author will acknowledge the learned Casaubon to be an impartial man of judgment, and yet he speaks of, and explains this affair.¹² much in the same language. His words are there, with which I shall conclude this chapter:

“Although, says he,

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I do not disapprove of the word baptizare being retained here, that the antithesis may be full, yet I am of opinion, that a regard is had in this place to its proper signification, for baptizein is to immerse, so as to tinge or dip, and in this sense the apostles are truly said to be baptized, for the house in which this was done, was filled with the holy Ghost so that the apostles seemed to be plunged into it as into a fish-pool.”

And in the same way, their being baptized or dipped in fire, may be accounted for, that being expressive of the same thing, unless our author should think, that this is still a much more improper way of speaking, but among the best Greek authors, we have this phrase of dipping in fire made use of, and particularly in Moschus.

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CHAPTER 3

The second argument in favor of baptism by immersion, taken from the place John chose to baptize in, and the reason of that choice,

John 3:23. with the weak replies, and foolish shifts and evasions which Mr B. W. makes thereunto, considered.

Mr B. W. next introduces his friend Mr P. in p. 11, 12 arguing for immersion, from those words in

John 3:26. And John also was

baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there, after this manner; namely,

“John was baptizing in Enon, because there was much water there; therefore all that were baptized were overwhelmed with water. They were dipped, they were plunged, because there was much water there.”

But this argument is not very fairly represented; for we do not argue merely from there being much water there, that they were dipped or plunged, but from their being baptized in a place of much water, and which was chose for that very reason. We know that there may be much water where no person is dipped or plunged into it; but that any person should be baptized in a place of much water, without being dipped or plunged into it, is what we deny. Moreover the reasonableness of concluding that baptism, in those times, was performed by immersion, we think may be fairly argued from John’s choosing of, and baptizing in a place where there was much water, and we believe it will appear so to every thinking and unprejudiced person; but let us consider what Mr B. W. has to reply. And,

1st, To shew his learning and skill in chorography, he inquires what Enon was, whether it was a river or no, and seems to call in question its being so, and therefore tells us, p. 13. That such a river cannot be found in the best accounts we have of the land of Israel: and adds, and it is very probable, that Enon was either a village, or a tract of land, where there were abundance of springs and little rivulets of water. Whether Enon is the name of a river, or of a city, town or village, or of a trace of land abounding with water, does not much affect our controversy, if it is but granted that there was much water there, for which reason John made

choice of it to baptize in; and I hope it will be granted, that there was a.14
sufficiency of water to baptize by immersion, especially seeing Mr B. W.
tells us in p. 17 that for plunging of people there need not be much water.
The Arabic version divides the word into two, and calls it Ain-Nun, which
may be rendered, the fountain of Nun; as does also the Syriac, Ain-Yon,
which Junius renders the fountain of the Dove: And as for Salim, near to
which was Enon, and which is the best direction for the finding where it
was; this was either Shalem, a city of Shechem, mentioned in

Genesis

33:18 as some think, though this is not very likely, seeing that was in
Samaria, with the inhabitants of which John had nothing to do; or else it is
the same with Shalim, in

1 Samuel 9:4 as Junius and others think,
though it seems rather to be that place which Arias Montanus

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calls Salim

juxta torrentem, Salim by the brook, which he places in the tribe of
Issachar, not far from the lake of Genesaret; and may be called so,
perhaps, either because it was near this Enon, where there was much
water, or else because it was not far from the place where the two rivers
Jaboc and Jordan met; as Calvin, from the geographers, observes upon
this place. But supposing that our present best accounts of the land of
Israel, make no mention of any such river as Enon; nor can it be
determined by them what it was, or where it was; yet I hope it will be
acknowledged, that the account of it in the sacred text is just, and that
whether it be a river, village, or tract of land, yet there was much water
there; for which reason John made choice of it as a proper place to baptize
in, which is sufficient for our purpose. But,

2dly, From inquiring into the place itself, he proceeds to give us the
notation of the word, or the reason of its name; for he says, the learned tell
us, that the word does signify a place of springs: And the learned

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also

tell us, that it signifies an eye, as well as a spring or fountain; and also

soothsaying, and clouds, or a beclouding; so that there is not much to be learned from that. And here I cannot forbear mentioning the observation of Aretius, upon this place; though I suppose that Mr B. W. will think that he might as well have let it alone, who, after he had said that it was a town near Jordan, observes,

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that it signifies affliction, humility, and weeping:

I suppose he derives it from the Hebrew word hn[Anab, which sometimes signifies to humble and afflict; “thereby, says he, teaching us, “that such we are required to be in baptism and true repentance.” But to go on: In order to strengthen this sense of the word, which Mr B. W. says is given by the learned, he informs us, that.¹⁵

“it is observable, that the town called. Middin, in

Joshua 15:61

is called Enon, by the seventy Greek interpreters of the Old Testament;”

whether this is an observation of his own, or of the learned with whom he converses, he does not tell us; if of the latter, he might have been so kind as to have told us who they were, that we might have consulted them, and have considered their proofs of it. By what goes before and after, it seems as if he meant that it was one of theirs; which when one comes to examine, it looks, according to the order of the text, as if it was Secacah, and not Middin, that is rendered Enon; the words in

Joshua 15:61 in the

wilderness, Beth-arabah, Middin & Secacah, are by the Septuagint thus rendered, etc. Baddargeis, etc Tharabaam, etc. Aenon; so that if a regard is to be had to the order of the words, then as Baddargeis answers to Beth-arabah, so Tharabaam to Middin, and Aenon to Secacah; and if so, here is a fine piece of critical learning spoiled: But supposing that Baddargeis answers to Bamidbar, which we render, in the wilderness; and Tharabaam to Beth-arabah, and so AEnon to Middin, because the Septuagint make seven cities here, and in the following verse, when there are but fix, to what purpose is this produced? or what is gained by it? or how does this prove that the word signifies a place of springs? Yes, in Mr B. W’s

imagination, it serves a very good purpose, and sufficiently proves this signification of the word; but how? why they (the learned) also observe, says he, “that in

Judges 5:10. there is mention made of those that fit in, upon, or near Middin, we read in judgment, where immediately the holy Ghost takes notice of the places of drawing water; so that, if any body would know wherefore Middin is rendered Enon by the Septuagint, the reason is ready, because of the places of drawing water.”

A fine way of arguing indeed! what, because Middin, in

Joshua 15:61 is rendered Aenon by the Septuagint, and because a word of the same form and found, is rendered in

Judges 5:10. by the same ep Krithriou, “upon the judgment-seat;” and we read in judgment, where the holy Ghost immediately takes notice of the places of drawing water; therefore the reason is ready for any body to know why Middin is rendered by Enon, in the former text, and that is, because of the places of drawing water.” Can any man in the world see any connection here? and how does this appear to.16 be the ready, plain and easy reason of this version: Had either Middin or Enon been in the Septuagint text of

Judges 5:10 there had been some tolerable color and pretense for all this, though that would have fell short of proving it to be the reason of such a version in

Joshua 15:61 but here is not the least appearance of either; though it is true, there are some interpreters who think that the word rendered judgment, is the proper name of a place either of that city mentioned in

Joshua 15:6,. or of a path or road-way which bore this name; so the Masora, R. David Kimchi,

and R. Levi Ben Gersom; though the Targum, Septuagint, R. Solomon Jarchi, R. Isaiah, understood it of judgment, as we do, as well as many other interpreters and expositors; but granting that the word does signify a place of fountains and springs, and was so called, because of the places of drawing water, then I hope there was aplenty of water there, and what was sufficient for the baptizing of persons by immersion of the whole body; for which reason John made choice of it. But,

3. He goes on and says,

“You and your friends must grant, that the words of the holy Ghost do not denote much water in one great channel, but many waters, streams or rivulets, in a certain tract or neighborhood.”

By the words of the holy Ghost, I suppose he means *polla udata*, which our translators have very well rendered much water; and he seems in this passage to have reference to that poor low criticism, which those of his persuasion are often obliged to have recourse to, which is, that there words are not expressive of a large quantity of water, but signify only, many little streams and rivulets, which are not sufficient for an immersion of the whole body, and therefore should have been rendered, not much water, but many waters. We grant that *udata polla* may be literally rendered many waters; but that they signify some little small streams and rivulets of water, and not a large quantity thereof, is what we deny. That John intends a large and not a small quantity of water, is manifest from his use of the phrase in other of his writings, as for instance, in

Revelation 1:15, it is said of

Christ, that his voice was as the sound, *udatoin pollan*, of many waters; but what found does little purling streams, and small rivulets of water make? And who can imagine the allusion should be made to them; or that these should be expressive of the voice of Christ in the gospel, especially in the ministry of it by the apostles, whose sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world? Again, in.17

Revelation 17:1 the great whore is represented as fitting *epi tw*

uditwn tw *pollwn*, “upon many waters,” by which are metaphorically set forth unto us, those many people, kingdoms, and nations over whom she exercised a lawless and tyrannical power, as appears from verse 15

where the angel tells John, that the waters which he saw, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues: from whence it is manifest, that by this phrase is intended, not a small quantity of people, or some little petty nations and kingdoms, which were subject to the see of Rome; but a large quantity of people, even multitudes, and of nations and kingdoms, the chief and greatest; besides, our author, as well as others, would do well to consider, that *udata polla* is an Hebraism, *Rabbim* μυσσ δβψσ and answers to *Mayim*, and by which the Septuagint frequently render these words; and that where small streams and rivulets cannot be intended, but large and great waters are spoken of, nay where indeed, the waters of the sea are plainly meant: As for instance, in

Psalm 77:19 it is said concerning God's leading his people through the Red Sea, Thy way is in the sea, and thy path, *ejn udaoi wolloiv*, in many waters, or as we justly read it, in the great waters; for surely the waters of the sea may be called so, and I hope that *udata polla*, here, does not signify many little streams and rivulets. Again, in

Psalm

107:23. sea-faring persons are thus described, they that go down to the sea in ships, that do business, *ejn udaoi polloiv*, in many waters, that is, in great waters, as the waters of the sea are; and I persuade myself, that none can be so weak as to imagine, that ships can sail in small streams and rivulets, or the business that the Psalmist speaks of, to be done in such places where there is not a sufficiency of water to dip or plunge into.

