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The Review.

REVIEW OF CHAPMAN ON BAPTISM.

CHAPTER.

[CONTINUED.]

In this chapter we shall present an historical view of Christian Baptism, and show how the early Christians understood the word *baptizo*, and how they represented it in their practice.

On page 204, of his book, Mr. Chapman says: "But what of immersion during the first two centuries? We answer, that there is not the first instance on record. The word *baptizo* was not then so used by any of the fathers. And this is the position in which church history and the writings of the fathers place immersion. We repeat that there is not the first instance on record of immersion for two hundred years after the birth of Christ. 'I admit,' said Mr. Fanning, in his debate with me in Lebanon, 'that there is not a case of immersion spoken of for the first two hundred years of the Christian era.' Now, let immersionists produce the same amount of testimony bearing on immersion, within the first two centuries, and we shall admit they have a showing; but until they do this, we shall insist on it, that the testimony of the first two centuries is entirely with us on affusion, and entirely against them on immersion."

On this subject I would ask in the first place, where is Mr. Chapman's proof of the assertion that the word *baptizo* was not used of immersion by any of the fathers during the first two centuries? Does he expect us to receive such a statement as solid truth on his mere assertion? The Greek body of names in Greek Lexicography assign to *baptizo* as its primary meaning, *to plunge, immerge or immerse*, and in the absence of proof to the contrary, we conclude that when the Christians fathers used the word *baptizo* they gave to it its natural and proper sense. If those fathers, therefore, testify that believers were *baptized*, they bear witness that they were *immersed*, for we must give to *baptizo* its primary meaning at all times, unless, from its connection, it must mean something else. Does Mr. Chapman expect these fathers when writing in Greek to stop to tell us in Latin or English the meaning of every word they employ? Why some of those fathers may have been as ignorant of the Latin language as Mr. Chapman is of the Greek! But I have another question to ask. What genuine records have come down to us from the primitive unimpaired church of the first two centuries? Aside from the Bible, we have hardly any authentic records at all of the first and second centuries, and as there was no controversy on the proper action of baptism at that period, we should not expect much evidence of a very definite character concerning that early historical age of the unimpaired church. We maintain, however, that what testimony we have from writers of that period (whether we go to those records that are admitted to be genuine, or to those whose genuineness is doubted), is decidedly in favor of immersion, and not of pouring or sprinkling. Let us then appeal to these records, and see what testimony they bear on this subject.

We will first take the testimony of some records the genuineness of which is called in question. The first of these is "The General Epistle" ascribed to Barnabas, a companion and fellow preacher with Paul. "This Epistle lays a greater claim to canonical authority than most others. It has been cited by Clement Alexandrinus, Origen, Eusebius, and Jerome, and many ancient Fathers. Cotelierus affirms that Origen and Jerome esteemed it genuine and canonical; but Cotelierus himself did not believe it to be either one or the other; on the contrary he supposes it was written for the benefit of the Ebionites (the christianized Jews), who were tenebrous of rites and ceremonies. Bishop Fell feared to own expressly what he seemed to be persuaded of, that it ought to be treated with the same respect as several books of the present canon. Dr. Bernard, Savilian professor at Oxford, not only believed it to be genuine, but that it was read throughout in the churches at Alexandria, as the canonical Scriptures were. Dodwell supposed it to have been published before the Epistle of Jude, and the writings of both the Johns, Vossius, Dupin, Dr. Cave, Dr. Mill, Dr. S. Clark, Whiston, and Archbishop Wake, also esteemed it genuine; Menardus, Archbishop of Lund, Spanheim, and others deemed it apocryphal."

Whether this Epistle was written by Barnabas, the companion of Paul, or not, it was evidently written either in the first or second century, for Clement Alexandrinus, (one of the authors who cite this Epistle,) wrote himself as early as A. D. 192. The testimony of the writer, then, (be he who he may,) goes to show what was practiced as baptism before A. D. 192. Let us then have his testimony on this subject. In Chapter 10: and verse 11, the writer thus speaks of baptism:

"Blessed are they who put their trust in Christ, and are baptized into the water; for they shall have their reward in one moment."

