

WHY JOHN THE BAPTIST SPRINKLED
THE MULTITUDE AT THE RIVER JORDAN, AND OTHER
SERMONS ON BAPTISM PREACHED AT HORNE MEMORIAL
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I have chosen for my subject to night, "Why John the Baptist Sprinkled the Multitudes at the River Jordan." In the very beginning I would make clear the position of Methodists on the subject of water baptism. With us this has never been a cardinal doctrine. The Christian religion is not bound up in forms and ceremonies but is a matter of the heart. "Neither circumcision available anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature" (Gal. 6:15). "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, but he is a Jew who is one inwardly" (Rom. 2:28,29). If this was true of the Jew, how much more true is it of the Christian. Is thy heart right with God? This is of much greater importance than the question of water baptism. "By one spirit are we all baptized into one body," that is into Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). All the water in the world cannot do that. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9). The Master did not make water baptism the badge of discipleship. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another" (Jno. 13:35). "Love, therefore, is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10). Methodism has ever been in harmony with St. Paul, when he says: "For Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the Gospel" (Cor. 1:17). "The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:15).

Having thus stated the position of Methodism on this matter, we will proceed to our task which is to show that John sprinkled the multitudes. If you will follow me closely I believe that I can demonstrate this as clearly as that two and two make four. In this demonstration tonight we will confine ourselves to the English Bible as we have it, which every man can understand, for it is the Book of the people.

The Teaching of Prophecy.

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea. Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him" (Matt. 3:1,5,6). This baptizing caused

many to think that he was the Christ, so the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who art thou?" When he said that he was not the Christ, they asked him this very significant question, "Why baptizest thou then if thou be not the Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet" (Jno. 1:25)? It follows then that baptism was one of the identification marks of all these three. Whence did the Jews get this information? From the same source whence they received all their knowledge concerning the Messiah, from the Scriptures which were what we now call the Old Testament. That was all the Bible they had in those days. Let us see what light the Old Testament Scriptures throw on this matter, for there must be prophecies there which will account for this case of "mistaken identity." Let us take them in reverse order:

(1) Who was "that prophet?" It was the prophet spoken of by Moses (Deut. 8:15,18). He was to be like Moses. Well, Moses was preeminently a "sprinkler" and not an "immersionist," according to Leviticus and Deuteronomy. So John must have been sprinkling.

(2) What about Elias? Well, in the contest on Mt. Carmel, Elijah did not immerse the burnt-offering and wood in water but poured the water upon them. The return of Elijah is prophesied in Malachi (Mal. 3:1-4; 4:5). This messenger was to prepare the way of the Lord; he was to "purify the sons of Levi" (Mal. 3:3). The Jews purified by "sprinkling" and not by "immersion." So John must have been sprinkling or he would not have been mistaken for Elias.

(3) Why did they think John was the Christ? Because he was baptizing. Then there must be prophecies in the Old Testament concerning the baptismal work of the Messiah. If those prophecies state the mode of that baptizing, it must be accepted as final, as determining the manner of John's baptizing. In Isaiah 52:15, we read this prophecy of Christ: "So shall he SPRINKLE many Nations." So John must have been sprinkling. I do not see how any thing could be clearer than that. I think that the failure to listen to the voice of prophecy accounts for the going astray of so many people on this question. I have had more than one "immersionist" ask me why I appeal to the Old Testament and do not restrict myself to the New Testament on the subject of baptism. My answer to that is that I want the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The Old Testament was all the Scriptures that the Master appealed to, and it helps us to a correct understand-

ing of the New. Now the only way to escape the above conclusion is to tamper with the word of God. I am aware that the correctness of this passage has been called in question by some. Yet it stands thus in our King James Bible, "sprinkle." In the American Revised Version it reads "sprinkle," though they give in the margin an alternative reading "startle." But they acknowledge that "sprinkle" is more likely correct by giving it the preference. But we find that this same A. R. Version reads "baptized in water" and "baptized in the Holy Ghost." You can draw your own conclusion as to why they raise a doubt about the word "sprinkle" in Isaiah 52:15. If they changed the New Testament to support a doctrine, it is remarkable that they went no further with Isaiah. They must have been "startled" by that prophecy, for doubtless the immersionists realize that their position on baptism is absolutely untenable unless they get rid of that prophecy of Isaiah. But the King James version must be correct, for there must be some prophecy concerning the baptismal work of the Messiah, else the Jews would not have made it one of the identification marks whereby they would know him. If we reject this passage in Isaiah, what have we left? There is the prophecy in Ezekiel 36:25, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean." This undoubtedly refers to the time of Christ. If we reject both of these we have no prophecy left and cannot account for the Jews mistaking John for Christ because of his baptizing. If we reject the former we must accept the latter, and the immersionist certainly gains nothing thereby. The better way is to listen to the voice of prophecy and not ignore it; to accept both these passages as they are and not tamper with God's word, for the sake of any doctrine. Let us make our doctrine conform to the Bible and not trim the Bible to fit our doctrine. (Endnote 1)

THE CONCLUSIVENESS OF THIS ARGUMENT.

This argument from prophecy is so far reaching and conclusive that I will restate it in another form. John Smith was coming down the street when Sheriff Brown, who had never seen him before, stepped up to him and said: "Joshua Jones, consider yourself under arrest." Smith replied: "I am not Joshua Jones. What made you think so?" The sheriff replied: "I have orders to look out for Joshua Jones who was coming this way on a spotted horse." How was Smith traveling? Just as truly as the sun shines; just as truly as water runs down hill; just as truly as two and

two make four, just as certainly do we know that John Smith was riding a spotted horse. That was the sole reason that he was mistaken for Joshua Jones. I have submitted this argument to several immersionists and they with one accord have pronounced the conclusion absolutely logical. But just so surely do we know that John was sprinkling for he was mistaken for Christ who was to sprinkle according to the sure word of prophecy. The logic is irrefutable. Upon this foundation we will build, with the confidence that we are building not upon the sand but upon a rock. It seems to me that prophecy makes so clear and plain the mode of John's baptizing that it is removed entirely from the realm of doubt and is thus taken from the field of debate. (Close Communion vanishes). How was Christ Baptized?