Moreover, if this phrase may not be allowed to be an Hebraism, it will be hard to prove that many waters signify a small quantity, and only some little streams or rivulets: Sure I am, some persons, of far superior learning to what Mr B. W. discovers, have thought the contrary, as Grotius, Piscator, Lightfoot, and others; but if there may not be allowed to be good judges of the Greek tongue, I hope Nonnus Panopolitanus may, who flourished about the year 420 was a famous Greek and Christian poet, and turned this gospel, according to John, into Greek verse, who not only says, that the place where John was baptizing, was *baqukumonov*, "a place of deep waters," but also expresses *udata polla* by *afqonon udwr*, *copiosa aqua*, "a large water, or abundance of water:" But because his

version of the whole text makes much for the elucidation of it, I will transcribe it from him: .18

—Hn de ki< autov.

Qeov Iwannhv qeopeiqea laon alhthn

Udati baptizwn baqukumonov enduqi salhm

Keiqi gar euruporoio kulendomenou potamoio

Ceumasin aenaiv kumainetai afqonon udwr

Arkion eim eni pasin

Which may be rendered in English thus.

"And the divine John himself also was baptizing in water, the straying people, who were obedient to God, at or in a place of deep waters, near to Salem, because there abundance of water, sufficient for them altogether, flowed in the ever-running streams of the winding river, whole passage over is very broad."

But supposing that much water in one great channel is not intended, though I must confess I can see no reason why it should not, and that many waters, streams, or rivulets are here meant; yet, who does not know that many of these together, can not only fill large and capacious pools, sufficient enough for immersion, but also frequently form and feed very great rivers? so that I do not see that this will much help his cause, or affect our argument.

But Mr B. W. says, p. 14.

"But what and if the holy Ghost intends to give us the reason why the place was called Enon, because there were many waters, springs or rivulets there? what will become of your argument then, and how will you help yourself?"

Where he insinuates, as if the design of the holy Ghost in these words, because there was much water there, is not to inform us of the conveniency of this place for baptizing, or that it was the reason why John made choice of it, but to explain the meaning of the word Enon, and to let us know, that the place was so called, because there was much water, or many springs or rivulets there: How trifling and ridiculous is this? Does the holy Ghost take such a method as this in other parts of the Bible, where the proper names of places are mentioned? and what necessity can there be for explaining of this any more than there is of others? and why is not the meaning of Salim as well as Enon given? Surely we need not be afraid of

losing our argument from such interpretations and senses of scriptures as there, which will appear vain and trifling at the first view, to every impartial.19 man of judgment; nor need we be much solicitous about helping ourselves, when pressed with such silly nonsense as this. But,

4. Mr B. W. proceeds to charge the argument for plunging in baptism, taken from hence, not only with want of consequence, but as a vain conjecture: his words are there;

"Granting, says he, that Enon was a great river, or a great water, yet it can never be proved that John plunged persons all over in it; that is nothing at all but your vain conjecture;"

and then in his usual, positive, and dogmatical way, adds,

"he baptized them, but he never plunged them."

Here I need only reason as I did before, with regard to the baptism of Christ, and others, in Jordan, that if John's pitching upon Enon, as a convenient place to baptize in, because there was much water there, and his baptizing in that place is not a demonstrative proof of his baptizing by plunging, yet at least must be a strong presumptive one, and such an one as he can never produce in favor of his baptizing there by an affusion or sprinkling of water: And again, is to suppose that John baptized there by immersion, is a vain and trifling conjecture, I am sure, and I believe it will appear to every unprejudiced person, that to suppose that he did it by sprinkling or pouring, is much more so. And if we poor ignorant creatures may not be allowed to infer and conclude immersion from hence, without being charged with making vain and trifling conjectures; yet I hope he will be a little more sparing of the great Calvin, for whom, I do not doubt, from some few hints I have observed in this conference, he has a value and respect, and whom I persuade myself he will allow to be an impartial man of judgment, and to whose judgment he will always pay a deference: His note upon this text, is this;

"Geographers write, says he, that there two towns, Enon and Salim, were not far from the confluence of Jaboc and Jordan, nigh to which they place Scythopolis. Moreover, from those words we may gather that baptism was performed by John and Christ, by a plunging of the whole body under water;"

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and I think we may conclude this very fairly too, whatever Mr B W. may

think of it. But,.20

5thly, Our ingenious author, by a new turn and mighty stretch of thought, has found out another reason, besides that of conveniency, for baptizing, which made John fix upon, and determined him in the choice of this place, there being much water there, and that is, that the vast multitudes which flocked to, and attended upon his ministry, might be refreshed; as also their horses, or their camels, or whatsoever we may suppose many of them did ride upon; by which, I suppose, he means asses. I cannot but observe, that he seems to speak this with some caution or guard upon himself, as he does also in p. 17 where he says, speaking of the people which flocked to John's ministry, "a great number of them, doubtless, must travel many miles; and we must suppose, many on foot, and many otherwise:" and this I cannot but attribute to a self-consciousness in him, that he deserved to be numbered among those animals, or at least, to his being aware that this would be turned upon him, for his foolish and ridiculous glosses on the sacred writings. What seems the most to strengthen him in his folly, and upon which he says much stress, is the vast multitudes of people which followed John, and attended upon his ministry; and the unwise part John would have acted, if he had not chose places where refreshment might be had for themselves and their cattle: But surely the man forgets himself, or at least, does not give himself time to consider, that John was now upon the declining hand, and had not those vast numbers and multitudes following him as formerly he had; the crowd was now after Christ, and not John; and though he had some which came to him, and were baptized, yet they were but few in comparison of what he had formerly, or what now followed Christ; as he might easily have observed, by reading this third chapter of John; and therefore there was no need for him to be so solicitous for accommodations for the people and their cattle, as is here by our author intimated; and to make his sense appear the more plausible, he tells us, that "by John's baptizing, we are to understand John's preaching, administering in his office, and fulfilling his course;" for which he cites,

Matthew 21:25,

Acts 10:47. It is readily granted, that sometimes by John's baptism, we are to understand his whole ministry, and particularly

the doctrine of baptism, preached by him, as distinct from the administration of the ordinance; but that by his baptizing here is meant his preaching, must be denied; for that it intends his administration of the ordinance of water-baptism, not only his act of baptizing, but the people's submission to it; for the text says, they came and were baptized, manifestly prove it; to say nothing of the place where it was performed, being a place of much water, the thing now in debate. He also insinuates, that great part.²¹ of the land of Judea was sandy and barren; but not so barren as his arguments are.

“You may understand, says he, what fort of a country, for water, a great part of that land was, from the great contentions between Isaac's servants, and others, about digging, finding, and enjoying wells of water;”

but there contentions did not arise so much from the scarcity of water, as from the envy of the Philistines on the one hand, and from Isaac's servants, stiffly insisting upon their right and property, on the other: For though persons may have never such plenty of things, yet they are not willing to be defrauded of what is their just right.

He goes on: “Glad at heart they were when they found plenty of water, for their own refreshment, and the refreshment of their cattle.” One would be almost tempted to think that the man was describing the sandy deserts of Arabia, rather than the fertile land of Canaan, and representing the travelling companies of Dedanim who being almost scorched with heat, are thrown into a transport of joy, at the sight of a spring of water; but who will it be most proper to give credit to, Moses, an inspired writer, who told the people of Israel, that God was bringing them into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, that spring out of valleys and hills; or our blundering geographer, who represents it as a desert and wilderness. Moreover, it seems, that there need not be much water for the plunging of persons, and therefore John need not have chose this place upon that account; but I hope, so much is needful, as will cover the persons all over. And there is one thing therefore that we need not be afraid of being pressed with by our author, as we are by some, and that is, the scarcity of water in some parts. But what he says of the practice of our friends in London, is entirely false, which is, that they plunge in little holes or tubs; for I cannot see, but he must mean them, and not those in other

places; because he adds, rather than the Thames, that is just by. Now there are but two places, in and about London, that I know of, which are made use of for the administration of this ordinance, the one is in the midst of a public meeting-house, and the other in an open place, where there are conveniencies for a large number of spectators; and it is very rare that this ordinance is administered by us in a private manner, as some other performances commonly are, in a lying-in chamber; and that only in the presence of a midwife, a nurse, and two or three gossiping women..²² As for the instance of a certain plunger in the country, performing the ordinance in an horse-pond, in the middle of a town, I shall suspend my thoughts about it, and neither condemn nor commend his practice, unless I had a better account of it, with its circumstances, than Mr B. W. has given; though I can see no great damage in it, as he has related it, provided the water was not dirty and filthy: But I suppose he designs it as a banter upon us, and a diversion for his reader; much good may do him with it, and let him make the best of it he can..²³

CHAPTER 4.

The third argument insisted on, in favor of plunging or dipping, as the right mode of baptizing, taken from the practice of the apostles, and particularly from the instance of the Eunuch's baptism in

Acts 8:38, 39 with the cavils and exceptions of Mr B. W. against it, considered.

THE next argument which our author, p. 18 produces, as insisted on by us, for the proof of baptism by immersion, and which he excepts against, is taken from the practice of the apostles, and particularly the instance of Philip's baptizing the Eunuch, recorded in

Acts 8:38, 39. thus;

And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, etc.

