

BAPTISM ACCOMPLISHED,
AND
JESUS STRAITENED NO MORE:

A Sermon,

ON
THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST,

Preached at Boston, June 10, 1810.



BY

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BAPTISM ACCOMPLISHED, &c.

LUKE, xii. 50.

But I have a baptism to be baptized with ; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished !

I AM come, said the adorable Saviour, to send fire on the earth ; and what will I, if it be already kindled ? I come not to send peace, but a sword and division. This was a doctrine which the Jews did not expect to hear from the lips of the Messiah : for they ever thought that when he came he would exalt their nation, and bring outward peace and prosperity to the seed of Israel : so carnally had they understood the law and the prophets concerning the promised Shiloh. His kingdom was not of this world, though he came to set up his kingdom therein. He came to make peace, but not with the monarchs of this world. But the important ends for which he appeared, required that the Prince of peace should proclaim war ; that the Lord of life should wield a two-edged sword ; and that he who gathereth together the scattered sheep of the house of Israel, should be the occasion of many divisions. He never aimed to unite all parties, but so spake as to separate the precious from the vile. He ever sought his chosen sheep, and divided them from the goats. In doing which, he well knew that a fire would be occasioned in Judea, and in all parts of the world, wheresoever his distinguishing gospel should be preached. Nor did the knowledge of those future

consequences in the least deter him from faithfully bearing witness to the truth. As he clearly saw the consequential end of his righteous ministration, so he freely announced what he saw. His declaration was speedily verified, and his hearers took every occasion of showing, that by nature they loved darkness rather than light. He sent fire on the earth, by sending that gospel which occasioned a fire. And as the fire of persecution was merely occasioned by the preaching of the kingdom of God; and as it was a means of discovering his chosen people from the rest, and of promoting their welfare, and the confusion of their enemies; from these, and the like considerations, he willed that it might be kindled. His powerful gospel was as a fire and a sword, whereby he effected the salvation of his people, and the divisions foretold. To some his doctrine proved a savour unto life, and to others a savour unto death. For though the gospel be derided by many, it shall be approved of, and inwardly received by all God's chosen. The election have, in all ages, obtained an enjoyment of the salvation thereof, though the rest have continued in their blindness, and have persecuted the saints for preferring the light of the gospel to their dark traditions! For so sure as God makes known his truth to his chosen, so sure are others to be kindled up to burning wrath at the proceeding.

‘ But,’ said the Redeemer, ‘ I have a baptism to be
 ‘ baptized with: I must go first. For all this fire and
 ‘ division, of which I now speak, will take place on my
 ‘ account, for my sake! My people, my beloved dis-
 ‘ ciples, will be hated for my sake, because they believe
 ‘ on me, follow me, and acknowledge me as their Re-
 ‘ deemer and King. The father will be divided against
 ‘ the son, because the son will leave the world and follow
 ‘ me, &c. ver. 53. I must, therefore, be baptized, or
 ‘ my baptism cannot be preached; nor can Satan stir
 ‘ up his emissaries to despise my baptism: nor can the

‘ Holy Spirit give my disciples a real enjoyment of its
 ‘ accomplishment. *But I have a baptism to be baptized*
 ‘ *with : and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!*’

In setting forth to you, my brethren, what I conceive to be the real import and design of these striking words of our ever blessed Lord and Saviour, I shall call your attention to the following particulars:—

First—The very important event which our dear Saviour here anticipated.

Secondly—The figurative manner in which he described it: He called it *A Baptism*.

Thirdly—His feelings under the anticipation of it: *How am I straitened till it be accomplished!*

Fourthly—The accomplishment of this important event.