Since John was sprinkling the multitudes, he must have baptized Christ in the same way, for John says that he came baptizing that he "might make him manifest to Israel (Jno. 1: 31)." There is nothing in the record to indicate that he changed the mode. But here is additional proof that Christ was baptized by sprinkling. Christ was a priest ("that he might be a faithful high priest," etc., Heb., 2:17.) He was to be a priest like his brethren, and above them also. Let us see if this occurred:

(1) Like his brethren, he was initiated into the Church in his infancy (Luke 2:21).

(2) Like his brethren, he was presented in the temple when forty days old. (Luke 2:22).

(3) Like his brethren, he was confirmed at twelve years old. (Luke 2:40).

(4) Like his brethren, he was consecrated to the priesthood at thirty years old, by sprinkling water upon him (Luke 3:21 and Num. 8:7).

(5) "Above his fellows," for at his baptism he was anointed with the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:22; Psa. 45:7; Heb. 1:9). Nowhere is it said that Christ was an example for us in baptism any more than in circumcision, but if we are to "follow Christ in baptism," concerning which we hear so much in some quarters, it must be by sprinkling.

CHRIST BAPTIZED BY SPRINKLING.

How did Christ, through his disciples, baptize, for he himself did not baptize (Jno. 4:2) ? Let it not be objected that this vitiates the prophecy quoted from Isaiah, for John prophesied that Christ was to baptize with the Holy Spirit, yet there is no record that he did this while here on

earth. It was to occur under his dispensation. The law recognizes that what a man does by another he does himself. How did Christ baptize? Christ was the child of prophecy. Now prophecy said that he should be born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14) and he was (Matt. 1:23); that he should be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:20) and he was (Matt. 2:15); that he should be called out of Egypt (Hosea 11:1) and he was (Matt. 2:15); that he should be called a Nazarene (Isa. 11:1 and Jer. 23:5) and he was (Matt. 2:23). Then when prophecy says "So shall he sprinkle many nations" (Isa. 52:15), it was fulfilled or it was not. If it was then we know that Christ baptized by sprinkling, even as did John. If it was not fulfilled then, either it will be or the Bible is false. If Christ baptized by immersion then why did he and John baptize differently? Why would Christ immerse then and sprinkle whenever that prophecy is fulfilled? Why was prophecy silent on, the immersion while it proclaimed the sprinkling? Echo answers, Why? The natural conclusion is the easiest and that is that God's Word is true and that this prophecy concerning Christ's baptismal work was fulfilled as were all others concerning him. Christ was sprinkled by John and Christ's disciples, under his direction, sprinkled those who came to them.

SPRINKLING AND POURING CONSTITUTE BIBLE BAPTISM,

But some ardent immersionist may still object that while prophecy says "sprinkle" and "pour" the record in the New Testament says "baptized" and that they are not one and the same thing. Well, let us see whether certain things described in the Old Testament are ever spoken of as "baptism" in the New? If so that will clear up the matter. Here is a description from the Old Testament: "And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord caused the sea to go back all that night and make the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon dry ground and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left (Ex. 12:21, 23). Here is what the Psalmist says about the same affair (Ps. 77:16, 20): "The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid; the depths were troubled also, the clouds Poured out water; the skies sent out a sound; thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron." Here is what Paul says about it: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were BAPTIZED unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor. 10: 8

1,2). Here God himself was the administrator and he poured out water from the cloud and Paul calls it "baptism." The only ones immersed at the crossing of the Red Sea were the Egyptians, and they perished. When we pour or sprinkle water in baptism why not call it immersion? Because it would be absurd. Yet it is no more absurd than the sermon by (this quality of print was very poor-did readable) of Norfolk, Va., which appeared in the Religious Herald about twelve years ago, in which he endeavored to prove by "main strength and awkwardness," that the crossing of the Red Sea was a clear case of immersion. Why did the good brother argue so fatuously to make this a case of immersion? He was in the same position that "Brer Rabbit" was in when Uncle Remus says "he was jest bleeed to climb a tree." Paul says this was baptism, and therefore the immersionist must prove it a case of immersion. But the water was poured on.

Again, Joel says (2:28): "And it shall come to pass afterward that I (the Lord) will pour out my spirit upon all flesh." Jesus said: "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1:5). Here is what happened. "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire and it sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost (Acts 2: 3,4). Peter said: But this is that which was spoken of by the Prophet Joel" (Acts 2:16). Does it not seem as clear as crystal that the "baptism" of Christ and of John was the fulfillment of the "sprinkling" and "pouring" of prophecy? Does it not seem ridiculously absurd to call "Pouring out of the Holy Spirit," "Immersion in the Holy Spirit? Yet this absurdity has been perpetrated by some immersionists who have a zeal but not according to knowledge. In attempting to squeeze the Scriptures into their doctrines, they get a result that is ludicrous both from a logical, and a Scriptural standpoint. Surely with them "the Word of God is bound."

SOME ADDITIONAL LIGHT.

Having demonstrated beyond peradventure, as I believe, that John baptized by sprinkling and not by immersion, I Will add the following for good measure:

1. Christ asked the multitudes concerning John, "What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind? (Luke 7:24; Matt. 11:7.) Was it by chance that Jesus used this figure of speech? If John had been immersing it would have no special significance. But according to prophecy John was sprinkling and this figure of the wind shaken reed becomes quite luminous. John is baptizing the multitudes who flocked to him. He takes a

hyssop branch and dips it in water and sprinkles the people. (Ps 51:7, Purge me with hyssop). The people hear about it and go out to see what is going on. When they draw near they are unable to see John, who is down at the water's edge, for the multitudes. All they can see to indicate where John is, is the waving of the hyssop branch which looks like a reed shaken with the wind. It would be but natural and easy to speak of going to see John as going to see "a reed shaken with the wind."