Here I must again observe, as I have already, in a parallel case, that we do not from this instance infer plunging, merely from Philip and the Eunuch's going down into, and coming up out of the water; for we know, as well as

he, that persons may go hundreds of times into water, as he says, without any design of plunging, or of being plunged; but we argue from both of them going down into the water; the one in order to administer the ordinance of water-baptism, and the other to submit unto it; and from their coming up out of it, as having performed it; from whence we think we have sufficient reason to conclude, that this was performed by immersion, or a plunging of the whole body under water; for to what purpose should they both go down into the water, if the ordinance was to be performed any other way? or what need would there have been of it? But if plunging cannot be inferred from hence, I am sure it is impossible that pouring or sprinkling should. But let us see what Mr B. W. will infer from this instance, and has to except against our argument from hence. And, 1st, From Philip and the Eunuch's both going down into the water, and coming up out of it, in a profane and irreligious manner, he infers, that neither of them were drowned there. Does this become a minister of the gospel, to treat the sacred writings, and the accounts they give of a solemn ordinance of Christ, after this manner? Whatever profane loose he may give himself in his attempts to be witty on the mode of baptizing by immersion, which he supposes to be unscriptural, yet, at least, he ought to set bounds to himself, and not be so free in playing with, and bantering the very words of the holy Ghost. But, 2dly, If that is rejected, why then he infers from hence, that they were both plunged over head and ears in the water. This, I suppose, is designed to shew the absurdity of our way of reasoning, as he imagines: But does not the man consider, that the one went down as an administrator, the other as a subject of baptism; the one to baptize, the other to be baptized? But suppose the ordinance was administered by pouring or sprinkling water, might it not be as justly inferred, that because they both went down into the water, one to perform, and the other to have it performed, and came up again out of it, when it was done, therefore they both had water poured upon them, or were sprinkled with it? And then, 3dly, When he is asked why he could not have concluded, that one was plunged and the other not: he replies, "Why truly, says he, because I thought it out "of the way of all sense, reason and revelation so to infer." I hope he will not say that it is out of the way of all sense, reason, and revelation to infer, that the one went down in order to administer the

ordinance of baptism, and the other to have it administered to him; but I suppose he means that it is out of the way of all sense, reason and revelation, to infer plunging from hence: But how then came the judicious Calvin to be so much out of the way, to conclude from hence that plunging was the ancient mode of baptizing, as he does, when he says, “here we see what was the rite of baptizing with the ancients; for they plunged the whole body into water?”

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How came this great man to be guilty of matting such a vain conjecture as our author says it is? especially when he affirms there is not in sacred history, the least shadow of a foundation for it. But to proceed, 4thly, In order to elude the force of our argument, from their going down into the water, he observes, that whosoever goes to any water, especially out of a chariot, must go down to it. But he is desired to observe, that it is not said, that they both went down to the water, but they both went into it. As for the text in

Psalms 107:23 which speaks of persons going down to the sea in ships, I hope our author does not think that they went by land in ships to the sea-side: If he would know what is meant by this, let him read ver. 26 where the distress that seafaring men are often in, is thus elegantly, 25 and beautifully described, they mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths, their soul is melted because of trouble; and what this means, those who have used the seas know full well, when their ships have been tossed up as it were to the heavens, and then again plunged into the depths of the sea, where they have been immersed in, and covered over with the waves thereof for a while, and on a sudden, have sprang out from thence. It is then they see the wondrous works of the Lord, in his remarkable appearance for them, and providential preservation of them.

5thly, He tells us, that

“had he been in the Eunuch’s place, he should not have chosen to have water poured upon him in the chariot, but for several reasons should have been entirely for going down to the water.”

He does not tell us what these designs are, that we might have considered them; but with his usual air of confidence affirms, that “there was no stripping, nor plunging, nor putting on change of raiment in the case;” and

all the reason he has to assign for it, is, because “Philip was directly caught away by the Spirit of the Lord, and the Eunuch immediately went on his way rejoicing:” But I hope he will allow that Philip was come up out of the water first, before he was caught away, and that the Eunuch was got into his chariot, before he went on his way; and to suppose so much time as was necessary to change their raiment, is no way contrary to the account in the sacred text, and he would also do well to consider, that those words directly, and immediately, are not to be found there. But, 6thly, He argues, that if those who were baptized by the apostles were plunged or overwhelmed, “then what prodigious labor must the apostles go through, when three thousand were baptized in one day, yea perhaps in less than half of it!”

To which I answer; There does not seem to be any necessity of concluding from

Acts 2:41 that they were all baptized in one day; but if they were, when we consider that there were twelve apostles, and seventy disciples, who were employed in the ministry of the word,

Luke 10:1 and so no doubt in baptizing, it will not appear so prodigiously fatiguing as our author intimates; for a single person, without having the strength either of Hercules, or Samson, and without much fatiguing himself, may baptize, in.²⁶ this way, a considerable number in a very little time. But then here is another difficulty behind, and that is, “What great trouble must they be at in stripping, and shifting, and changing apparel! and what abundance of plunging garments they must have ready!”

To which I reply, no more trouble than a single person has for himself, and no more plunging garments to be provided than every one to provide for themselves, which is no more trouble than when five or ten persons only are baptized: and when we consider how much bathing was in use among the Jews, it will not seem so strange, where, and how they should be so easily provided with plunging garments. Our objector goes on, and adds, “In what a poor condition was Paul, when he was plunged, having

been so ill, and so long without eating or drinking! and after that, how unfit must Paul himself be under his wounds and bruises, and in the dead of the night, to go into some deep water, and take up the jailor and plunge him!”

Here I cannot but remark the wretched blunder that our author makes, or at least the inadvertency, to say no worse of it, that he is guilty of, in talking as if the baptism Paul and the jailor was in one and the same night. But if he objects this is not his meaning, why did he write in such a blundering manner, and many times with want of sense, as when he talks of Paul’s taking up the jailor, and many such like passages which are to be found in this his performance. But to proceed, that Paul was three-days before his baptism without eating or drinking, is true, but that he was so very ill as our author represents, does not appear so manifest; however, it is plain, that he was not so ill, but he was able to arise and be baptized, which he need not have done, had it been performed by pouring or sprinkling water upon him. As to Paul’s unfitness, under his wounds and bruises, to plunge the jailor, I need only act, how he and Silas were capable of praying and singing the praises of God, and that so loud as the other prisoners heard them? and after thee preached the gospel to the jailor and his family, which must be a much more laborious work, and more spending and fatiguing to them, than baptizing of them was; but that same God who enabled them to perform the one, carried them through the other.

Again, he says,.27

“how improperly did Peter speak in Cornelius’s house, when he talked of forbidding water! whereas he should have said, can any man forbid these men from going to the river to be plunged?” to which I answer; if there is any impropriety in this text, it is not to be charged upon the words or sense of the holy Ghost, but upon our translation; for udwr “water,” ought not to be put in construction, with keilusai, “forbid,” but with baptizhnai, “to be baptized;” and so the whole be rendered thus,

“Can any man forbid, that these should be baptized with water, which have received the holy Ghost as well as we?”

and then the sense is this; has any man any thing to object why these who have received the holy Ghost, even as we, should not be admitted to the ordinance of water-baptism? for seeing they have received the greater

privilege, why should they be deprived of the lesser? And this reading and sense of the words are confirmed by the learned Erasmus, in his notes upon the text, which are these,” the Greeks, says he,

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read after this manner,

mhti udwr, etc. and the sense appears to be this:

“Can any man forbid that there should be baptized in water, who have received the holy Ghost as well as we? for as the spirit is preferable to water, and seeing they have him, it will be no great matter if this be added also: Moreover the accusative to udwr.

“water;” either depends upon the preposition kata, which may be understood, or else adheres to the verb baptizhnai, “to be baptized;” just in the same form in which we say, baptizomoi baptizisma, “to be baptized with a baptism.”

As to what Mr B. W. says, concerning the use of plunging garments in baptism, that therefore the water comes to the body only a filtering, or as it can work its way through, which, says he, at best is only equivalent to sprinkling. I need only reply, it is sufficient in baptism that the whole body be plunged into and covered under water; nor does it much concern us, to observe and know, how it works its way through to the body. I hope he will acknowledge, that a corpse may be said to be truly buried, when covered with earth, though it is wrapt up in a shroud, or in its funeral clothes, and put up close in a coffin, so that the earth with which it is covered, does not as yet touch it; even so a person may be truly said to be baptized, when in the name of the three Divine Persons, he is plunged into, .28 and covered over with water, even though the water may not be supposed to have had time enough to have worked its way through to his body; and when it has done so, how that is equivalent to sprinkling, no man can devise. But enough of this, I proceed to the next argument..29

CHAPTER 5

The fourth argument taken from

Romans 6:4,

Colossians

2:12 with the sense given of those scriptures, by Mr B. W.

considered.

OUR next argument for baptism by immersion, which Mr B. W. has thought fit to produce in p. 24 and except against, is taken from

Romans 6:4,

Colossians 2:12 where this ordinance is took notice of by the apostle, as a burial, and as representing the burial and resurrection of Christ; which argument may be formed thus, and not in the loose rambling way, in which he has represented it, and which, no doubt, he thought would best answer his purpose; namely,

“If the end and design of baptism are to represent the burial and resurrection of Christ, then it ought to be performed by plunging into, and overwhelming with water; but the end and design of baptism, are to represent the burial and resurrection of Christ, therefore it ought to be performed by plunging into, and overwhelming with water; the reason is, because no other mode of baptizing either by pouring or sprinkling a little water on the face, can answer this end.”