First—I am to point out to you the important event which our dear Saviour here anticipated. I shall now, my brethren, have opportunity of preaching Christ to you in his kingly and priestly offices together. I am now called to view him on the cross, and also on the throne: to preach baptism in a mystery, and to hold forth a mystery in baptism. I am this day to preach baptism as essential unto life and salvation; and I am also to allow, that baptism is no part of that for which any man is forgiven or justified. I am carefully to distinguish, therefore, between one baptism and another. Our Lord here calls us to *look* at one by the other, and to *exalt* one by the other. He here requires us to commend one above the other, and so not to hold to the one and exclude the other. In these words of our glorious Lord, we are taught to see how one is the foundation and glory of the other; and also to observe how admirably both appear maintained together. Truth is evermore consistent with itself, and is sweetly connected in all its distinguishable links in one grand chain. There is no need, therefore, to deny the precepts in order to enjoy the promise: nor can the

ordinances commanded be for a moment at war with the most liberating views of a bleeding Redeemer. On the contrary, unerring wisdom has ordained the believer to behold the soul transforming glories of the Lamb in the glass of gospel worship. I am constrained to believe that our unequalled prophet, in the interesting words of my text, had direct allusion to the holy ordinance of water baptism; and that he here calls us to review his sufferings and death under that figure. — *I have, said he, a baptism to be baptized with.*

In further prosecuting my subject, I will briefly attend to the term whereby Christ set forth the object of his anticipation, viz. *baptism*. Doubtless he had a design in the choice of this word, and we must allow that he well knew the subject he wished to represent, and also the import of the terms he selected, whereby to convey his mind to his disciples, at this, and at all other times.

He chose to represent his deep suffering for the sins of his people, by the term *Βαπτισμα, Baptism*. But who can suppose that our blessed Lord had any allusion to child-sprinkling! The small descent of a few drops of water on the countenance, is by no means adapted to illustrate the overwhelming sufferings of his cross. Yet, according to the notions and professions of many, he must have intended to set forth the amazing sorrow of Gethsemane, and the agonizing death of Calvary, by so inexpressive a symbol as that of being *sprinkled* with a little water in his face! Sometimes, indeed, the advocates for unbelievers' baptism plead for *pouring*; but, as they never practise any such thing, their plea must be esteemed as only a diversion. The term *baptism* has (it must be owned) been used in different senses by the ancients: this, however, will not prove that it does not signify, when appropriated to the ordinance of our Lord, a being entirely *covered* or *buried* in water. To put completely under water, as one is put under the earth,

when he is buried, appears to be the primary sense of the words βαπτω, *Bapto*, and βαπτίζω, *Baptizo*: and in agreement herewith, we read of the saints being *buried with Christ in baptism*, and that as many of them as have been baptized into Christ, have *put on Christ*, and so are *covered in Christ*.

“ In a remote sense, — because things that are washed are dipped in, or covered all over with water; it is put for *washing*. Luke, xi. 38. Heb. ix. 10. Mark, vii. 4. And we dare modestly assert, that no Greek author of any credit, whether heathen or Christian, has ever put baptizing for sprinkling, or used these words promiscuously. The Greeks have a peculiar word to express sprinkling, viz. ραντίζω, *rantizo*, which they use when they have occasion, as might be abundantly shown, if needful*.”

This definition of the word baptism evidently coincides with the sense we are necessitated to put upon it in my text; or rather to acknowledge that in such sense the Lord (of language) himself hath used it. That Jesus here spake of his sufferings in the garden, and on the cross, few sober Christians, I presume, will for a moment deny. And yet I see not how any honest man can allow so much, and at the same time object to the above literal signification of the word baptism. For what analogy can be discerned between a few drops of water sprinkled on the face of an infant, and the overwhelming deluge of sufferings which the Lord of glory endured for the salvation of his much beloved church! *I have*, said he, *A Baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!* Surely these words must be allowed to lose all their beauty when read thus: I have a sprinkling to be sprinkled with, &c. The very ideas formed in the mind by a recollection of the mode of baptizing,

* Mr. B. Keach.

(allow the use of the word,) practised by Independents and others, seem far too wide to admit of any coalition with the sense of our Lord's words.