2. There are several pictures representing the baptism of Christ. They belong to the early part of the Christian era. They represent John pouring water upon the head of Christ, as he stands "in Jordan." Not a one of them suggests immersion. Is it not strange that if these pictures are libelous, they are nevertheless in harmony with that "sure word of prophecy?"

3. When Christ was baptized, the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him (Luke 3:21). The water descended upon him. The lesser and the greater are in accord; the mode of the symbolized and the mode of the symbol agree. This is what we would expect. That is why the immersionist, having gone wrong on the symbol, tries to be consistent by rendering the "pouring out the Spirit," "baptism in the Spirit."

4. In Matt. 3:5, we read: "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan and were baptized of him. Can any man suppose that it was possible for John to immerse all those who went out to him? But he could have baptized them readily if he was sprinkling according to prophecy.

5. The Christian Religion does not impose onerous rites and burdensome ceremonies. They would not be in accord with its spirit. Here is an ordinance for the world. It must be a ceremony which every disciple may observe and every pastor may perform in every clime and at every season. Let me quote the words of a Baptist clergyman who was evidently doing some thinking: "Has it occurred to you that the great head of the Church in establishing an ordinance for all time and for all latitudes and for all seasons of the year would not likely give to the Church one that is so utterly unphysiological as immersion? Now, I have studied medicine and practiced as a physician fifteen years and I know what I say is true, it is contrary to all the laws of health and life for the baptized or for the administrator." (Endnote 2)

I have known of cases where women did not appear for

immersion at the appointed time because it was inimical to their health. When I was pastor in Richmond, Va., another pastor reported in our Preachers' Meeting that he had been called on to baptize a man dying with tuberculosis. A preacher of another denomination had been sent for to minister to the dying man, who declared his faith in Christ as a Saviour and desired to be baptized that he might die a member of the Church, but this preacher could do nothing as it was impracticable to immerse the sick man. Then the Methodist preacher was sent for. The man was baptized and died happy in the Lord. Now I do not think that water baptism was essential to his salvation any more than it was in the case of the thief on the cross. But it ministered to his peace of mind. I thank God, not that Methodists sprinkle, but that by following the teaching of the Scriptures they are ready at all times to administer the rite of baptism.

Another case of this kind was told by a Methodist preacher in Danville, Va. A preacher of the ___ - ___ Church had been called to the hospital to see a woman who was about to undergo a very serious operation. She wanted to join the Church but it was impracticable to immerse her. He advised that a Methodist preacher be sent for. He went with the Methodist pastor, and offered prayer, after which the Methodist preacher baptized the woman. It seems to me that that was enough to convince that man that immersion as the only mode of baptism was absolutely wrong. It fails in universal administration, which puts it to the test and finds it wanting. That indicates clearly that it is not according to the divine plan.

Again, many preachers who practice immersion, from concern about life and health of themselves and their converts, have had to postpone till summer the baptism of those converted in winter. Some ministers in impaired health are not able to attend to it at all. But not so with those who baptize as did John and Christ, by sprinkling.

NEW TESTAMENT BAPTISMS EXAMINED.

We will now proceed to examine the baptisms recorded in the New Testament. Truth is ever harmonious and consistent. The superstructure must correspond with the foundation. If it is fitly framed it will grow into a symmetrical building.

(1) We will take the case of the Eunuch, as that is considered a stronghold by immersionists. (Acts 8:26-38). The "going down into the water" and the "coming up from the water" proves nothing here, as it proves nothing any

where else, as to the mode of baptism, for both Philip and the Eunuch "went down" and they both "came up." So if that pertained to the "baptism" then they both were baptized. But the record says that after they "went down" and before they "came up," Philip baptized the Eunuch. (Acts 8:38,39). This occurred in the desert. (8:26). Now if there had been a stream sufficiently deep in which to immerse a grown person (about waist deep,) then it would not have been desert, for the two do not go together. The Eunuch's exclamation, "See, water," indicates surprise at finding any water, which was but natural as they were in the desert. But what suggested baptism to the Eunuch? Well he was studying the Bible (Old Testament.) He was reading a prophecy concerning Christ from Isaiah. Remember that the chapter and verse divisions were unknown in that day. (Read chapters 52 and 53 of Isaiah) Philip began at the same Scripture and preached to him Jesus. (Acts 8:35). In the last verse of the 52nd chapter we read: "So shall be sprinkle many nations." With that plain direction before him, how would the Eunuch expect to be baptized? By sprinkling, of course. If Philip had offered to baptize him any other way would he not have rejected the whole thing? How any man with a knowledge of the Scriptures and possessed with ordinary reasoning power can ever get immersion out of or into the baptism of the Eunuch is more than I can see. Immersion does not satisfy as a product of this material. If it did it would not fit upon the foundation of prophecy. Sprinkling not only conforms to the material in hand but it conforms also to the foundation. It fits like the parts of Solomon's temple.

(2) Now let us take the baptism of Paul (Acts 9:18, 19). He was in the house of Judas. "And he received sight forthwith, and arose and was baptized and when he had received meat he was strengthened." The natural supposition is that the whole transaction took place in the house of Judas. Where could he have been immersed? It would be a very difficult thing, if they had had bathtubs such as we have. But the Jews did not bathe by immersion. They did not wash their hands by dipping into the bowl but by pouring the water over the hands. Again, we cannot get immersion here without supposing something that is not in the record. Sprinkling makes no such requirement and fits into the structure, whereas immersion does not.