In the 14th verse of this chapter, speaking on the same subject, the writer says: "We go down into the water full of sins and pollutions; but come up again bringing forth fruit, having in our hearts the fear and hope which is in Jesus by the Spirit." This witness, then, clearly testifies in favor of the practice of immersion. We pass on to another work, "The Shepherd of Hermas." To this work the following description is prefixed in the "Apocryphal Testament":

"This book is thus entitled, because it was composed by Hermas, brother to Pius, bishop of Rome; and because the angel, who bears the principal part in it, is represented in the form and habit of a shepherd. Irenaeus quotes it under the very name of Scripture; Origen thought it a most useful writing, and that it was divinely inspired; Eusebius says, that though it was not esteemed canonical, it was read publicly in the churches, which is corroborated by Jerome; and Athanasius cites it, calls it a most useful work, and observes, that though it was not strictly canonical, the Fathers appointed it to be read for direction and confirmation in faith and piety. Jerome, notwithstanding this, and that he applauded it in his catalogue of writers, in his comments upon it afterwards, terms it apocryphal and foolish. Tertullian praised it among the apocryphal books, it is found attached to some of the more ancient MSS. of the New Testament; and Archb. Wake, believing it the genuine work of an apostolical Father, preserves it to the English reader by the following translation, in which he has rendered the books not only more exact, but in greater purity than they had before appeared. The archbishop procured Dr. Grabe to entirely collect the old Latin Version with an ancient MS. in the Lambeth Library; and the learned prelate himself still further improved the whole from a multitude of fragments of the original Greek, never before used for that purpose."

Pius, the brother of the Hermas spoken of above, was Bishop of Rome, A. D. 141, and if the work was written by the individual to whom it is here ascribed, this fact will give us some clue to the date of the production of this book. Irenaeus flourished as a writer about A. D. 167, and was Bishop of Lyons, about A. D. 178, and as he quotes "The Shepherd of Hermas" it must have been written before or at that time. And whatever may be thought of the opinions of this writer, he is a good witness in a matter of fact which came directly under his eye, and we may learn from him how the Christians of his day understood the word *baptizo*, and how they represented it in their practice. Now in Book 3, Similitude 9, verses 152, 153, we have the following language:

"For before a man receives the name of the Son of God, he is ordained unto death; but when he receives that seal he is freed from death, and assigned unto life. Now that seal, that is the water of baptism, into which men go down under the obligation unto death, but come up appointed unto life."

The learned historian Augusti, 7, 77, after quoting this passage at length, adds: "this passage contains distinct evidence of the custom of immersion."

We will now pass on to notice some writings the genuineness of which is universally admitted. The first of these is the Apology of Justin Martyr, written about A. D. 140. The following extract from Justin Martyr's Apol. 1, ch. 61, we present as translated by Dr. Waddington, a distinguished Pederbaptist historian and scholar. It reads as follows:

"Whoever are persuaded that those things are true which are taught and inculcated by us, and engage to live according to them, are taught to pray to God, fasting, for the remission of their former sins, while we pray and fast with them. Then they are led by us to some place where there is water, and are regenerated even as we ourselves were regenerated: for they are then IMMERSED in the water, in the name of our Father of all, the Lord God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost." [Waddington's History of the Church, published by Harper & Brothers, 1838, page 46, note 5.]

In the language of Lord King, in his "Primitive Church," p. 218, "Justin Martyr describes the same [baptism] 'by being washed in water'; and calls the place where they are baptized *loutron*, 'a washing place' or 'a bath.' The Greek verb which Prof. Stuart and others translate washed, as used by Justin Martyr, is *louo*, a form of the verb *lavo*. Now it may be asked whether the washing here spoken of was by immersion? In answer to this I would observe, that the Greeks ordinarily expressed the idea of a bath by *loutron*, the noun used by Justin Martyr to designate the place of baptism, and they expressed the act of bathing by the same word which Justin Martyr has employed to express the act of baptizing. Dr. Carson, in a learned and valuable "dissertation on *louo*," shows, by numerous and indubitable examples from various Greek authors of ancient ages, that it is used in a sense entirely synonymous with our word *bath*; that it is applied without regimen to the bathing of the body, precisely in the manner in which we say of a person, 'he bathes frequently'; and that it 'may almost always be translated by our word *bath*, though we sometimes translate it by *wash*.' In support of Mr. Carson's position, we give the following attestations from some of our standard Lexicographers. Liddell and Scott. "Louto, to wash, tina; esp. to wash the body, Nizo, being used esp. of the hands and feet, Pluno, of clothes." "Loutron, a bath, bathing place." Donnegan. "Louto, to wash, to bathe." "Loutron, water for washing, or bathing—a washing place; a bath." Robinson. "Louto, to bathe, to wash, trans, spoken only of persons." "Loutron, a bath, water for bathing, washing, ablution, spoken of baptism, Eph. 5: 25; Titus 3: 5."