But let us attend to what Mr B. W. has to except. And,

1. He seems to deny this to be the end and design of the institution of this ordinance, when he asks,

“But did Christ ever institute baptism for any such end? As for the Lord’s Supper, he hath said, Do this in remembrance of me; and it is plain from the word, that in the Lord’s Supper we shew forth his death till he come: but where has he said, be plunged or baptized, to represent my burial or resurrection?”

To which I answer, that though we have not the end of this institution declared, in so many express words, yet we think it may be fairly concluded from those texts now mentioned, and must continue to be of the same mind, for ought Mr B. W. has advanced against it: Nor are we alone in our sentiments: For that Christ’s burial and resurrection are represented by baptism, has been acknowledged by many, both ancient and modern.³⁰ divines, whose words I forbear to transcribe, partly because they have been many of them produced by others already, and partly because I would not fill my book with citations, and therefore shall only direct the reader to the

reference in the margin.

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Though Mr B. W. is of opinion, that to infer this from those words, buried with him in baptism, is very absurd and inconclusive; and that

“we may as well be hanged up against a tree, to represent Christ crucified, because it is said, that we are crucified with Christ.”

But can any mortal see this to be a parallel case? to say nothing how shocking this expression must be to every serious mind, and not to be borne with; no more than the wretched jargon which follows it, when he says, “and to make a fair end of you, be fore to see you dead under the earth or under the water;” which, I doubt not, to every impartial intelligent reader, will appear to have as little of argument as it has of sense in it. Besides, who does not see that all this, whatever he can mean by it, may be levelled as much against the ordinance of the Lord’s-Supper, as that of Baptism. Moreover, there are other texts, besides these mentioned, which demonstrate the representation of Christ’s resurrection, which supposes his burial to be the end of baptism; as for instance,

1 Peter 3:21 where

baptism is said to save us, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. But how does it do that, but by representing the resurrection, of Christ unto us, and thereby leading our faith to it, to behold our justification and discharge, by a risen Savior? To which I might also add,

1 Corinthians 15:29 where

the apostle evincing the truth of the resurrection of the dead, thus argues, else what shall they do, which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not? that is,

“Who are baptized into the faith of the resurrection of Christ, which is represented thereby, and which is the confirmation of our resurrection;”

the thing that is there debated; and which, if not true, the apostle argues that their baptism, as well as their faith, and his preaching, was in vain.

Besides, if our author removes this end of baptism, he ought to have substituted another, and have told us what was the end and design of it,

which he has not done; for all the ordinances of the gospel are, no doubt, designed for the comfort and edification of believers, and the confirmation of their faith in the person of Christ; and seeing there appears nothing more³¹ manifestly to be the end of it, than what has been mentioned, we shall think fit to abide by it. But,

2. Our author asks, “What there is in your plunging that represents Christ’s burial and resurrection;” and to shew that there is no agreement, he runs the parallel between them, and observes, that Christ was carried to his grave, where, being dead, he was buried, and lay there three days, and three nights, and that in the earth, where a great stone was rolled at the mouth of the sepulcher, and when he arose, it was by his own power, and thereby declared to be the Son of God: But as for us, we go ourselves into the water, are plunged alive, and that not three minutes, in water; and that our plunger dares not leave us, nor roll a stone upon us; and it is he that puts us in that pulls us out, and we are declared to be what we are: What would the man have us be declared to be, what we are not? and then in a taunting manner says, “and this is the representation and the mighty resemblance.” These are some of our author’s masterly strokes, and when the candor of the reader has supplied the want of sense in his expression, and charitably conjectured at his meaning, I need only reply, that the things instanced in are only circumstantial, and not essential to a burial, and therefore unnecessary to be represented in baptism; nay, it would have been absurd to have had them: It is enough that the things themselves are, namely, the burial and resurrection of Christ, which are sufficiently represented by an immersion into water, and an emersion out of it. But who does not see that a Quaker, or any other person that denies the ordinance of the Lord’s-Supper, may argue after the same manner, and say, you say that this ordinance represents a crucified Christ, and shews forth his death and sufferings, but pray how does it appear? you take a loaf of bread, and break it in pieces, and a bottle of wine, and pour it out; but Christ, when he was crucified, was hanged on a tree, his head was crowned with thorns, his hands and feet were pierced with nails, and his side with a spear; but here are no thorns, nails, or spear made use of by you, his real body was treated after this manner, but yours is only a loaf of bread; he poured out his blood, you only wine; “and this is the representation, and the mighty resemblance.” And I think all this may be

said with as much justness as the other. But,

3. Mr B. W. has got another way of getting off the argument taken from these texts, in

Romans 6:3, 4;

Colossians 2:12 and that is, by

asserting that the baptism of Christ's sufferings, and not water-baptism, is³² intended in them. It would be endless, and perhaps our author will say needless, to oppose to him the several expositors and interpreters, who understand, by baptism, the ordinance of water-baptism, in those texts; as well as a large number of them who think the allusion is made to the ancient practice of baptizing by immersion; as Grotius, Vorsiius, Paraeus, Piscator, Diodate, and the Assembly of Divines on

Romans 6:4 and

Zanchy and Davenant on

Colossians 2:12. I suppose that Mr B. W. will

reply, that these are but men, and their judgment fallible; I hope he does not think that he is more than a man, or that his judgment is infallible; and it wilt scarcely be accounted modestly in him, to set himself upon a level with them: Though I confess that his sense of the words is not disagreeable to the analogy of faith, yet I wonder that he should be so positive as to say that this is the only meaning of them, as he does in p. 31. As to what he says with respect to those texts, one of them being produced as an argument to promote holiness in believers, and the other to strengthen their faith in the doctrine of justification; I cannot see, but to understand them of water-baptism, suits very well with the scope thereof, however it is ridiculed by our author: For why may not our baptism, wherein we profess our faith in a buried Christ, and that we are dead by him to the law, the world, and particularly to sin, be urged and made use of by the spirit of God, as an argument why we should not live any longer therein. And are there no force, power and cogency in this argument? Again, in baptism we profess our faith in the resurrection of Christ, which is represented hereby, and that we are risen with him, and therefore are under the highest

obligations, to walk in newness of life, as the apostle himself argues.

Moreover, what can have a greater tendency to strengthen our faith in the doctrine of justification, than this ordinance has? by which it is led to see where our Lord lay, and how our sins were left in the grave by him; and he, as our glorious representative, rising again for our justification, by whom we are acquitted and discharged from all sin and condemnation; and is such a way of arguing from hence, to promote holiness, and strengthen us in the doctrine of justification, to be wondered at, what is meant by it? But to proceed,

4. Supposing that the baptism of Christ's sufferings is intended here, and that we are buried with him therein, as our head and representative, it must be allowed, that Christ's sufferings are called so, in allusion to water-baptism; and if we are said to be buried with him in them, it must be in allusion to a person's being buried in water in that ordinance, which cannot³³ be by pouring or sprinkling of water upon him, but by an immersion into it. So that our argument for plunging, from hence, is like to lose nothing by this sense of the words. That Christ's sufferings are called a baptism, in

Matthew 20:22,

Luke 12:50, as also that by a Synecdoche, they are called the blood of his cross, is granted; but then the shedding of his blood was not the whole of Christ's sufferings, but a part only, and riffs is called the blood of sprinkling, not with regard to its being called a baptism; but because it is sprinkled upon a believer's conscience, and being so, speaks peace and pardon there; but when the greatness and multitude of Christ's sufferings are let forth, they are represented, not by a sprinkling of water, but by mighty floods of water, which overflowed him, so that he seemed, as it were, to be plunged into them, and overwhelmed with them; as he says, in

Psalm 69:2. I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me; where the Septuagint use the word *katapontizw*, as they do also in verse 15 which Mr B. W. in page 45 grants is very proper to express plunging by; and therefore no wonder then that his sufferings are compared to a baptism, and such an one as is administered by immersion:

So that the argument from hence, notwithstanding all those cavils and exceptions, stands firm and unshaken. As to the argument taken from the universality of Christ's sufferings in every part of his body, which he makes his antagonist plead in page 32 he acknowledges it was never made use of by the greatest men of our persuasion, why then does he produce it? If every thing that has been dropt by weak christians, in private conversation on the subject of infant-baptism, was published to the world, how silly and ridiculous would it appear?.34

CHAPTER 6

The fifth and last argument taken from the signification of the word baptizw, which always signifies to dip or plunge, with Mr B. W's. exceptions to it, considered.

THE fifth and last argument used by us, for immersion in baptism, taken from the constant signification of the word baptizw, baptizo, to dip or plunge, Mr B. W. has thought fit to produce in p. 33 and except against, which we hope, notwithstanding, to make good, however we may be represented by our author, as incapable of reading our mother tongue. And,

1. Mr B. W. denies that baptw, bapto, and baptizw, baptizo, signify one and the same thing; but the reason he gives, is not a sufficient one, and that is, because the holy Ghost never makes use of the former, when this ordinance is expressed, but the latter; for the holy Ghost may make use of what words he pleases, without destroying the sense of others; and by the way, then it may be observed, that ranpzw, rantizo, and baptizw, baptizo, do not signify one and the same thing; because the holy Ghost never makes use of the former, when the ordinance is expressed, but the latter. Besides, all the Lexicographers that I have been able to consult, tell me, that baptw and baptizw do signify one and the same thing; for they render both by the very same words, and they are both promiscuously used by Greek authors: And indeed, why should not baptizw, baptizo, the derivative, signify the same as its primitive? what, is its signification lessened by the addition of a syllable to it? Dr Gale

f11

has given instances

enough of derivatives in zw, which signify the same with their primitives.