(3) The day of Pentecost. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized and the same day were added unto them three thousand souls." (Acts 2:41). Immer-

sionists argue that John's going away from the city to the Jordan implies that he went there because there was water to immerse. Then what does the baptism of three thousand in a single day in the city imply? There is no natural body of water in or near Jerusalem sufficient for immersion. The "brook Kedron" is ordinarily an almost dry watercourse. Unless seasons were entirely different from what they are now, of which there is no proof and no probability, there was only a rill of water there at Pentecost. Therefore, there were no facilities in Jerusalem for immersion except in the reservoirs of water used for drinking and cooking. To conceive of the apostles immersing three thousand in these is preposterous. Forbidden by common decency, it would have been especially forbidden by the violent and unyielding opposition to the new faith. The same number of Negroes bathing in the reservoir of one of our towns would not start a riot any more quickly than would have occurred in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost had three thousand followers of the hated Nazarene been immersed in the city's drinking water. If the Jew did not dip his hands into the bowl because that would pollute the water, would three thousand likely follow one another into the pool? In a little while the water would be not only ceremonially unclean but actually dirty. Immersion presents many difficulties, but never the mode indicates by prophecy. The problem is easy when we follow God's Word. (Endnote 3)

A STRIKING COMPARISON.

But let us compare the record of Pentecost with the prophecy of Ezekiel before we go further:

Ezek. 36:24: "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries into your own land."

Acts 2:5: "And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven."

Ezek. 36:25: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you."

Acts 2:41: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto him about three thousand souls."

Ezek. 36:26: "A new heart also will I give you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."

Acts 2:46: "And they, continuing daily with one accord

in the temple, and breaking bread, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart."

Ezek. 36:27: "And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgements, and do them."

Acts 2:4 "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance."

If sprinkling was the mode of baptism, then that record and the prophecy are like a seamless garment. But immersion leaves one item unfulfilled while the others are fulfilled perfectly. Immersion does not fit here and if it did the result would not fit in the building. Sprinkling not only fits here but the result is after the same pattern we have found before.

(4) The Phillipian Jailer (Acts 16:25-34). The dead of night, the general agitation, the necessity of despatch, and the narrative are all against immersion. We might suppose that they went out to a river. We might suppose that there was a horse trough there, as one ardent immersionist did. We might suppose bath tubs but I do not suppose that the most modern jail is equipped with bathtubs, lest prisoners might commit suicide. Shower bathe would be handy for sprinkling, but, I hardly think that the jail at Philippi had them. Sprinkling does not call for any supposition. We do not have to add anything to God's Word.

(5) Lydia and her household, (Acts 16:13-15). Where did it take place? Well, "the place of prayer" was by the riverside. While no man can affirm that the baptism occurred there, we may grant that it did. Yet they did not go there for baptism but for prayer. The location would not be unfavorable to immersion provided that was the mode indicated by prophecy, which it was not. If Lydia was immersed, she was immersed either with her clothes on or naked. (Naked immersion has been practiced by some who were very zealous, thinking that it would have more efficacy for washing away their sins.) But there is nothing said about "laying aside their garments" here or elsewhere in connection with baptism. We can hardly suppose that Lydia would let a man who was undoubtedly a stranger to her, himself naked, (for Paul certainly had no rubber suit), lead her without any clothes on into the river. Neither one had a change of clothes, for they did not come there for baptism. (If they had come for baptism Paul would have brought no change of garment for he was baptized in the house of Justus by sprinkling, as we have seen.

But why pursue the matter further? If we could remove the difficulties which immersion brings up we would still have to reconcile this with other baptisms and with prophecy. It would be entirely out of harmony with them. Why should we take such a course? Sprinkling, the mode indicated by prophecy, gives no such trouble. Indeed we only get into trouble when we depart from God's Word.

(6) The baptism of Cornelius and his household. They were gathered together in the house of Cornelius. Whatever took place occurred there as far as we know. Peter said: "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? (As always the Holy Ghost fell upon them.) If language has any meaning, this means that the water was to be brought to them and not, that they should be carried to the water. The former is natural; the latter is forced. The former is in harmony with prophecy and other baptisms; the latter is at variance with them all. I prefer to take the former. Thus we find sprinkling confirms the prophecy of the Old Testament; it will fit naturally into every baptism of the New Testament, without suggesting even a discordant note. Immersion calls for much "supposing" and is out of harmony with the voice of prophecy. This is presumptive evidence that it is error, for truth is always consistent and therefore harmonious.

THE PURPOSE OF BAPTISM.

But the immersionist says that baptism represents "burial and resurrection" and therefore immersion is the only baptism. But, again the immersionist is mistaken, for if the preceding argument from prophecy holds good, and we have faith enough in it to believe that it will withstand any assault that can be made upon it, the Scriptures give him no ground to stand upon. Prophecy is dead against him. But we will allow this idea standing room so that we may get a chance to try it out at the bar of reason and see if it has any legs to stand upon. Whose burial and resurrection does baptism represent? One says that of Christ and another says that of the believer. Let us examine each of these in turn. It is claimed that there are three doctrines in the gospel: death, burial and resurrection, (1 Cor. 15:1-3) and that the two ordinances are emblematic of them. Well, the fact that there are three of one and two of the other is suspicious to begin with. The Lord's supper is a memorial of the death of our Lord for he said: "This do in remembrance of me." (Luke 22:19). But it is not emblematic, for if it were it would

represent crucifixion, which it does not. There is nothing about it that suggests crucifixion. So that is suspicious also. Now when we come to examine baptism as emblematic of Christ's burial and resurrection, we are met on the threshold with no "ipse dixit" of our Lord. He never said: "Be baptized as a memorial or as an emblem of my burial and resurrection." Would the hasty plunging of the convert into water ever suggest burial to an oriental? No, never, nor to anyone else for that matter. Would the dilapidated appearance of the convert as he rises from the so-called "liquid grave" ever suggest to any one the glorious resurrection of our Lord? Can anybody ever believe that such a sight represents the resurrection of our bodies, which is so wonderful that Paul uses such words as "in corruption," "power," "glory" to describe it? Is it a worthy representation of our being raised from a life of sin to a life of righteousness? The old man is characterized by deceitful lusts; the new man is created unto holiness.