It may not be improper here to add a thought or two, relative to the order of our Saviour's sufferings, as suggested by the use of the term baptism. His likening them to a baptism seems to lead to a consideration of the baptizer. He certainly did not baptize himself, though he freely gave himself up to be baptized in blood! Although by wicked men he was crucified and slain, yet *they* did but what the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ordained. Jesus was bruised and stricken by the Father. *It pleased the Lord to bruise him.* Christ was therefore baptized by his Father, who, in the great covenant of redemption, sustained the character of God Supreme; and in that sovereign plan of salvation, demanded the rights of Deity, in respect to the breach of law, at the hand of the Son incarnate, who was the immediate head and husband of the elect world. In allusion to this great compact and relative obligation, our great Surety spoke, when he said, *I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!* None but the divine Father, therefore, had either authority or power to baptize the great Immanuel in death! O what rich grace appears in this stupendous scheme of covenant salvation! How deeply laid in wisdom infinite, and love unbounded! What grace is this, my friends! That the eternal Father *will*, for vile lost sinners, thus awfully baptize his best beloved Son! Had we been plunged in the abyss of his displeasure, we had never ascended from the deep to endless eternity! O most mighty and most merciful Father, accept the heartfelt tribute of our highest praise, for this thy love which passeth knowledge, till we join thy saints in bliss, more fully to adore thy wonders, in glory's perfect light!

Here also, my spiritual brethren, let us mark the

mystery of our text, as touching the *baptized*. How am I straitened, said he, till it be accomplished! How passive, and altogether submissive, did this great Son appear in his Father's righteous hand! You know that in baptism the person baptized is required to be passive, and resign himself to the hand of the baptizer. Thus was our dear Redeemer. He was heard repeatedly to say to his righteous Father, *Not my will, but thine be done*. He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. He *came* to be baptized. What condescending love shines forth in Jesus's humbling himself to be baptized for us! With what zeal for the glory of God did he appear through all the extensive path of obedience! And how did he beseech the ears of his Father with his human powers and irresistible cries! As he was baptized, praying, in Jordan, so also in his other baptism which he underwent for us; for in Gethsemane, and on Calvary, we find him praying. Yes, my brethren, for us he sent forth many a fervent prayer by day and by night! O ineffable Redeemer! let the remembrance of thy bloody sweat render our accursed sins increasingly odious and loathsome to our spirits; and while we view thee thus baptized in thine own blood for us, may all our hearts thy matchless love enjoy, and again sing hallelujah to thy lovely name! Sacred deliverer, accept the dear bought feeble tribute of our tongues; when we see thee as thou art, we will give thee nobler praise with all thy heavenly hosts.

Of what vast importance, my friends, was the mysterious baptism of our immortal Lord! Herein is immaculate holiness displayed, and immutable justice exalted! Jesus in his baptism bore all the vengeance due to the innumerable offences of his people. Here we view the overwhelmings of wrath, and the swellings of boundless

love. In this most holy baptism we recognise both the weakness and the strength of God our Saviour, 2 Cor. xiii. 4. Rom. i. 4. and are able, through his word and Spirit, to see how *both* were engaged in our salvation. For neither *strength*, nor *weakness*, could effect our salvation when viewed apart; but divine wisdom knew how to unite both in one agent, even Immanuel, and ordained this wonderful Person to a most wonderful baptism, and thus accomplished what could neither be done by man or God alone! Well might Paul say, *We preach the wisdom of God in a mystery*. But that we may see more of this mystery, as contained in our text, and set forth by baptism, I shall now call your attention,

Secondly—To the figurative manner in which our Lord has described the important event which he here anticipated: He called it *A Baptism*.