And indeed, some have taken the word, under consideration, to be what

grammarians call a frequentative, which signifies more than the derivative does. But,

2. It seems our author will scarcely allow baptw, bapto, to signify dip or plunge, and therefore puts it upon us to prove, that Judas, when he put his hand in the dish, thrust it all over in the sauce,

Matthew 26:23 where

the word embapyav embapsas, is used; but he should have observed, that it was not his hand, but the sop in his hand, by a metonymy of the subject, as Piscator observes, which he dipt into the sauce, as he might have learned, by comparing the text with

John 13:26. And in p. 45 he says,.35

“yea, with respect unto baptw itself, it is very evident that the Greeks did not directly mean plunging thereby; for when the Septuagint tell us in

Daniel 4:33 that Nebuchadnezzar’s body

was wet with the dew of heaven, they make use of the very word;”

and I would also add, very justly, it exactly answered to the Chaldee word [bfxv here used. which word always signifies to tinge or dip, as dyers dip their clothes in their vatts, and so is expressive of what a condition

Nebuchadnezzar’s body was in, he being as wet with the dew of heaven, as if he had been dipt or plunged all over in water. But enough of this; let us consider,

3. How we are like to come off with the word baptizo, baptizo; And here our author in p. 41 tells us, ore rotundo, and with confidence enough, in so many words, that “it never does signify plunging; washing with water by pouring or sprinkling, is the only meaning of it.” The man has got a good assurance, but yet by his writing, he does not seem to have such a stock of learning; however what he wants in one, he makes up in the other. It is strange that all our Lexicographers, so many learned critics, and good divines, should be so much mistaken, as to render the word to dip or plunge, and allow this to be the proper signification of it. I have myself consulted several Lexicons, as those of Suidas, Scapula, Hadrian, Junius, Pasor, as also another made by Budaeus, Tusanus, Gesner, Junius,

Constantine, Hartung, Hopper, and Xylander, who all unanimously render the word by *mergo*, *immergo*, to plunge or dip into: And though they afterwards add also, *abluo*, *lava*, to wash, yet it is plain they mean such a washing, as is by dipping; and we are very willing to grant it, for we know that there can be no dipping without washing: But had they meant a washing by pouring or sprinkling, they would have rendered it by *persundo*, or *aspergo*, to pour upon, or sprinkle; but this they never do. And, to there I might add a large number of learned critics, and good divines, who grant, that the word in its first and primary sense; signifies to dip or plunge only; and to wash only in a secondary, remote, and consequential one; as Casaubon, Camerarius, Grotius, (

Matthew 3:6)

Calvin,

f12

Alting,

f13

Alsted,

f14

Wendelin,

f15

and others. But what need I

heap up authors, to prove that which no man of any tolerable learning will deny: But what will not ignorance, attended with a considerable share of confidence, carry a man through? I might oppose to him, the use of the word in many Greek authors, but this has been done better already than I am capable of doing it, to which I refer him,

f16

and shall content myself,³⁶

with just mentioning that passage of Plutarch,

f17

baptizwn onauton eis

qalasoan, which I think the author I have reference to, has took no notice of; and let him try how his sense of pouring or sprinkling will agree with it. I am sure it will find very harsh, to render the words pour or sprinkle thyself into the sea, but will read very well to be rendered thus,

plunge thyself into the sea: But I suppose he will take this to be a breach of the first article agreed upon in this conference; but why the Greek authors should not be allowed as evidences, in the sense of a Greek word, I cannot see: I am sure this is not very consistent with right reason, which the thing in debate was to be cleared up from, as well as from the word of God. But let us consider the use of the word with, the Septuagint, which I suppose he will not except against, because he has himself brought it into the controversy. And there are but two places, which I have as yet met with, where the word is used by them, and the first is in

2 Kings 5:14

where it is said of Naaman the Syrian, that he went down, *ki< ebappzato*, and baptized or dipped himself seven times in Jordan: I presume our author will not say, that this is to be understood of a washing, by pouring or sprinkling; especially, seeing it answers to the Hebrew word *,φβλ* which always signifies to dip or plunge, and is the word, which is so often rendered by *bapto*, *bapto*, and *which*, by the way, proves there two to be of the same signification, seeing they are promiscuously used by them, to express one and the same word.

The other place is in

Isaiah 21:4 where what we read, fearfulness

affrighted me, they render, *k anomia me baptizei*, iniquity hath plunged me; for to translate the words, iniquity hath washed, or poured, or sprinkled me, would be intolerable; but both the language and the sense are smooth and easy, by rendering them, iniquity hath plunged me; that is, into the depths of misery and distress; so that I am overwhelmed with horror and terror: And hereby also the sense of the Hebrew word *t[b*, here used, is very beautifully expressed. But let us now confider,

4. What exceptions Mr B. W. makes against this universal sense of the word, and there are three places in the New Testament which he opposes to it.

The first is in

Mark 7:4.37

And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat

not, and many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables. Whereupon Mr B. W. observes, that the words of the holy Ghost are, except they first baptize themselves; and many other such things they have, as the baptizing of tables. Excellent observations indeed! But how does this prove that the word signifies only a washing, by pouring or sprinkling? I believe it will appear, that this is meant of the washing of the whole body by dipping, which might be done, without their going into a pond or a river before they came home; for they had, no doubt, proper conveniencies for immersion, when they came home, seeing bathing was in many cases required of the people, as well as of the priests; and to understand it of such a washing, seems better to express their superstitious solicitude to cleanse themselves from all impurity they might contract by converting with others in the market; it seems to be distinct from washing of hands in the former verse, where a different word is used. But supposing that washing of hands was intended here, does not every body know, that the usual manner of doing that, is not by pouring or sprinkling water upon them, but by putting them into it. And here I cannot but take notice of the observation of Beza

f18

upon this text;

baptizeqai, says he, in this place, is more than cerniptein; for the former seems to respect the whole body, the latter only the hands, nor does baptizein signify to wash, but only by consequence, for it properly denotes to immerse for the sake of dipping.”

As for the washing or baptizing of cups, pots, etc. it is well known that the cleansing of vessels, which were polluted by the falling of any dead creature that was unclean into them, was by putting into the water, and not by pouring or sprinkling water upon them. The express command in

Leviticus 11:32, is, that it must be put into the water, or as the Septuagint render it bafmoetai, it must be dipt into water. Moreover, their superstitious washing of vessels, which our Lord seems here to mean, and justly reprehends, of which we read many things in their Misnah,

f19

or

oral law, their book of traditions, was performed this way, where they to express it by, which always φβλ make use of the word signifies to dip or plunge. But what need I use many words to prove this, when every old woman could have informed him of the usual manner of washing their vessels, which is not by pouring or sprinkling water upon them, but by putting them into it: And if he asks, did the Jewish women wash their tables so? There appears no reason to conclude the contrary; and if he should say, how and where could they do it? I answer, in or near their own houses, where they had conveniencies for bathing themselves, and washing their garments, at proper times, without carrying them to a river.

The next place instanced in by him, is

Hebrews 9:10. where the ceremonial law is said to stand only in meats and drinks, and divers washings; it is in the Greek text, in divers baptisms; and, says our author, “it is evident from the word of God, that those washings generally stood in pouring or sprinkling of water;”

but that is a mistake of his, for they neither flood in them generally, nor particularly; for those ceremonial ablutions were always performed by bathing or dipping in water, and are called diaforio, divers, or different, not because they were performed different ways, as some by sprinkling, others by pouring, and others by plunging, but because of the different persons and things, the subjects thereof; as the priests, Levites, Israelites, vessels, garments, etc. And here it may not be atolls to observe what Maimonides,

f20

who was one of the most learned of the Jewish writers, says concerning this matter,

“Wherever, says he, the washing of the flesh or garments is mentioned in the law, it means nothing else than the washing of the whole body; for if a man washes himself all over, excepting the very tip of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness.”

Nay, he says it is necessary that every hair of his head should be washed; and therefore the apostle might well call these washings, baptisms.

The third and last instance produced by him, is

1 Corinthians 10:1, 2.

where the apostle says, that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea; which when our author has mentioned, he very briskly asks, “Pray how were our fathers baptized there?” to which, I hope, we shall be capable of returning an answer, without appearing to be so bitterly gravelled with this place, as he is pleased to make his friend say we are. As for the manner in which he represents some of our friends accounting for it; namely, that when the people of Israel passed through the Red sea, they had the waters stood up, both on their right hand, and on their left, and a³⁹ cloud over them; so that there was a very great resemblance of a person’s being baptized, or plunged under water. This, I say, is not so much to be despised, nor does it deserve so much ridicule and contempt, as he has pleased to cast upon it; and I believe will appear to any unprejudiced person, a much better way of accounting for it, than he is capable of giving, consistent with his way of administering the ordinance: Though I cannot but think that the Israelites were first baptized in the cloud, and then in the sea, according to the order of the apostle’s words; and agreeable to the story in Exodus 14 where we read, that the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them, and was between the two camps, to keep off the Egyptians from the Israelites. I am therefore of opinion, with the learned Gataker,

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that the cloud when it passed over them, let down a plentiful rain upon them, whereby they were in such a condition, as if they had been all over dipt in water; so that they were not only covered by it, but baptized in it: Therefore our author very improperly directs us to

Psalm 77:17, the clouds poured out water, as the better way of resolving the case; for the apostle does not say, that they were baptized in the clouds, but in the cloud which went before them, but now palling over them, in order to stand behind them, they were, as it were, immersed in it. But supporting that the text in Psalm 77 may be a direction in this case, and seem to explain what the apostle means by baptizing, it will no ways agree either with our author’s sense of the word, nor his way of administering the ordnance: For, were the Israelites baptized under the

clouds, by their pouring or sprinkling a small quantity of water upon their faces? the Hebrew word μdz here used, signifies an overflow, or an inundation of water: And Ainsworth reads it streamed down or gushed with a tempest; so that they were as persons overwhelmed, and plunged over head and ears in water; and therefore the apostle might well call it a being baptized.