In immersion the "new" is less attractive and presentable than the "old" which is a reversal of the spiritual process. "Burial and resurrection" may be read into immersion, by those desiring to establish an already accepted doctrine, but they will never be read out of it. It is too preposterous.

But it must be noted that neither John nor Christ ever said anything about baptism as "burial and resurrection," if it means that and they practiced immersion. But we have already seen that they baptized by sprinkling and therefore it is not strange that they are silent about baptism as "burial and resurrection." It had no such meaning to them.

Again, which comes first, death or burial? Death, of course, unless a live person is buried. Then, which ought to be represented first? Death of course. Yet on the "burial and resurrection" theory of baptism, the convert is baptized first which represents burial and resurrection and not until sometime afterwards is he allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper which represents the death of our Lord. He is not allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper until he has been immersed. Here the cart is before the horse, which is suspicious. To be logical the Lord's Supper would have to come first. Then ought not every death to be followed by burial and resurrection? Certainly. Yet on this theory a disciple may have pictured to him the death of our Lord a thousand times in the Lord's supper but his burial and resurrection only once in baptism. (Yet

St. Paul makes the resurrection the keystone in the doctrinal arch.) Such a system is not symmetrical but very lopsided, and is therefore very suspicious.

Again, St. Paul (1 Cor. 15:4) mentions the fact that three days intervened between the burial and resurrection. Therefore, ought not the convert to remain under the water three days? It would be necessary for this theory to be consistent. Baptism as emblematic of the "burial and resurrection" or our Lord will not bear investigation.

Let us turn now to baptism as the "burial and resurrection" of the believer. Since a man must not be buried alive, what represents that he is dead? The believer is said to be crucified (Gal. 2:20; Rom. 6:5,6). But is there anything to represent his crucifixion? Nothing. The crucifixion is figurative; the resurrection is likewise figurative and not literal. Is it not a violation of every law of language to understand the burial alone as literal? The truth is that in the 6th chapter of Romans St. Paul is not, talking about water baptism. When he says: "Know ye, not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death" (Rom. 6:3.) he is talking about the Spirit for here is what he says in 1 Cor. 12:13: "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." That,, body is Christ. So this does not refer to water baptism. By the baptism of the Spirit the old man is crucified and buried and the new man is raised up by the glory of the Father.

Here is another matter to consider. The believer is not dead but alive. Dead men ought to be buried and not live ones. The old man ought to be buried before there is a new man to deal with. Burial was the closing of the old and resurrection is the beginning of the new. Therefore a man ought to be a sinner when he goes down under the water and a Christian when he comes up out of the water. This I submit is perfectly logical, but it means "baptismal regeneration," which is unscriptural. We are justified by faith. By grace are ye saved through faith. Yet I never heard any one clamor strongly for immersion that did not seem to me to be tinctured by "baptismal regeneration."

So, having been examined thoroughly, as we believe, baptism as "burial and resurrection" is rejected. The Scriptures give the immersionist no ground to stand upon, and in the court of reason baptism as "burial and resurrection" has not a single leg to stand upon. It is error. I am unwilling to accept anything that is contrary both to reason and to Scripture.

Then what is the design of baptism? It represents ceremonial purification. In Hebrews 9:10, we read of "divers washings," (Greek, baptisms) which refers to the ceremonial dispensation and means "divers purifications." It is worthy of note that there was not an immersion among them. In Luke 11:38, we have: "And when the Pharisee saw it he marveled that he had not first washed (Greek baptized) himself before eating." It is very hard to believe that Christ was expected to immerse himself before eating. Again, Mark 7:4, "When they come from the market, except they wash (Greek, baptize) themselves, they eat not and many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the washings, (Greek, baptizings) of cups and pots, and brazen vessels and of tables." Some manuscripts add "couches." While "tables" and "couches" are rejected by some authorities, yet the very fact that these readings are among the oldest shows that they were accepted for centuries and presented no supposed impossibility in "baptizing" tables and couches. Their immersion would have been a manifest impossibility. At the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee, we read "there were set twelve firkins after the manner of the Jews' purifying." Does this not throw light on what these baptisms meant? When Jesus was baptizing in Judea and John was baptizing at Aenon, there arose a dispute about "purification." Does not this incident throw light also on the design of baptism? Then in the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Old Testament) the word "baptizo" is used three times literally and once figuratively. Every time it is used literally it means purification. Two of these were by sprinkling. In the other (II Kings 5:14), though it is translated "dipped," there is no necessity for supposing that Naaman immersed himself in the river, for the action expressed in verse 14 is in answer to the command of Elisha, given in the 10th verse, which was to "wash." In Isaiah 21:4, it is used in a metaphorical sense, ("fearfulness baptizes me"). Here the idea of immersion is excluded. If Mark 10:38,39 and Luke 12:50 refer to the martyrdom of Christ it means that he was overwhelmed with sufferings, the outward manifestation of which was "sprinkled with his own blood," both in Gethsemane and on Calvary.

MEANING OF BAPTIZO.

What has just been said has a bearing on the meaning of "baptizo." So we will consider its meaning a little further. "Baptizo" had acquired a religious meaning two hundred years before Christ came. Josephus, who wrote

the "Jewish Antiquities" was a learned man, who understood the Greek language and knew Jewish customs; he called cleansing by sprinkling water, "baptism." He says: "Baptizing by this ashes put into spring water, they sprinkled on the third day and the seventh (Bk. 4: chap. 4) (Endnote 4). "Baptizo" had therefore a special meaning when Christ came and he never intimated that he used it in a different sense. It was used to represent ceremonial cleansing when the entire cleansing was by sprinkling. That certainly does not give much comfort to the immersionist who refuses standing room to any one who does not agree with him.

