

The Ancient Mode of Baptizing by Immersion, Plunging, or Dipping Into Water, Maintained and Vindicated.

by John Gill

The sermon defends the mode of baptizing by immersion, plunging, or dipping into water, and argues that it is the correct interpretation of Christ's baptism in the river Jordan.

Scripture: Matthew 3:16, Acts 8:38

Topics: "Baptism", "Immersion"

Description

John Gill defends the practice of baptism by immersion, arguing against a recent pamphlet that promotes alternative methods. He emphasizes that the scriptural basis for baptism is rooted in the examples of Jesus and the apostles, who practiced immersion, and he critiques the opposing views as lacking in scriptural support. Gill asserts that the act of baptism symbolizes the burial and resurrection of Christ, which necessitates immersion to accurately represent this significance. He challenges the arguments of his opponent, Mr. B.W., highlighting the importance of adhering to biblical principles in the administration of baptism.

Transcript

The

Ancient Mode Of Baptizing,

BY IMMERSION, PLUNGING, OR DIPPING INTO WATER;

Maintained And Vindicated;

Against the Cavils and Exceptions of the Author of a late Pamphlet, entitled, 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 Practice 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 the same thing over again, which has been well done already; but those of a different persuasion from us, being continually thrusting their crumbe 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 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 to 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, page 23 and will-worship, page 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 troublesome in interrupting:" Which terms being agreed upon, to work they go, and what they made of it, is now our business to inquire. 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 page 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 to the Hebrew *מִן*, 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 Psalm 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, "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, "that John baptized in Jordan is true, but he never dipped nor plunged any in his life;" as he does in page 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,[1] "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, 18; 1 Cor. 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 alleged, 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 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 *eiV ton Iordanhn*, into Jordan, as the preposition *eiV* 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 and 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, page 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, 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 being 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, en udap, in water, only in Luke 3:16 the preposition en 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 much in the same language. His words are there, with which I shall conclude this chapter: "Although, says he,[2] 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.[3] 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 page 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 choreography, 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, page 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 sufficiency of water to baptize by immersion, especially seeing Mr.

B. W. tells us in page 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[4] 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[5] 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,[6] 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 "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 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 these 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 Revelation 17:1 the great whore is represented as fitting *eptw 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, and answers to *רבים מאימים*; *Rabbim 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:--Hn de ki autov qeoV lwannhV qeopeiqea laon alhthn Udati baptizwn baqukumonoV enduqi salhm Keiqi gar euruporoio kulendomenou potamoio Ceumasin aenaoiV 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, page 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 convenience 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 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;"[7] and I think we may conclude this very fairly too, whatever Mr. B W. may think of it. But, 5thly, Our ingenious author, by a new turn and mighty stretch of thought, has found out another reason, besides that of convenience, 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 page 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 and 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 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 conveniences 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.

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. 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, page 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 came 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?"[8] 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 Psalm 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 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 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, "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,[9] 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, 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 hen it has done so, how that is equivalent to sprinkling, no man can evise. But enough of this, I proceed to the next argument. CHAPTER 5

The fourth argument taken from Romans 6:4 and 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 page 24 and except against, is taken from Romans 6:4 and 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 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.[10] 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 leveled 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 more 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

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