But now let us consider also, how they might be said to be baptized in the sea; and there are several things, in which the Israelites passage through the Red sea, resembled our baptism. As for instance, their following of Moses into it, which may be meant by their being baptized into him, was an acknowledgment of their regard unto him, as their Guide and Governor; as our baptism is a following of Christ as our Prophet, who has taught and led us the way; as well as a profession of our faith in him, as our Surety and Savior, and a subjection to him, as our King and Governor: Theirs was at their first entrance upon their journey to Canaan, as ours is, when, in a way of profession, we publicly begin our christian race: They, when they came out of it, could ring and rejoice, in the view of all their enemies being destroyed; as the believer also can in this ordinance, in the view of all his sins being drowned in the sea of Christ's blood, withers the instances of the Eunuch and Jailor. But in nothing is there a greater resemblance between them, than in their descending into it, and coming up out of it; which is very much expressive of the mode of baptism by immersion. And this I choose to deliver in the words of the judicious Gataker.

f22

“The descent, (that is, of the Israelites) says he, into the inmost and lowest parts of the sea, and their ascent out of it again upon dry land, hath a very great agreement with the rite of christian baptism, as it was administered in the primitive times; seeing in baptizing they went down into the water, and came up again out of the same; of which descent and ascent express mention is made in the dipping of the Ethiopian Eunuch,

Acts 8:38, 39. Moreover, as in the christian rite, when they were immersed, they were overwhelmed in water, and as it were buried; and in some measure, seemed to be

buried together with Christ. And again, when they emersed, they seemed to rise, even as out of a grave, and to be risen with Christ,

Romans 6:4, 5 and

Colossians 2:12. “So likewise, the waters of the sea standing up higher than the heads of those that passed through it, they might seem to be overwhelmed; and in some respects, to be buried therein, and to emerse and rise out again, when they came out safe on the other side of the shore.”

And having now considered all those exceptions, which our author has made against this sense of the word, which is contended for, I hope it will appear, that he has little reason to make that vain triumph he does, in p 38 where, he asks, “Where now is your baptizo, that signifies nothing else but plunging and overwhelming?” As for his comparing the passage of the Israelites through the Red sea, to his travelling to Scotland with the Irish Sea on his left hand, and the German on his right, and to his journeying to Cornwall, with the British channel at some distance from him, on his left hand, and the channel of Bristol on his right, I cannot see it can be of any service, unless it be to lay aside the Israelites’ passage through the sea as a miracle, and so furnish the atheist and deist with an argument, such an one as it is, for their purpose. As for his sneer upon plunging in it, I can easily forgive him, and pass it by, as well as that of the plunging of the Egyptians, with the same contempt in which he delivers them. Having thus considered.⁴¹ his exceptions to those arguments produced for plunging, I shall in the next chapter take notice of his reasons against it..⁴²

CHAPTER 7

Mr B. W.’s reasons against plunging in baptism, considered.

MR B. W. in the next place, proceeds to give us some reasons in p. 43 why he is against the administration of the ordinance of baptism by plunging.

And his

First reason is,

“because there is not any foundation for it in the word of God; no precept, no example, says he, no necessary consequence, no words nor found of words to favor it;” and a little lower, “There is not a word, he means of plunging, nor the shadow of a word; and

therefore I think I have good reason against it.”

Words are the shadows, representations, and expressions of our minds; but what the shadow of a word is, I cannot devise, unless he means the least appearance of a word: as perhaps he may; and that I suppose is an initial letter of a word, or an abbreviation, etc. But the holy Ghost does not write in such a manner, and therefore we expect to find whole words, or none at all. But to proceed, does he want a precept? let him read

Matthew

28:19 or an example? let him take Christ for one,

Matthew 3:16. and

the Eunuch,

Acts 8:38, 39. And is no necessary consequence to be deduced from the places John and the apostles baptized in? nor from the circumstances which attended it, of going down and coming up out of the water? I hope it will appear to every thinking, and unprejudiced person, that it has been proved that not only the found of words, but the true sense of words favor it.

His other reason is,

“because it is not only without foundation in the word of God, but it is directly against it;” but how does that appear? Why, suppose some poor creatures, says he, upon a bed of languishing, under consumptions, catarrhs, pains, sores, and bruises, be converted, and that perhaps in the depth of winter, it is their duty to be baptized, that is true? but is it their duty to be plunged? no, to be sure; for the whole word of God commands self-preservation; and therefore it is evident, that plunging is against the commands of God.”.43

I suppose he takes it to be contrary to the sixth command; but if it is the duty of persons to be baptized, it is their duty to be plunged; for there is no true baptism without it? But what, in the depth of winter? why not? what damage is like to come by it? Our climate is not near so cold as Muscovy, where they always dip their infants in baptism, to this very day; as does also the Greek church in all parts of the world. But what, plunge persons when under consumptions, catarrhs, etc? why not? perhaps it may be of

use to them for the restoration of health; and its being performed on a sacred account, can never be any hindrance to it. Whoever reads Sir John Floyer's History of Cold-bathing, and the many cures that have been performed thereby, which he there relates, will never think that this is a sufficient objection against plunging in baptism; which learned physician has also of late published An Essay to restore the dipping of Infants in their Baptism; which he argues for, not only from the signification of baptism, and its theological end, but likewise from the medicinal use of dipping, for preventing and curing many distempers. If it may be useful for the health of tender infants, and is in many cases now made use of, it can never be prejudicial to grown persons: He argues from the liturgy and rubric of the church of England, which requires dipping in baptism, and only allows pouring of water in case of weakness, and never so much as granted a permission for sprinkling. He proves in this book, and more largely in his former, that the constant practice of the church of England, ever since the plantation of christianity, was to dip or plunge in baptism; which he says continued after the reformation until King Edward the sixth's time and after. Nay, that its disuse has been within this hundred years: And here I cannot forbear mentioning a passage of his, to this purpose,

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“Our fonts are built, says he, with a sufficient capacity for dipping of infants, and they have been so used for five hundred years in England, both Kings and Common people have been dipped; but now our fonts stand in our churches as monuments, to upbraid us with our change or neglect of our baptismal immersion.”

And I wish he had not reason to say as he does,

f24

that sprinkling was first

introduced by the Assembly of Divines, in 1643, by a vote of 25 against 24, and established by an ordinance of parliament in 1644. Which complaint

Mr Wall

f25

has taken up, who wrote the last in this controversy, having studied it for many years; and has fairly acknowledged, that immersion is the right mode of baptism; for which reason he calls upon his brethren, the clergy, to a reformation in it: As for those who would willingly conform to.44

the liturgy, he says before them the difficulties they must expect to meet with; which, betides the general one of breaking an old custom, he mentions two more: The one is from those who are presbyterianly inclined, who as they were the first introducers of it, will be tenacious enough to keep it. And the other is, from midwives and nurses, etc. whose pride in the fine dressing of the child will be entirely lost. But to return from whence I have digressed. Mr B. W. it seems, is of opinion, that baptism by plunging, is not only against the sixth, but also against the seventh command, for which reason he must be against it. To baptize by plunging, he insinuates is

“a practice contrary to the whole current of Christ’s pure precepts, of an uncomely aspect, and seemingly scandalous and ignominious to the honor of christianity; and that one would think a man would as soon deny all right reason, and religion, as believe Christ would ever command such a practice.”

But I appeal to any, even our worst adversaries, that make any conscience of what they say or do, who have seen the ordinance administered, whether it is of such an uncomely aspect, and so seemingly scandalous, as this defamer has represented it.

“And, says he, to use the words of a servant of Christ, can we therefore imagine, that Christ’s baptism should intrench so much upon the laws of civility, charity, and modesty, as to require women and maids to appear openly in the light of the sun, out of their wonted habit, in transparent and thin garments, next to nakedness, and in that posture be took by a man in his arms, and plunged in the face of the whole congregation, before men and boys!”

Who this servant of Christ is, whose words he uses, and has made his own, he does not tell us. I shall therefore inform the reader, they are the words of one Ruffen, an author he might well be ashamed to mention in the manner he does: However I shall not be ashamed to give Mr Stennett’s reply to this paragraph, in his excellent answer to that scurrilous writer, which I have put in the margin;

f26

and would also recommend that book to the readers of our author, but especially to himself; for had he read it before he published his, perhaps it might have prevented it, or at least, have

made him ashamed to quote those expressions, with such a complement upon the author of them. How does this become one, who calls himself a minister of the gospel, to be guilty of such a scandal and defamation as this.⁴⁵ is? What, did the man never see the ordinance administered? If he has, his wickedness in publishing this is the greater; if not, he ought to have took an opportunity to have informed himself, before he had made so free with the practice, as to asperse it after this manner. It is well known, that the clothes we use in baptism, are either the person's wearing apparel, or else those which are on purpose provided, which are made of as thick, or thicker stuff, than what are usually worn in the performance of the most servile work. those who have seen the ordinance administered, know with what decency it is performed, and with ruth, I am persuaded what our author says will find but little credit. I have nothing else, I think, to observe now, unless it be, his arguing for the preferableness of applying water to the person, to any other mode of baptism, from the application of grace to us, and not us to that, in p. 46 which I suppose was forgot in the conference, or else he had not an opportunity to croud it in. To which I need only reply, that there does not appear to be any necessity of using a mode in baptism, that must be conformable to that; besides, if there was, does not every body know, that in plunging a person, there is an application of the water to him, as well as an application of him to the water? For as soon as ever a person is plunged, the water will apply itself to him. As to the vanity which he thinks we are guilty of, in monopolizing the name of baptists to ourselves, he may take the name himself if he pleases, seeing he thinks we have nothing to do with it, for we will not quarrel with him about it: But since it is necessary to make use of some names of distinction in civil conversation, he does well to tell us, what name we should be called by, and that is plungers; but then he will be hard put to it to shew the difference between a baptist and a plunger. Betides, the old objection against the name baptist being peculiar to John, or so an administrator, may as well be objected against this name as the other, because we are not all plungers, but by far the greatest part, are only persons plunged. However I could wish, as well as he, that all names were laid aside, especially as terms of reproach, and the great name of Christ alone exalted..⁴⁶

CHAPTER 8.