But in Classical Greek does not baptizo mean "immerse" always? No. It means: "to wet, moisten, bedew, to rain, to wash, to spill" (Gases); to immerse, to wet, to wash, to purify" (Suidas); "to dip, to immerse, to wash, to be sprinkled, to purify" (Shreveilius); "to immerse, to dip, to cleanse" (Stephanus); "to cleanse, to immerse, to dye" (Scapula) ; "to dip, to immerse, to sink, to, bathe," (bathing was by affusion rather than by immersion), "to baptize," (which does not call for immersion any more than bathing does) (Sophocles); "to dip, in or under water, to be drenched" (which certainly does not require immersion), "to baptize" (Liddell and Scott); "to wet, to tinge," (which certainly do not call for immersion) (Contopoulos); "to dip, to immerge, to submerge, to cleanse, to wash, to bathe, in the New Testament an immersion in water, performed as a sign of the removal of sin" (Thayer). (This last statement is diametrically opposed to the Scriptures. The Israelites were baptized when crossing the Red Sea by pouring. (See page 5). The baptism with the Holy Ghost was certainly not immersion in water. We must give up Thayer or the Bible. I give up Thayer). Dr. Carson, a great immersionist, while claiming that " 'baptizo' always signifies to dip, never expressing anything but mode," acknowledges "I have all the lexicographers and commentaries against me in this opinion." That is pretty good proof that "baptizo" did not always mean dip or immerse in classical Greek. Numerous examples might be cited. It is one thing to claim, and quite another to prove.

THE LATIN TRANSLATION.

When the Latin Fathers translated the Bible into the Latin language, they did not translate the word "baptizo" but took it over bodily into their language, though they had the word "immersio," meaning immersion. Why did they do this? If "baptizo" means to "immerse" it is pas-

sing strange. It would be just about as sensible as it would for a man to borrow a suit of clothes when he had a suit already made to his measure, or adopting a child in order to have an heir when he had a fine child of his own.

THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When the King James Version was made, the English translators brought over "baptizo," merely changing the o into an e. This shows conclusively that "baptizo" had a meaning all its own. It was easier to transliterate than to translate it. They were wise, for sprinkle, pour, immerse, cleanse, or purify, when standing alone, would not correctly give its meaning.

THE GREEK PREPOSITIONS. (Endnote 5)

We have heard so much about "down into" and "up out of" in connection with baptism that we need to look at the Greek prepositions. The preposition, "eis," has fifteen meanings assigned to it. It is translated about five hundred times by "into" and about as many times by "to." But when it means unequivocally "into" it is used before the noun as well as before the verb. But this unequivocal method is never used in speaking of going to water for baptism. The preposition "apo" is used about six hundred times and is given fifteen meanings in the New Testament. In some forty cases only, is it translated by "out of," and is practically every one of those it would be better rendered by "from." The American Bible Union (Baptist) in making their version of the Scriptures did substitute "from" for "out of" in all except six passages, two of which refer to baptism. The others were inconsequential, and would no doubt have been changed also but the reason for not making a clean sweep with the exception of these two, would be too obvious. The preposition, "en" has fourteen meanings. In more than one hundred places it is rendered by "at;" in one hundred and fifty places it is rendered by "with," which is its proper meaning when found in connection with baptism, as in every instance except Mark 1:9, it is used with a dative case of the noun, which expresses the instrument by which an action is effected. It is "with water" and "with the spirit" and not "in." The other preposition is `ek" which has seven meanings. It is rendered by "from" about one hundred and seventy times and by "out of" one hundred and forty times. The unequivocal way of saying "out of" with "ek" is to put it before the verb as well as before the noun. This unequivocal method is never used in connection with baptism. Immersion can never be proved by the Greek prepositions.

PLACES OF BAPTISM.

But it is argued that the places where baptism occurred indicates immersion. Well, here they are: At or in Jordan; beyond Jordan; in the wilderness; at Bethabara, beyond Jordan; in Jerusalem (Pentecost); at Aenon (the Greek really means "many waters" not "much water"); in the desert (the Eunuch); in houses (Saul standing up, and Cornelius); at Samaria; perhaps by a riverside (Lydia); in a jail (Phillipi); at Ephesus. Let the reader judge whether all these places fit in naturally with, the theory that baptism was by immersion exclusively. Sprinkling? resents no difficulty.

HOW CAN METHODISTS IMMEDIATE?

Because I have made out such a strong case for sprinkling as the Scriptural mode of baptism, really unanswerable, as I believe, I have been asked by an immersionist to answer this question. It is a fact that immersion is provided for in our ritual if the candidate desires it. I take pleasure in answering it. We have already seen that baptism means ceremonial purification with water. While I find not the slightest intimation in the Scriptures that this purification was ever by immersion, the manner of it is not prescribed, and therefore we have nothing to show that immersion is forbidden. But the very meaning of the word "baptizo," as we have seen, takes a wide range. This would certainly indicate that this purification might be administered in various ways. So, while we hold to sprinkling as the method of Scripture, and prefer it as the mode most easily administered, yet where a candidate prefers immersion, "as the answer of a good conscience," he can be immersed without any inconsistency" on our part. That shows the spirit of Methodism. Other denominations boast that they have "no creed but the Bible," but that means that you must accept some other man's interpretation. Otherwise you are entirely wrong. So it comes about that we have some Methodists who have been sprinkled and some who have been immersed, yet, I never heard of any division in a Methodist Church on the subject of water baptism. Each is satisfied with his own and the other's baptism. They dwell together in unity and commune together as all true Christians should.

ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM.