It appears, then, that he likened the sufferings which he had to undergo unto deep waters, and considered that he in bearing them should be as one baptized or overwhelmed in sorrow and in death! And as his sufferings did not fall in one part of his body only, suppose his face, if you please, but all over it from head to foot; so it follows that baptism, *in his view of it*, did not consist in sprinkling or even covering the *face only* with water, but in the immersion of the whole body. In what I further advance under this head, I shall endeavour as before signified to look at one baptism by another, and to familiarize one to your view by the other. One baptism is here made a symbol of another. Jesus's essential and saving baptism may be represented then to us, by the figure himself hath chosen, in the following things:—

1. In point of *obligation*. For no man is expected to be baptized, without having first a command from his Lord for so doing, otherwise he would be guilty of

will-worship, and his conduct would of necessity be destitute of obedience. Nor does the Holy Spirit work in any man to perform what there is no command for in the book of all truth. But was Jesus under any command? To be sure he was; for he was a servant; and he said to his Father, *Thy law is within my heart.* And speaking in regard to this solemn service, he says, *This commandment have I received of my Father.* What? Why, to lay down his life; or, in other words, to be baptized. *I have,* said he, *A Baptism to be baptized with. Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.* To this baptism he was obliged, having been circumcised, and set his hand to our bond; and being made under the law, he became a debtor to do the whole law, and suffer its penalty on our account. The original ground of this obligation lies in his ancient relation to the chosen seed in eternal union, as their head of life and glory. For being their elect head *in love*, above the consideration of the fall, he therefore became their redeeming Surety *in mercy*, and was called by his nearness of relation to restore the people, when fallen, to an enjoyment of all grace and glory. Thus, love bound his heart to all obedience, and brought him into servitude; so that, as he would not suffer his spouse to perish under law, he himself came under commandment; and accordingly said, *I have A Baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!* Here, then, we see how, by the figure of baptism, we are taught to conceive of one great circumstance appertaining to the sufferings of our Lord: we see he saved others, himself he could not save, but by fulfilling his relative obligations! O what depths of love are here! What wisdom shines in our incarnate God! Here we behold mercy and truth met together, while righteousness and

peace kiss each other. How strong our obligation to be obedient to him who thus obliged himself to be baptized in sorrow, and in death, for us, even when we were enemies. But I must proceed to notice this baptism of our Lord:—

2. As to a *willingness* suggested by the figure. All who are rightly baptized are willingly obedient therein: in short, I know not how to conceive of obedience without the will being engaged freely. It is certain that an infant can no more be said to be willing, than the *swaddling clothes* in which it is wrapped can be said to choose baptism. As this is the truth incontrovertibly, it must be impossible for the keenest eye to discern any connexion between the sprinkling of an infant, and the voluntary immersion of our redeeming Lord. But truth constrains us to own that the baptizing of a *willing people*, (Psalm cx. 3.) is a striking representation of that sorrowful baptism in which Immanuel freely delivered up himself for his chosen bride. Hereby is manifested the propriety of our Lord's language, in likening his sufferings to a baptism, and himself to one who had to be baptized. In this, my friends, we have reason to rejoice, that our blessed Saviour willingly offered up himself for us. He voluntarily, and in love to his members, descended into the deep, and yielded up himself to be awfully plunged therein by the almighty arm of his loving but provoked Father. Here, evidently, does the willingness of Jesus appear in his own words: *I delight to do thy will, O God. I lay down my life for my sheep.* And Paul adds, *He loved me, and gave himself for me.* All this was needful; for God always required that the sacrifice under the law should be brought with willing mind; therefore the antetype must also be offered willingly. And may we not conclude that the willingness, required in the worshipper under the law, was designed to intimate that the great Surety of the people stood willing in the

upper world, and in the covenant settlements of grace, to become the sacrifice of his chosen; or, in other words, to be baptized into death in order to raise his members into everlasting life. I confess it appears to me to have been the very reason of the thing, and the most pleasing way of accounting for the injunction laid upon the ancient worshippers to offer willingly. Other thoughts I know might be proposed, but I have not opportunity for entering fully into so copious a subject. The willingness of Christ to undergo all that was just and needful in the deliverance of his church, will, I expect, be readily acceded. And I also presume, that it sufficiently appears, after what has been said, that Jesus's willingness to redeem his sheep is strongly figured out by that great work being likened to *a baptism*. I have, said he, *A Baptism to be baptized with*. He speaks of it as what he was *willing* to undergo, and his words suggest that his heart was therein strongly engaged.