Concerning the free or mixt communion of churches.

MR B. W. here and there drops a sentence, signifying his love and affection to persons of our persuasion, as in p. 42 “Christians of your persuasion, I hope, I dearly love;” this and such like expressions, I can understand no otherwise than as a wheedling and cajoling of those of his members, who are of a different persuasion from him in this point, whom he knows he must have grieved and offended, by this shameful and scandalous way of writing. And at the same time, when he expresses so much love to them, he lets them know, that he “does not admire their plunging principle, though he does not love to make a great noise about it.” I think he has made a great noise about it, and such an one as, perhaps by this time, he would be glad to have said. He signifies his readiness “to carry on evangelical fellowship, in all the acts thereof, with chearfulness,” with those who are differently minded from him. That those of a different persuasion from us, should willingly receive into their communion such whom they judge believers in Christ, who have been baptized by immersion; I do not wonder at, seeing they generally judge baptism performed so, to be valid; but how Mr B. W. can receive such, I cannot see, when he looks upon it to be no ordinance of God, p. 41 and a superstitious invention, p. 23. nay, will-worship, p. 24. There are two churches in London, which, I have been informed, will not receive persons of our persuasion into their communion; but whether it is, because they judge our baptism invalid, and so we not proper persons for communion, or whether it is a prudential step, that their churches may not be over-run by us, I cannot tell; I think those of our persuasion act a very weak part in proposing to belong to any such churches, who, when they are in them, are too much regarded only for the sake of their subscriptions, are but noun substantives therein, and too many like Issachar’s ass, bow down between two burdens. But to return, Mr B. W. has thought fit, in the close of this conference, to produce “some few reasons for the equity and necessity of communion with saints as saints, without making difference in judgment about water-baptism, a bar unto evangelical church fellowship;” which I shall now consider..47

1. “God has received them, and we should be followers of God as dear children. We are commanded to receive one another, as Christ hath received us to the glory of God.”

That we should be followers of God in all things, which he has made our duty, is certain, but his, and his Son's reception of persons, is no rule for the reception of church members. A sovereign lord may do what he pleases himself, but his servants must act according to his orders: God and Christ have received unconverted sinners, but that is no rule for churches; God the Father has so received them into his love and affections, as to let them apart for himself, provide all blessings of grace for them, nay, give himself in covenant to them, send his Son to die for them, his Spirit to convert them, and all previous to it. Christ also hath received them, so as to become a surety for them, take the charge both of their persons and grace, give himself a ransom for them, and bestow his grace upon them; for we are first apprehended by Christ, before we are capable of apprehending and receiving him: must we therefore receive unconverted persons into church-fellowship, because God and Christ have received them? It is what God has commanded us to do, and not all that he himself does, that we are to be followers of him in, or indeed can be; besides, the churches of Christ are oftentimes obliged, according to Christ's own rules, to reject those whom Christ has received, and cut them off from church-communication; witness the incestuous person; so that they are not persons merely received by Christ, but persons received by Christ, subjecting themselves to his ordinances, and to the laws of his house, that we are to receive, and retain in churches. The text in

Romans 15:7 which speaks of receiving one another, as Christ, hath received us to the glory of God, can never be understood of the receiving of persons into church-fellowship. For the persons who are exhorted both to receive and be received, were members of churches already; therefore that text only regards the mutual love and affection which they should have to one another, as brethren and church-members; which is enforced by the strong love and affection Christ had to them.

2. "All saints are alike partakers of the great and fundamental privileges of the gospel."

If by the great and fundamental privileges of the gospel, he means union to Christ, justification by him, faith in him, and communion with him, who denies that saints are partakers of these things? Though in some of them, not all alike; for some have more faith in Christ, and more communion.⁴⁸

with him, than others have: But what is this argument produced for? or indeed, is there any argument in it? does he mean that therefore they ought to partake of gospel ordinances? who denies it? And we would have them partake of them alike too, both of Baptism and the Lord's supper; it is the thing we are pleading for.

3. "All believers, though in lesser things differently minded, are in a capacity to promote mutual edification in a church state."

But then their admittance into it, and walk with it, must be according to gospel order, or else they are like to be of little service to promote mutual edification in it.

4. "It is observable that the churches for the free communion of saints, are "the most orderly and prosperous."

This observation is wrong, witness the churches in Northamptonshire, where there is scarcely an orderly or prosperous one of that way; they having been made a prey of, and pillaged by others, to whose capricious humors they have been too much subject.

5. "Many waters should not in the least quench love, nor should the floods drown it."

This is foolishly and impertinently applied to water-baptism: But what is it that some men cannot see in some texts of Scripture?

6. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is!"

I think I must also make a note of admiration too, as wondering what the man means by giving us half a sentence! But perhaps this is to give us a specimen of what shadows of words are, though I suppose he means for brethren to dwell together in unity; it would have been no great trouble to have expressed it; but he is willing to let us know that he has got a concise way of speaking and writing. For brethren to dwell together in unity, is indeed very pleasant and delightful: But how can two walk, or dwell together thus, except they are agreed!

7. "All the saints shall for ever dwell in glory together."

Who denies it? But does it from thence follow, that they must all dwell together on earth? And if he means that it may be inferred from hence, that they ought to be admitted, whilst here, to church-fellowship, who denies it? .49
But I hope it must be in a way agreeable to gospel order; and he ought to have first proved, that admission to church-fellowship without water baptism, is according to gospel order, Jesus Christ, no doubt, receives

many unbaptized persons into heaven; and so he does no doubt, such who never partook of the Lord's supper; nay, who never were in church-fellowship: But are these things to be laid aside by us upon that account?

We are not to take our measures of acting in Christ's church here below, from what he himself does in heaven, but from those rules which he has left us on earth to go by.

Having thus considered our author's reasons, for the free and mixt communion of saints, without making water baptism a bar to it; I shall take the liberty to subjoin some reasons against it, which I desire chiefly might be regarded and considered by those who are of the same persuasion with us, with respect to the ordinance of water-baptism. They are as follow:

1. Because such a practice is contrary to Christ's commission, in

Matthew 28:19 where Christ's orders are to baptize those that are taught. It is not only without a precept of Christ, which in matters of worship we should be careful that we do not act without, (for he has nowhere commanded to receive unbaptized persons into churches) but it is also contrary to one which requires all believers to be baptized; and this must be either before they are church members or after they are so, or never. The two latter, I dare say, will not be asserted, and therefore the former is true.

2. It is contrary to the order and practise of the primitive churches; it is not only without a precept, but without a precedent: The admission of the first converts after Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension, into church fellowship, was after this manner. First, they gladly received the word, then were baptized, and after that, added to the church,

Acts 2:41. So the apostle Paul first believed, then was baptized, and after that assayed to join himself to the disciples,

Acts 9:18, 26. Who therefore that has any regard to a command of Christ, and an apostolical practice, would break in upon such a beautiful order as this? I challenge any person, to give one single instance of any one that was ever received into those primitive churches without being first baptized.

3. It has a tendency to lay aside the ordinance entirely. For upon the same foot that persons, who plead their baptism in their infancy, which to us is none at all, may be received, those who never make pretensions to any,⁵⁰ yea, utterly deny water-baptism, may also. Moreover, if once it is accounted an indifferent thing, that may, or may not be done; that it is unnecessary and unessential to church-communion, to which persons may be admitted without it, they will lie under a temptation wholly to omit it, rather than incur the trouble, shame, and reproach that attend it.

4. It has a tendency to lay aside the ordinance of the Lord's-Supper, and indeed all others. For, suppose a person should come and propose for communion, to any of those churches who are upon this foundation, and give a satisfactory account of his faith and experience to them, so that they are willing to receive him; but after all, he tells them he is differently minded from them, with respect to the ordinance of the Lord's-Supper: I am willing to walk with you, says he, in all other ordinances but that; and, as to that, I am very willing to meet when you do, and with you; to remember Christ's dying love: I hope I shall be enabled to feed by faith, upon his flesh and blood as well as you; but I think to eat the bread, and drink the wine, are but outward ceremonies, and altogether needless. I should be glad to know, whether any of these churches would reject this man? I am sure, according to their own principles, they cannot. Therefore has not this a tendency to lay aside the ordinance of the Lord's Supper? For if it is warrantable for one man, it is for ten or twenty, and so on ad infinitum. All that I can meet with, as yet, that is objected to this, is, that the Lord's-Supper is a church-ordinance, and cannot be dispensed with in such a case; but baptism is not, and therefore may. But baptism is an ordinance of Christ, and therefore cannot be dispensed with no more than the other: By a church-ordinance, they either mean an ordinance of the church's appointing; or else one that is performed by persons when in a church state. The former, I presume, they do not mean, because the Lord's-Supper is not in that sense a church-ordinance: And if they mean in the latter sense, that baptism is not a church-ordinance, then certainly it ought to be performed before they are in a church state; which is the thing pleaded for. When they talk of baptism's not being essential to salvation, who says it is? but will this tolerate the abuse, neglect, or omission of it? Is any thing relating to divine worship essential to salvation? but what, must it

all be laid aside because it is not? is not this an idle way of talking?