But the immersionist is still unsatisfied. He says, "Why do you have more than one baptism, when the

Bible says there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism (Eph. 4:5)?" Well, what is the "one baptism"? In Hebrews we read of "divers baptisms"; there is the baptism of John; that of Christ's disciples; that "in the name of the Lord Jesus"; that "in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost"; and then the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Now, which is the "one baptism" spoken of by Paul? He says also there is but one God. Certainly there is but one God in the Old Testament and the New; there is but one Lord; He is the same in both Testaments; one faith to save in both; one baptism in both for in both it means purification. So we have but one baptism, whether we sprinkle or immerse. It is always in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and means purification.

OUR IMMERSION ASSAILED.

But our immersion has been declared invalid, because we are not in the succession. Says the immersionist: "You were not immersed, therefore, you have no right to immerse." Then was John's baptism valid? If he immersed, which he did not, unless Scripture and logic both break down, who immersed him? We have all heard immersionists boast of how they had an unbroken line from the days of John the Baptist, which not only makes their baptism valid, but at the same time proves that baptism in immersion. While that old myth has been exploded by their own historians, their leaders keep right on telling it and seem to expect intelligent people to swallow it. Here is what is said about that myth by Dr. W. H. Whitsitt, who was at one time Professor of Church History in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, Ky., and its president from 1895 to 1899. No one can charge that he was prejudiced in his views. "Prior to the year 1641, our Baptist people in England were in the habit of sprinkling and pouring for baptism." (This appeared in the New York Examiner, April 23, 1896.) He says: "In September, 1880, I moved up the figures just eight years, announcing and proving in the New York Independent for September 2 and 9, that immersion was introduced into England, not in the year 1633, but in the year 1641." (A Question in Baptist History, p. 14) "The earliest Baptist Confessions of Faith all contemplate sprinkling or pouring as the act of baptism. It was not till the year 1644, three years after the invention of

immersion that any Baptist Confession prescribes dipping or plunging the body in water as the way and manner of dispensing the ordinance." (Independent, September 9, 1880.) Dr. Whitsitt made a thorough examination of the "original sources" in the British Museum and alleges and proves that immersion as baptism was not practiced nor pleaded for by either Smyth or Helwys, the alleged founders of the General Baptist Denomination in England. He sums up the matter in these words which he quotes from Prof. A. H. Newman: **(Endnote 6)**. "Let no Baptist henceforth risk his reputation for scholarship and fair dealing by denying that John Smyth was a Se-Baptist (one who baptized himself) or that his baptism was, as regards its form, an affusion (sprinkling or pouring)." As to Dr. Whitsitt's ability, here is this tribute from Prof. J. G. de Hoop Scheffer, one of the first masters of history in Europe: "A man whose breadth of view, acute understanding and exceptional skill in historic studies lead me to hope that, vigorously supported by his brethren in the faith, he shall one day execute a task which, up to the present time, has never been satisfactorily performed and which apparently could be better entrusted to no other person-the writing of a history of the Baptists." Prof. deHoop Scheffer was so impressed with the accuracy of Dr. Whitsitt's research work that he rejected the date which he had hitherto held, viz.: September 12, 1633, and accepted the date fixed by Dr. Whitsitt, 1641. The correctness of this date is further attested by the research work of Dr. H. M. Dexter, a Congregationalist of Boston, which was published in December, 1881. Dr. Dexter was a master of research work. In the first chapter (The True Story of John Smyth) he shows that Smyth and Helwys did not practice immersion; in the second he brings forward proofs that it was introduced in 1641, and in the last chapter he exposes at considerable length and with admirable learning "the clumsy fraud that has become such a grief and pain in connection with the alleged immersion of Smyth." Yet, instead of being "vigorously supported by his brethren in the faith," Dr. Whitsitt was so vigorously attacked by the Southern Baptist Church for publishing the facts of history as he found them, that he found himself in "circumstances painful and unfortunate" and retired from the Seminary at Louisville. He became Professor of Philosophy at Richmond College in 1901 and held this position till his death. It seems that they pre

ferred error to truth, for all their attempts to disprove his contentions have been futile. It is one thing to claim; it is another to prove. Dr. Whitsitt proved all that he claimed.

Thus the same thing invalidates their immersion that they claim invalidates mine. But at least I make no false claim about its validity, which they do every time they claim an unbroken line from John the Baptist. That is an exploded myth.

BAPTISM OF ROGER WILLIAMS.

Roger Williams is regarded as the founder of the Baptists in America. (The Representative Baptist Church in Washington is called "Roger Williams Memorial"). Here is what Dr. Whitsitt says about his position on baptism: "This appears to prove that Mr. Williams did not regard immersion as essential to baptism." (A Question in Baptist History, p. 154.) As to Williams' own baptism, Dr. Whitsitt says: "In the present state of information, it would be unwise to pronounce with certainty any conclusion regarding this question. However, within the limits of the uncertainty which is freely acknowledged, the weight of evidence appears to incline very closely towards the view that Roger Williams was sprinkled and not immersed at Providence in 1639. (Ibid, 164.) His baptism was like that of John Smyth in England. Remember that Dr. Whitsitt lived and died a Baptist. I doubt if the Baptists in this country have ever produced his equal as an historian. Yet in the face of this unimpeachable evidence I have heard the boastful claim made more than once of the "unbroken line of immersion" from the days of John. Are such claims due to ignorance of Church History? Well, that is a charitable construction to put upon it. But undoubtedly there are many that are "risking their reputation for scholarship and fair dealing." To substantiate this absurd claim documents were forged in England, clumsy documents, for Dr. Whitsitt speaks of the fraud at Epworth, Crowle and West Butterwick, "that brings blushes to the cheeks of intelligent Baptists in all parts of the world" (p. 15). He quotes Professor Newman as styling the Crowle fraud as a "festering carcass" (p. 20). What sort of spirit was it that would forge documents to try to substantiate a doctrine of a church. "The church is the pillar and ground of truth." (1 Tim. 3:15). It proves that somebody thought this chain needed mending. But that shows to what straits people are re

duced when they depart from the Bible. We need resort to nothing dishonorable when we accept sprinkling as the Bible mode of baptism, for truth is not only consistent but clean. Truth does not have to be bolstered up by forgery and misrepresentation. Yet, has this spirit ceased to exist? I quote the following from a pamphlet "The Bible Mode of Baptism," by Rev. J. E. Mahaffy, of South Carolina.