To these we might add the testimonies of some distinguished scholars. George Campbell. "There are two words which occur in the N. T. in the sense of *washing or bathing*; yet they are not synonymous, though we have not terms which correspond so exactly as to mark the distinction between them. The words are *niptein* and *louein*. The former *niptein*, or rather *nipsesthai*, (for the middle voice is more used,) denotes to wash or bathe a part of the body; the latter *louein*, is to wash or bathe the whole body. That the verb *louein* is commonly used in the manner mentioned, see Acts 9: 37; Heb. 10: 23; 2 Pet. 2: 22; Rev. 1: 5. In all which whether the words be used literally or metaphorically, the complete cleansing of the body or person is meant." (See Note on John 9: 7.)

Bloomfield. "Nipsesthai denotes to wash a part only of the body, while *louein* is to wash or bathe the whole body. This distinction is expressly marked infra xiii. 10, where *louein* is used of him whose whole body is washed, and the verb *nipsesthai* is joined with *vous yodas*." [The fact.] (Note on John 9: 7.)

As Justin Martyr, then, speaks of leading the candidate for baptism out to a place where water is, and as he calls the place of baptism, a bath, or washing place, and as he uses a verb to express the act of baptizing that denotes *washing or bathing* of the whole body, he must certainly refer to immersion as practised in his day. And we must bear in mind that this is not the description of any one case of baptism, but a *universal description*. Dr. Wall says of this instance: "It is the most ancient account of the way of baptizing, next to scripture; and shows the plain and scriptural manner of administering it. The Christians of these times had lived, many of them at least, in the apostles' days." (Vol. 1st, p. 69.)

As the primary meaning of *baptizo* is immerse, and as Justin Martyr used a word to express the act of baptism which denotes the washing or bathing of the whole body, the translation of Waddington is perfectly correct: "they are immersed in the water." The next principal Greek writer to Justin Martyr, who immediately succeeded the apostolical Fathers, is Irenaeus. According to Bingham he flourished as a writer about A. D. 167. He is chiefly celebrated for his five books 'Against Heresies,' containing confutations of most of the errors which had then appeared in the church. In this work there are incidental allusions which go to show that Irenaeus considered to be the true form of baptism. When speaking of some of the underseers of the Valentines, Irenaeus says of them: "Others put the person into the water, indeed, but instead of the Christian form of baptism used a strange and uncouth one." "There are some of them," says Irenaeus, "who think it needless to bring the person to the water at all; but mixing oil and water together they pour it on his head. On which words of his, and by a thousand other instances, it appears that the Catholics did ordinarily put the whole body in the water." (Hist. of Inf. Bapt. Vol. 1st, pages 504, 505.)

Of these Valentines, Irenaeus says:—"And for their baptism they had as many sorts of it as there were teachers among them; but all contrary to the true." His language: "Others put the person into the water indeed," implies that this was correct practice as far as it went, but then, "instead of the Christian form of baptism they used a strange and uncouth one," and hence their baptism was defective. And as for their baptism "who thought it needless to bring the person to the water at all; but mixing oil and water together they poured it on his head," their sort of baptism, says Irenaeus, "was contrary to the true." [Irenaeus, according to Irenaeus, in the true sort of baptism, the person must be brought to the water, and put into the water, and the Christian form of baptism must be repeated over him. His testimony, therefore, is clearly in favor of the custom of immersion.]