3. Our Lord's calling his work *A Baptism*, serves to set forth the idea of meetness. For no one is rightly baptized without meetness. Bring forth fruits meet for repentance, said John the Baptist, unto persons who came to him to be baptized, and think not to say within yourselves, *We have Abraham to our father*. Thus, John gave them to understand that baptism was not an ordinance to be administered on the ground of fleshly relation to their forefathers, as was circumcision. It seems as though these ancient Pharisees and Sadducees had entertained the same erroneous notion concerning baptism as many do in our day; who imagine that, if they can but prove a relation to gracious or believing parents, they have thereby made out a sufficient right to the ordinance of baptism: whereas, the Bible always demands personal meetness in all who come to be baptized. *If thou believest, thou mayest*. For *he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved*. And these last

words irrefragably prove, that none are baptized aright but who shall surely be saved! There is not a real baptist in the world but what is as sure to come to glory as God is faithful to his word. For he that believeth and is baptized shall, saith God, be saved. The promise is as much made to baptism, as to any other *act of righteousness* in all the book of God. Therefore, whoever teaches a baptism *that may be rightly administered, and the subject not be finally saved*, contradicts the Holy Spirit in his word, and greatly dishonours the Redeemer who has appointed the ordinances of baptism and the holy supper *for his redeemed only*. Now, in the baptism of Christ here spoken of, we shall surely find a meetness requisite.

Hear the word of the Lord. For such an high priest *became us*, who is *holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners*. He, *who knew no sin*, was made sin for us. Ye were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb *without blemish, and without spot*. I *delight to do thy will, O God, thy law is within my heart*. Called of God an high priest, after the order of Melchisedec. This meetness is constantly referred to in the Scriptures. The Father styles him his *righteous servant*. And had this meetness been wanting, he could not have obtained eternal redemption for Zion. Had he not been radically and perfectly righteous, he could not have wrought out and brought in a perfection of righteousness in the days of his flesh, and by his Baptism. He must have been *radically and personally* upright and holy, in order to become *actively and openly* so on our behalf. His person must have been every way acceptable, or his services could never have become well-pleasing in the sight of the Father. But we gladly remember that, when he was baptized in Jordan, the Father declared himself well pleased; and what was done in Jordan, in a figure, was shortly to be done on

Calvary in reality. This Baptism, also, Jesus was engaged to undergo, which occasioned the words of my text: *I have A Baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!* But I hasten to remark that,

4. Our Lord, by calling his sufferings *A Baptism*, evidently calls us to consider the depth or greatness thereof. For in baptism we are not sprinkled with a few drops, but are plunged in the deep: and John baptized in Enon, near to Salim, because there was *much water* there. Now, as much water is required, and has always been used in true baptism, so the *greatness* of Jesus's sorrows is very aptly represented by immersion in water. But who can see *why* he should call his sufferings, death, and burial, a *baptism*; if all that were meant by baptism, in the figure, were no more than sprinkling the face with a few drops of water. No one can see any great cross in such a ceremony, nor even the shadow of self-denial. Doubtless, our blessed Saviour here spoke of his sufferings, as great and overwhelming; and such they truly were. When all God's waves and billows rolled upon him; when deep called unto deep at the noise of Jehovah's water-spouts from on high; wave upon wave rolling, for a moment, concealed him in the flood, but speedily he arose to be straitened no more in the gates of death! How full of hope and salvation were his dying words when the conflict was ended: *It is finished!* "The storm is over, the waters are assuaged, the sea is calm! I have passed the tempestuous deep, and am entering the immortal haven of everlasting joys! I have been immersed in sufferings, but now I am come up out of the waters. Truly, I have been *baptized*, and not sprinkled; my trouble did not fall in drops on my head only, but like a swelling flood or boisterous sea, it hath overwhelmed me wholly; but now, *It is finished!*"