"SUPERLATIVE MISREPRESENTATION"

"Having more light on the subject, I refer again to the tract written by Rev. W. W. Hamilton, Th. D., D. D., published by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, "Department of Evangelism" 723 Austell Building, Atlanta, Ga., entitled, "Bible Baptism." It is being circulated promiscuously throughout the country, more especially in out-of-way places, rural and mill districts, among the young people of other denominations.

"Time would fail us to point out the many instances of mangled quotations from the Bible, as in Acts 2:28, where repentance is left out and baptism is substituted for the remission of sins. But I must call attention to the paragraph in which Dr. Hamilton says that the Greek word for sprinkle (rantizo) occurs 62 times in the New Testament, the word for pour (ekkeo) occurs 152 times, and the word for wash (louo) occurs 139 times, yet he says that in not a single case is either one of these words ever used when baptism is referred to. In reply to this, I will say that I have taken time to examine carefully the nine leading texts of the Greek New Testament (and there is no material difference in them) with the aid of the best lexicons in existence, with the following result: The word rantizo occurs 7 times instead of 62; ekkeo occurs 19 times instead of 152; louo occurs 10 times instead of 139, and in nearly every case they refer to baptism. This is doctoring facts and figures, as well as theology, with a vengeance.

"I am utterly astonished that such apparently deliberate exaggeration and misrepresentation is resorted to in this twentieth century to deceive and mislead unsuspecting people who in thousands of instances have no means of finding out for themselves the baseness of such falsehoods. Replying to my criticism of his figures some time ago, Dr. Hamilton explains that he quotes from a Baptist writer who is dead, but says that if he included compounds, as any scholar would do, then the figures are

correct which is another apparently deliberate falsehood. Another Baptist preacher, Rev. C. L. Fowler, B. D., Clinton, S. C., affirms that the tract is correct, because, he says, the same figures are given in twenty standard Baptist works. Surely he is mistaken.

"Three months ago I offered \$500.00 for the references where these words occur in the Greek text of the New Testament, but notwithstanding a promise that I should have them and repeated public assertions that they are there, they have not been handed in. Mr. Fowler says that all this work as gone over carefully during his course at the Theological Seminary and the passages verified, and the figures are absolutely correct. Is it possible that any Theological Seminary turns out work of this kind? But think of a great church thus humiliated by the reckless bungling of its leaders in trying to bolster up and propagate a false doctrine and proselyte people from other churches by the use of such pernicious literature sent out by its Home Mission Board. Since my exposure of these misrepresentations I understand that the tract is being sent out with a pen foot-note, "Including compounds," which is an additional untruth.

"I see in the January Gospel Forum that its editor, in his desperation to find the references and make good his rash promise, has somewhat reduced the number and included a fourth word to supplement or complement the disappointing and diminishing frequency of the third. Is it possible that this learned Gamaliel does not know the difference between louo (to wash) and luo (to untie)? Or is he trying to play on the ignorance of others in order to get out of a hole?..... Counting "luo"? Well, that lets the cat out and the most charitable name to give her is Ignorance."

I submit this whole matter for the careful consideration of everybody. Our position is founded upon the sure foundations of Scripture and reason. Standing upon those we challenge the world to dislodge us, and yet we do not put stress upon water baptism. Here is a structure that rests upon Scripture: its walls are four-square with all the rules of logic; it is symmetrical in design; its colors are harmonious; its windows admit the light of truth; its roof does not leak. Its perfection indicates its divine origin. So consider it well.

In these latter pages I have set forth some very plain, and, to a great many people, little known facts. They are

not complimentary to those guilty of them, but they are matters of history. The shame lies, not in exposing them but in doing them and in the persisting in them, rather than confessing and forsaking them.

Is it not high time that these facts were published broadcast to the world so that our own Methodist people may be duly warned and armed against those who would proselyte them from the Church of their fathers I believe that there are thousands of others who will be glad to know these facts, though it may bring a blush to their honest faces. I believe that there are thousands of honest, simple folk who once they know the truth, will refuse to follow leaders who resort to such unscrupulous methods to advance the interests of their Church. The Kingdom of God never calls for protection by falsehood nor for advancement by error nor deceit. So, "ring out the false, ring in the true."

"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

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1. By "immersionist" is meant one that holds to immersion as the exclusive mode of baptism, and unchurches those who do not agree with him.
 2. Quoted in "letters on Baptism," by Rev. E.B. Fairfield, D.D., who was at one time a Baptist preacher. He was requested by the Free Baptist Printing Establishment, of Boston, to prepare a book in defense of Baptist views. He set about his task, but as he studied the questions he became convinced that the Baptist position on baptism was erroneous and he found it impossible to remain in the Baptist Church. His book is not a defense of the Baptist position but a fine exposure of its fallacies and errors.
 3. See "Letter on Baptism" p. 141
 4. See "Summers on Baptism," p. 222
 5. See "Summers on Baptism," p. 99-101, and Letter on Baptism," pp. 154-165
 6. Albert Henry Newman, D.D. LL.D., Professor of Church History in McMaster University, Toronto, Canada. He is a Baptist. In one of his books he says: "If the apostolic churches were Baptist Churches, the churches of the second century were not. Still less were those of the third and following centuries."

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