We will now proceed to give the testimony of another witness who lived at the same time with Tertullian. Clement of Alexandria, according to Bingham, wrote A. D. 192. In his Mystagog. 2, he says: "You were led to a bath, as Christ was conveyed to the sepulchre, and were three days immersed to signify Christ's three days' burial." (See Christian Review, Vol. 3, p. 99.) These instances are sufficient to show how the fathers of the second century understood the word *baptizo*, and how they represented it in their practice; and I would here remark before I proceed, that even if the genuineness of the works ascribed to Barnabas and Hermas, has been justly suspected, there is no reason at all to doubt the very high antiquity of these writings. As these works are quoted by writers who wrote in the second century, they must have been in existence at that time, whether

they were written by the authors whose names they bear or not. In confirmation of what we have said concerning immersion as practiced by the Christians of the first and second centuries, we will now appeal to church history. Our Ecclesiastical Historians have surveyed the entire field, and collected the facts together, and in their histories, they either give us the facts themselves, or the results of their extended investigations, and hence, when their testimony is impartial, it must possess great weight.

We begin with Neander. Neander, who died at his residence in Berlin, on the 15th of July 1850, was a Minister of the Lutheran Church, and he may well be considered as the first Ecclesiastical Historian of the age. Dr. Sears, in Christian Review, Vol. 1st, pp. 571, 572, remarks: "Neander is chiefly distinguished by other ecclesiastical historians, by a complete mastery of the philology and criticism of the whole circle of literature in which his authorities are found. It is but natural to expect that his highest merit shall be found where he has devoted, with enthusiastic ardor, the freshness of his youth and the strength of his manhood, to the study of the Christian Fathers. Here he was not content to take up with the results of his predecessors, nor to walk in their footsteps, in his investigations. He wished to survey the whole ground for himself, and in his own way, and with entire independence of thought, submit his mind to original testimony and receive his first impressions from this quarter. . . . Untrammelled by the hypotheses of others, undismayed by the huge mass of obscure documents to be examined, he comes to his work, with no desire so strong as that of mastering every production of the earliest age of the church."

Dr. Sears here speaks from his own personal knowledge of the character of Neander, and this distinguished historian, therefore, is a very important witness in reference to the practice of the early Christians. The testimony of such a man is not to be disposed of as the mere opinion of some Theologian.

In his "Planting and Training of the Church," Neander confines his remarks to the Apostolic age, and he thus deposes, when speaking of the practice of the Christians of that period: "The usual form of submersion at baptism, practiced by the Jews, was transferred to the Gentile Christians. Indeed, this form was the most suitable to signify that which Christ intended to render an object of contemplation by such a symbol: the immersion of the whole man in the spirit of a new life. But Paul availed himself of what was accidental to the form of this symbol, the two-fold act of submersion and of emersion, to which Christ certainly made no reference at the institution of the symbol. As he found therein a reference to Christ Dead, and Christ Risen, the negative and positive aspect of the Christian life—in the imitation of Christ to die to all ungodliness, and in communion with him to rise to a new divine life, he made use of what was accessory in order to represent by a sensible image, the idea and design of the rite in its connection with the whole essence of Christianity." (Planting and Training, p. 101.)

In his "History of the Christian Church, during the three first centuries," Neander testifies as to the practice of the early Christians in the period immediately following the Apostolic age. He says: "Baptism was originally administered by immersion, and many of the comparisons of St Paul allude to this form of administration: the immersion is a symbol of death, of being buried with Christ, the coming forth from the water is a symbol of a resurrection with Christ, and both taken together represent the second birth, the death of the old man and a resurrection to a new life. An exception was made only in the case of sick persons, which was necessary, and they received baptism by sprinkling. Many superstitious persons imagined, from attaching too much importance to externals, that baptism by sprinkling was not valid, and therefore they distinguished those who were so baptized from other Christians, by the name of 'climici.'" (History of Church, pp. 197, 198.)