The greatness of Immanuel's sufferings may be considered with respect to the procuring cause: he endured all the weight of guilt and punishment due, by a just law, to all the myriads of God's chosen. The sins of one of our race subjects to wrath inconceivable and endless. Then, O what sorrow must belong to the innumerable offences of all those who will finally make up *the general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven!* The Lord, or Jehovah, in the person of the Father, laid upon him the iniquities of us all. Thus Immanuel was made sin for us, and became a curse for us, that we might be freed from the curse of the law, and be made the righteousness of God in him. How great must those sufferings be that deliver so many great sinners from so great a destruction, and raise them up to an enjoyment of so great a glory as that of the empyreal heavens!

Furthermore, we may be helped in our thoughts of the greatness of our Saviour's sufferings, by observing that it was the hand of Omnipotence that inflicted his punishment, the hand of his own Father too. He also had to sustain the loss of great conscious enjoyment: *My God, my God, he cried, why hast thou forsaken me!* Add to these the fury and power of the Devil, with the derision and malice of men. Thus were his sorrows multiplied, and his cross made heavy. These things were alluded to, when, before his bloody sweat and crucifixion, he said to his disciples, *I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!* I shall now proceed to show that,

5. Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, are represented by the figure which he here assumed. He not only suffered, but really died; and was buried, and rose again, according to the Scriptures. And these things are particularly designed to be set forth by water baptism. We have seen how these words of our

redeeming Lord make it a figure of his sufferings. And it is well known that Paul makes it an emblem of his burial and resurrection. Rom. vi. 3—5. Col. ii. 12. To which Peter also is forward to bear undeniable witness; 1. Pet. iii. 21. From these three witnesses we have sufficient evidence of the principal design of the despised ordinance of gospel baptism. As, therefore, it is thus designed to preach Christ, and is thus to be administered, till he comes again into this world, in open person, how highly should all the Saints esteem it! 'Tis Christ that makes the ordinances dear to his followers. But how altogether defective is infant sprinkling in this important matter! Not one glimpse of Christ can here be found; either in his sufferings, death, burial, or resurrection! But, on the other hand, what errors have been introduced by it! How many juvenile minds have been misguided in their first entrance into catechetical instructions! Surely here is matter of lamentation! The Baptists have been often censured hard as making too much of baptism: but the blame has been laid at the wrong door; for when do they talk of any man being made a member of Christ, &c. by their baptism; or when do they make baptism *a seal* of the covenant of grace, which was from everlasting, and is to everlasting, sure to all the elect, without any act and deed of theirs? But I forbear.

We believe that baptism preaches Christ, and is enjoined on all believers by him, and therefore we love the ordinance, we preach the ordinance, and urge to the practice of it; and had not our Lord considered baptism as preaching his death, burial, and resurrection, he would hardly have said, when referring to these things, *I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!* Being covered in water, is an emblem of Christ's suffering, death, and burial. And as the person baptized is but a moment

under the water, and is immediately raised up to newness of life; so, herein is beautifully figured out the resurrection of Christ, *early on the third day*. In recollecting these things, therefore, we readily discover the wisdom and design of our Saviour in likening his sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection, to *a baptism*.

Thus by *three that bear witness* to his Sonship and redemption *on earth*, he reveals his glory, and maintains his cause to his second coming: the ministration of the Spirit, the ordinance of baptism, and the supper of the Lord. By the first we are prepared to enter into the church; in the second lies the visible way of entrance; and in the last, a communion-table continually appears, within the house of our God, after we have entered.