5. It is a rejecting the pattern which Christ has given us, and a trampling upon his legislative power; is this doing all things according to his direction, when we step over the first thing, after believing, that is enjoined us? Is not this making too free with his legislative power, to alter his rules.⁵¹ at pleasure? and what else is it, but an attempt to jostle Christ out of his throne? It is no other than an imputation of weakness to him, as if he did not know what was best for his churches to observe; and of carelessness, as if he was unconcerned whether they regarded his will or no. Let such remember the case of Nadab and Abihu. In matters of worship, God takes notice of those things that seem but small, and will contend with his people upon that account. A power to dispense with Christ's ordinances, was never given to any men, or set of men or churches upon earth. An ordinance of Christ does not depend upon so precarious a foundation, as persons having, or not having light into it: If they have not, they must make use of proper means, and wait till God gives them it.

6. We are commanded to withdraw from every brother that walks disorderly; not only from persons of an immoral conversation, but also from those who are corrupt in doctrine, or in the administration of ordinances; if this is not a disorderly walking, to live in the abuse, or neglect and omission of a gospel ordinance,. I know not what is: We are not to suffer sin upon a brother, but reprove him for it; bear our testimony against it, lest we be partakers of his guilt; and if we are to withdraw from such disorderly persons, then we ought not to receive them.

7. This practice makes our separation from the Established church, look more like a piece of obstinacy, than a case of conscience: What, shall we boggle at reading the Common-prayer-book, wearing the surplice, kneeling at the Lord's supper, etc. and can at once drop an ordinance of Christ? if this is not straining at gnats, and swallowing of camels, I must confess myself mistaken.

To all this I might have added also, that it is contrary to the constant and universal practice of the churches of Christ, in all ages of the world. To receive an unbaptized person into communion, was never once attempted among all the corruptions of the church of some: This principle of receiving only baptized persons into communion, was maintained by the authors of the glorious Reformation from Popery, and those who

succeeded them. As for the present practice of our Presbyterians and Independents, they proceed not upon the same foot as our Semi-Quakers do. They judge our baptism to be valid, and their own too; and therefore promiscuously receive persons; but, according to their own principles, will not receive one that is unbaptized. And could we look upon their baptism valid too, what we, call mixed communion would wholly cease, and⁵² consequently the controversy about it be entirely at an end; therefore the Presbyterians and Independents do not maintain a free and mixt communion in the same sense, and upon the same foundation, as some of our persuasion do, which those persons would do well to consider.

It may be thought necessary by some, that before I conclude, I should make an apology for taking notice of such a trifling pamphlet as this is, which I have been considering. Had it not been for the importunity of some of my friends, as well as the vain ovations, and silly triumphs, which those of a different persuasion from us are ready to make upon every thing that comes out this way, however weak it be, I should never have given myself the trouble of writing, nor others of reading hereof. If it should be asked, why I have been so large in considering several things herein, to which a shorter reply would have been sufficient? I answer, It is not because I thought the author deserved it, but having observed that the arguments and exceptions which he has licked up from others, have been, and still are, received by persons of far superior judgment and learning to himself, and who are better versed in this controversy than he appears to be; it is upon that account, as well as to do justice to the truth I have been defending, I have taken this method. But if any should think me blame-worthy, in taking notice of some things herein, which do not carry in them the appearance of an argument, I persuade myself they will easily forgive me, when they consider how ready some captious persons would have been to say, I had passed over some of his material objections. However, without much concerning myself what any one shall say of this performance, I commit it to the blessing of God, and the consideration of every impartial reader..⁵³

FOOTNOTES

ft1

An vero una, an trina mersione sit baptizandum, indifferens semper judicature fuit in ecclesia christiana; quemadmodum etiam an immersione an vero adspersione atendum, cum illius expressum

mandatum nullum extet; & exempla adspersionis non minus quam immersionis in scripturis possint deprehendi, sicui enim Matthew 3. Christus in aquam ingressus, & ex ea egressus est, & Ethiops. Acts 8. Sic multa millia uno die in ipsa urbe Jerusalem dicuntur fuisse baptizata. Acts 2. item multi in totalibus privatis, Act. 16, & 18 1 Cor.1:16. ubi egressus ejusmodi in aquas vix esse potuit. Synop Put. Theolog. Disp. 44. Thes. 19.

ft2

Etsi non improbo ut hic quoque retineatur verbum baptizare quo plena sit h antiqesiv, tamen: habendam hoc loco propriae significationis rationem censeo, baptizoin enim tanquam ad tingendum. mergere est. Atque hoc sensu vore dicuntur apostoli baptioqnhai. Domus euim in qua hoc peractum est, Spiritu sancto fuit repleta, ita ut in cam tanquam in kolumbhqran, quandam apostoli demersi fuisse. videantur. Casaub. in Act. 1:5.

f3

Idyll 1. Mhti qighv plana dwra tagar puoi panta bezaptai

ft4

Antiqu. Jud. 1. 2. c 3.

ft5

Vid. Stephan. Dictionar. Geograph.

ft6

Significat afflictionem, humilitatem & fletum, admonens nos tales requiri in baptismo & vera poenitentia, Aretius in

John 3:23.

ft7

Fuisse autem duo haec oppida AEnon & Salim, non procul a confluenta Jordanis & Jaboc tradunt geographi, quibus viciniam faciunt Scythopolim. Coeterum ex his verbis colligere licet, baptismum fuisse celebratum a Joanne & Christo totius corporis submerfione. Calvin in Joh. 3:23.

ft8

Hic perspicimus, quisnam apud veteres baptizandi titus fuerit: totum enim corpus in aquam mergebant, Calvin in

Acts 8:38.

ft9

Graeci legunt in hunc modum mhnti udwr, etc. et apparet hunc esse sensum: num quis vetare potest, quo minus aqua baptizentur ii, qui spiritum sanctum acceperunt, sicut & nos? veluti plus sit spiritus quam aqua, cumque ille contingerit, nihil esse magni si hoc accesserit:.54 Caeterum to udwr accusativus aut pendet a praepositione subaudita kata, aut adhaeret verbo baptioqhnaï, ea forma qua dicimus, baptizomai baptisma. Erasmus in

Acts 10:47.

ft10

Gregory Nazianzen. Basil. Chrysostome, Ambrose, Daille, Fowler, Cave, Towerson, cited by Mr Stennett, in his answer to Ruffen, p. 144, 145, 147,156, 157. See also. Dr Goodwin's Christ set forth, Sect. 3.

Ch. 7.

ft11

Reflections on Mr Wall's History of Infant-baptism, p. 217.

ft12

Institut. 1. 4. c. 15. s. 19.

ft13

Loc commun. p. 198. & Explic. Catech. p. 311.

ft14

Lexic. Theolog. p. 221, 222.

ft15

Christ. Theolog. 1:1. p. 22.

ft16

Dr Gale's Reflections on Mr Wall's History of Infant. baptism, letter 3.

ft17

De Superstitione

ft18

Plus autem est baptizeoqai, hoc in loco; quam cerniptein, quod illud videatur de corpore uni-verso, istud de manibus duntaxat intelligendum. Neque to baptizein significat lavare, nisi a consequenti, nam proprie declarat tingendi causa immergere. Beza in Marc. 7. 4.

ft19

Tract. Mikvaoth. c 10. f. 1, 5, 6.

ft20

Ubicunque in lege memoratur ablutio carnis aut vestium, nihil aliud vult, quam abluionem totius corporis, nam siquis se totum abluat. excepto ipsissimo apice minimi digiti ille adhuc in im-munditie fua, Maimon. in Mikvaoth. c. 1, 4. in Lightfoot Hor. Hebr, in Matthew p. 47.

ft21

In Adversar. Miscellan. p 30.

ft22

Magnum habet convenientiam ille in maris intima infimaque descensus, ex eodem ascensus denuo in aridam, cum baptismi christiani ritu, prout is primis temporibus administrabatur. Siquidem inter baptizandum in aquas descendebant, & ex eisdem denuo ascendebant: Cujus kataazasewv ki< anazasewv in Eunachi Aethiopsis tinctione mentio expressia reperitur,

Acts 8:38, 39. Quin & sicuti in ritu christiano, quum immergerentur aquis obruti, & quasi sepulti & Christo ipsi consepulti quodammodo videbantur; rursusque cum emergerent, a sepulchro quodammodo resur-gere, ac cum Christo resuscitare prae se serebant.

Romans 6:4, 5.

Colossians 2:12. Ita maris illius aquis.55 capitibus ipsis transeuntium altius extantibus obruti ac sepulti quodammodo poterunt videri & cruet-gere ac resurgere denuo, cum ad littus objectum exeuntes evasissent. Gatak. ibid.

ft23

Essay to restore the Dipping of Infants in their Baptism, p. 60.

ft24

Ibid. p. 4, 12, 32.

ft25

Defence of the History of Infant-baptism, p. 129, 130, 131, 146, 147.

ft26

It does not shock me so much, to find Mr R. use such terms as are scarce reconcileable to good sense, as it does to find him using such expressions, and making such descriptions, as are hardly consistent with that civility and modesty, for which he would appear to be an advocate. I can bear with him, when, on this occasion, he calls thin garments a posture instead of a habit, and tells us of things that are ignominious to the honor of christianity, being now pretty well acquainted with his stile. But I must confess myself offended with that air of levity, and those indecent terms, in which he condemns the pretended immodesty of others. For the words by which he sometimes describes the vicious acts and inclinations which he censures, seem not so much adapted to excite horror and aversion in the reader, as to defile his imagination, and to dispose him to that imprudent temper of making a mock of sin. And the true reason why I do not quote Mr R's words at large in this place, as I do in many others, is not to evade the force of his argument, but to avoid the mode of his expression, by which he has given too much occasion of offense to virtuous minds, and perhaps too much gratified those that are viciously inclined.

Stennett's Answ. to Ruffen. p. 137.

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