Such then is the testimony of Neander concerning the practice of Christians during the three first centuries. We will now proceed to give the testimony of another Lutheran, the great Moheim. This distinguished man died in 1755, and it has been justly said of him: "He was the ablest critic which had yet appeared on ecclesiastical history, and most of all, excelled his predecessors in the study of the Christian Fathers. He views every subject with a philosophic mind, and selects his materials with judgment." On the practice of Christians in the first century, this learned historian thus speaks: "The sacrament of baptism was administered in this century, without the public assemblies, in places appointed and prepared for that purpose, and was performed by immersion of the whole body in the baptismal font." (Hist. Vol. 1, p. 105.)

Of the second century, he says: (Vol. 1, p. 170.)

"The sacrament of baptism was administered publicly twice every year, at the festivals of Easter and Pentecost, or Whitsunday, either by the bishop, or the presbyters, in consequence of his authorization and appointment." The persons that were to be baptized, after they had repented the *creed*, confessed and renounced their sins, and particularly the *devil*, and his pompous allurements, were immersed under water, and received into Christ's kingdom by a solemn invocation of *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, according to the express command of our Blessed Lord."

Waddington, a learned Episcopalian, in his Church History, p. 46, speaking of the second century, says: "The ceremony of immersion (the oldest form of baptism), was performed in the name of the three Persons of the Trinity."

In Lord King's "Inquiry into the constitution, discipline, unity, and worship of the Primitive church," published for the Methodist Episcopal church, on pp. 218, 219, we have the following: "As for the quantity of water employed in baptism, that is whether they sprinkled or dipped, to me it seems evident that their usual custom was to immerse or dip the whole body. When St. Barnabas describes a baptized person by his going down into the water. 'We go down,' saith he, 'into the water full of sin and filth, but we ascend with fruit and benefit in our hearts.' And so Tertullian represents baptized persons as 'entered into the water.' And Justin Martyr describes the same 'by being washed in water;' and calls the place where they are baptized *loutron*, 'a washing place' or 'a bath' whence Firmilian inveighing against the baptism of heretics, condemns it as carnal, and as being upon that account, no whit 'different from the baptism or washing of the Jews; which they used as a common and ordinary bath to wash away the filth of their bodies.' 'But though immersion was their usual custom, yet perfusion or sprinkling was not accounted unlawful; but in cases of necessity, that was used, as in clinic baptism; which was, when sick persons, whose death they apprehended, were baptized in their beds; as Novatian, 'being sick and near death, as was supposed, was baptized in his bed by perfusion, or pouring on of water.'"

Bingham, another learned Episcopalian, testifies that in Justin Martyr's time, A. D. 140, and in Tertullian's, A. D. 192, "the place of baptism was not in the church, but some were distinct from it." He says, also, "the first ages all agreed in this, that whether they had baptistries or not, the place of baptism was always without the church." (Vol. 1, p. 309.) He also says (Vol. 1, p. 536.) "The ancients thought, that immersion, or burying under water, did more lively represent the death and burial and resurrection of Christ; for which reason they observed the way of baptizing all persons by a total immersion under water, except in some particular cases of great exigency, wherein they allowed of sprinkling, as in the case of clinic baptism."

Dr. Wall, in his "History of Infant Baptism," (Vol. 2, pp. 384, 385,) says of the early Christians: "Their general and ordinary way was to baptize by immersion, or dipping the person, whether it were an infant, or grown man or woman, into the water."

This is so plain and clear by an infinite number of passages, that, as one cannot but pity the weak endeavors of such Pedobaptists as would maintain the negative of it; so also we ought to disown and show a dislike of the profane scoffs which some people give to the English antipedobaptists merely for their use of dipping. It is one thing to maintain that circumstances not absolutely necessary to the essence of baptism, and another, to go about to represent it as ridiculous and foolish, or as shameful and indecent; when it was in all probability the way by which our blessed Saviour, and for certain was the most usual and ordinary way by which the ancient Christians, did receive their baptism. I shall not stay to produce the particular proofs of this. Many of the quotations which I brought forth for other purposes, and shall bring, do evince it. It is a great want of prudence, as well as of honesty, to refuse to grant to an adversary what is certainly true, and may be proved so. It creates a jealousy of all the rest that one says."

Dr. Gregory, an Episcopalian, in his Church History revised by Martin Riter, a Methodist (formerly, President of Augusta College, Ky.) says of the first century: "The initiatory rite of baptism was usually performed, by immersing the whole body in the baptismal font."