6. Our adorable Redeemer, by comparing his sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection, to a baptism, may lead us to consider, briefly, the work of the cross as a mystery; for baptism has its mystic import, which depends on the word for manifestation. The proper meaning of this ordinance can only be known by the word and Spirit of God. To a carnal mind, which of course can only judge of it by imperfect reason, it is likely to appear a strange practice; and too many gracious men have joined to increase the derision, and treat God's institution with that irreverence, which nothing less than the blood of Jehovah-Jesus can remove. The mystery of the cross lies much in the person, love, relations, covenant, and mediation of the Son of God, who in his manhood suffered, bled, and died. Of these things we can know nothing more than what is revealed in the Scriptures; they are designed to be known and enjoyed by the faith of the operation of God: here reason must submit all her powers to the unerring will of her great Author. She is to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good: but this is to be done, without either hoping or even wishing to find safety

or satisfaction in any thing but truth itself. When God's word is ridiculed, reason has then added insolence and blasphemy to her frailty and negligence !

We learn from the lips of a Teacher who never announced a falsity, that in old time *men loved darkness rather than light*. And we are told by his servant Paul, that in his day the preaching of the cross was esteemed foolishness by men of worldly wisdom : and as it was in the beginning, so it is now. The same sort of people are to be found upon earth unto this day, as those of whom we read ; the person of Christ is misrepresented, and in many different ways denied ; his doctrines are said to lead to licentiousness ; his atonement is only a metonymy ; his life a mere pattern of good morals ; his death but as that of a martyr ; his blood without virtue, and shed without any saving design ; his laws unnecessary, and too legal for liberal and free minds ; his Spirit no more than a moral disposition personified ; his ordinances non-essentials, and mere peccadilloes. The work of the Spirit is termed fanaticism, and cant is the best word that can be afforded to represent an experimental enjoyment and confession of the gospel. Haranguing upon unpractised morals, like a heathen philosopher, is made to serve instead of preaching Christ crucified ; and in some places it is called preaching the gospel ! The inspiration of the Scriptures is denied by many, and questioned as very doubtful by others, while profane writings can obtain credit and commendation. Does not this sufficiently indicate the state of the mind to be very corrupt, and that their hearts are at enmity with God ?

Blessed be the Most High, however, we yet can behold a few heaven-born souls, whose faith, hope, worship, and conduct, bear a strong resemblance of those ancient saints who lived and died in faith ; and having passed through much tribulation, and washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, are, therefore, now before the throne of God,

and serve him day and night in his temple. But we are laughed at for believing mysteries. By whom? By men that are in the habit of doing the very same every day they live! The truth is, were the mystery of faith agreeable to the carnal appetites men naturally love to cherish, we should in all probability see most men become believers. But the contrary being so very evidently the case, many, to excuse themselves, would fain persuade us that the Scriptures are an imposition, devised by self-seeking and uninspired men. But the enemies of God cannot stir against him, or his cause on earth, without being one way or other made to serve the interests of that God and his cause. *The wrath of man shall praise him: and all things shall work together for good to them that love God.*

Now the ordinance of baptism has been greatly changed, mutilated, opposed, and ridiculed; therefore, in these respects also, it was the more answerable to our Saviour's purpose, who knew all things that would arise in opposition to the doctrine of his cross, to call his crucifixion, death, and resurrection, *A Baptism.*

7. We may also remark, that by our dear Saviour's choice of baptism as a figure, whereby to represent his humiliation work, we are led to a view of his righteousness. For his own words to his servant John, at his baptism in Jordan, were, "Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil *all righteousness.*" As it was an act of righteousness to be baptized, and as Christ calls his humiliation work a baptism, we are to understand that he considered his sufferings and death as the fulfilling of all righteousness. *I have a baptism to be baptized with;* that is, I have an obedience to perform, a suffering to undergo, even unto death. Baptism is plainly commanded, so is all righteousness. Baptism cannot be attended to but the subject must act from love to God; neither did our blessed Mediator act from any other