When speaking of the practice of the second century, he says of baptism: "This rite was performed by three immersions." (See history, pp. 34, 53.) Prof. Stuart, after he had taken an historical view of "the mode of baptism practiced by the church in the early ages of Christianity, and after the time of the Apostles," says on p. 75, of his Essay on Baptism: "But enough." (Denkry. vii. p. 216.) "A thing made out of the ancient practice of immersion. So indeed all the writers who have thoroughly

investigated this subject conclude. I know of no one usage of ancient times which seems to be more clearly and certainly made out. I cannot see how it is possible for any candid man who examines the subject, to deny this."

On page 77, of his Essay, he adds: "We have collected facts enough to authorize us now to come to the following general conclusion, respecting the practice of the Christian Church in general, with regard to the mode of baptism, viz: that from the earliest ages of which we have any account, subsequent to the apostolic age and downward for several centuries, the church did generally practice baptism by immersion; perhaps by immersion of the whole person; and that the only exceptions to this mode which were usually allowed, were in cases of urgent sickness or other cases of immediate and imminent danger, where immersion could not be practiced."

I could produce additional testimonies but it is altogether unnecessary. In view of the testimonies I have produced, I would ask, what becomes of Mr. Chapman's assertions as given in the beginning of this chapter? Let the reader consider well the quotations I have given from the writings of the fathers and from church history, and compare them with the declarations of Mr. Chapman: "that there is not the first instance on record of immersion during the first two centuries;" that "the word *baptizo* was not then so used by any of the fathers;" and that "this is the position in which church history and the writings of the fathers place immersion." In view of the amount of testimony I have produced, I will, with some alterations, adopt the language of Mr. Chapman's challenge and say, 'Now, let pourers and sprinklers produce the same amount of testimony bearing on pouring and sprinkling, and we shall admit that they have a showing; but until they do this, we shall insist on it, that the testimony of the first two centuries is entirely with us on immersion, and entirely against them on pouring and sprinkling.'

In justice to Mr. Fanning, I would remark in conclusion, that he denies having made the admission attributed to him by Mr. Chapman, and he affirms that the statement is not true, either in form or in facts.

As a specimen of Sandy Patrick's peculiar manner of leading a hesitating mind to venture on the Savior, we may refer to a case in Glasgow, which occurred about this time. An intelligent female who was laboring under a deep sense of sin, was visited by Mr. P., and notwithstanding all his encouragements and prayers, she seemed to be only increasingly distressed, and almost in despair. At length while on their knees, Mr. P. said to her, 'Let us sit up a while; and placing himself beside her, and looking steadfastly in her face, he said:

"Do you believe the Bible?" "I do," she replied. "Can you tell me who made the world?" "She smiled a little contemptuously, and after a pause, said: 'It was God.' To which he immediately replied, 'How d'ye ken? were ye there to see?' " "She seemed surprised, perceiving that there was evidently more meant by the question than she had supposed, and then remarked, 'No, I was not there, but the Word of God says that he made it.' " "Ah, well then, ye believe a' that the Bible says, d'ye?" "She said 'yes.' " "Ah, well, we'll see; 'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.' What says that?" "The Father."

"Weel, wid ye do as the Father bids ye? He commands to hear the Son." "To this she assented. " "Well, then, what does the Son say? 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' 'Come unto me and I will give you rest.' To woman in the Gospel he said, 'Daughter, thy sins which are many are all forgiven thee; and he will not say the same to you? Is he no saying it even to the noot ye dinna believe him. I tell ye, ye dinna believe a' the Bible.' " "She instantly saw the shame and am of not trusting in a promising, present Redeemer, and as instantly ventured on his mercy. Confiding in the love and power, and truth of the world's Redeemer, she trusted herself in his hands, and found the peace she sought."—Chris. Chron.

There is a strong disposition in men of opposite minds to despise each other.

The proper force of words lies not in the words themselves, but in their application.

It is not only for the sick man, but the sick man's friends, that the doctor comes. His presence is often as good for them as for the patient.

The loss of a friend is like that of a limb. Time may heal the anguish of the wound, but the loss cannot be repaired.

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