

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

BAPTISM AND COMMUNION.

AN EXEGESIS ON ACTS II. 42, 46.

By Rev. George Armstrong, A. M.

The history given in the second chapter of Acts is a grand fulfilment of ancient prophecy, and of the promise of Christ in respect to the coming of the Holy Spirit; and it is also a mighty and grand development of the Kingdom of Christ among men. The facts therein recorded are not isolated from the gospel history, but are most intimately connected with that wonderful and sublime series of events certified to us in the gospels, and are indeed their proper and necessary outgrowth and complement, according to the purpose of God. The events recorded in this chapter are most important and instructive. The Apostles had previously been enlightened—and (with one exception,) converted,—they had been called to preach the gospel of the kingdom, and in their ministry had been directed and guided by the personal instructions of Christ, and blessed with his approval.—But having finished his work of humiliation and suffering,—having died for our sins according to the Scriptures, risen from the dead and gone into heaven to the right hand of the Father, our glorified Lord and Saviour, most mightily and mysteriously endowed the Apostles and their associates with power from on high, in fact, "baptized them in the Holy Spirit," as his forerunner John announced, and Jesus promised he would do. These disciples are now therefore fully prepared to carry forward the great and comprehensive work committed to them by the Lord ere He ascended from earth. And the way and order in which they performed their work is the proper, the divinely authorized method to evangelize the world, and gather disciples into union and fellowship in the church of Christ. It is highly proper therefore that we carefully examine the facts recorded, and receive the light and instruction they afford on the important matters of order and right in the christian Church. Endowed thus in an uncommon degree with holy spiritual power and gifts by the Divine baptism they had just received from the Lord Jesus, the Apostles and their associates, preached Christ crucified, his resurrection from the dead as predicted, and other doctrines most intimately connected with these, and charged upon their hearers most pointedly and fearlessly the great guilt of the latter in denying and crucifying Jesus. The attention of the people was powerfully roused, and their hearts pungently affected by these earnest utterances, and they ask the Apostles with deep anxiety, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" The response came from the inspired company, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off—even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Three thousand of those who heard this harped and burning discourse gladly received the message of the Gospel,—repented of their sins, and thus obtained the pardon promised and were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Here then we have the gospel preached, attention aroused, enquiry made, direction given, and compliance rendered,—repentance exercised and baptism received. The evidence of their conversion must have been satisfactory to the Apostles and their co-adjutors; and it is impossible to believe they would recognize as penitents, and admit to baptism, and to the sacred fellowship to which baptism is the divinely appointed form of introducing disciples of Christ, unless such evidence appeared in respect to the three thousand. And that they did not misjudge the results abundantly show. The inspired workers on this memorable day were but carrying out the last great commission of their ascended Lord. (Matt. xxviii: 19-20). This commission required them to proceed in the great work of evangelizing the world, and building up the kingdom of Christ here in the following order: (1) to disciple the nations to Christ; (2) to baptize the individuals who become disciples; (3) to teach the baptized disciples all the other things which Christ had commanded, or authorized. This is the order arranged and laid down by the Great Teacher, the Lord and Saviour of the Church. And the apostles conformed perfectly to this law of the kingdom. By receiving the gospel preached on this day, and submitting to the baptism commanded by the Lord, these three thousand persons were added to, or admitted into the same sacred society, body, or brotherhood that had been waiting and worshipping in faith and hope at Jerusalem for some time previous, instant in prayer for the promise of the Holy Spirit, and upon whom that Spirit came in mighty power and manifold gifts in the morning of that memorable day. (See Acts i: 13-15; Luke xxiv: 33, 49; Acts ii: 1-4). What a vast and glorious increase was then made to that despised company of believers who had confessed and followed Jesus their Redeemer and King! What wonders grace can do! How mighty and overwhelming in his operations, gifts, and influences is the Holy Spirit! How rapid and stupendous is the transformation He effects in the church by imparting in abundance new power to the members, and securing through their utterances and efforts a vast accession of true, earnest and steadfast converts! May we not hope and pray for similar power and results to be witnessed in these last times? Sydney, C. B. July 1874. (To be continued.)

For the Christian Messenger.

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

FROM THE LOWER GRANVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH TO THE REV. J. C. BLEAKNEY.

Dear Brother,—

You having tendered your resignation, we cannot permit your departure without an expression of our esteem. During your pastorate among us, you have not shunned to fearlessly and faithfully preach the gospel of our blessed Saviour. Your ministerial labours among us have been owned and blessed. Souls have been converted and the church has been confirmed in her faith. The interest you have manifested towards our families and our Sabbath Schools, our Prayer Meetings, and in all your pastoral duties have strengthened our love and esteem for you as a faithful minister of the gospel. There are few scenes fraught with more emotion than that which severs the tie between a beloved Pastor and a loving people. And dear brother, believe us that in accepting your resignation we feel that sorrow, which only a church can feel, that has been deprived of a much loved and esteemed Pastor.

And in conclusion, dear brother, our sincere prayer is that Heaven's best blessing may rest upon you, Sister Bleakney and daughter, and that you may be abundantly blessed in whatever place God in his all-wise providence may direct your steps.

Signed by order, and in behalf of the church.

EBENEZER SPROULE, Clerk.

Lower Granville, 20th July, 1874.

REPLY.

Dear Brethren,— Believing that duty has greater claims than feelings, I have resigned my pastorate, and in reply to your very kind address I will say that it was after prayerful consideration.

Your appreciation of my feeble efforts and kind treatment of myself and family will ever be gratefully remembered. While I forbear an expression of the deep emotion produced in our breasts by your tearful farewells, I would say that Mrs. Bleakney and daughter join me in very warm regards to each, hoping that we shall hear of your prosperity, both temporal and spiritual, and that when life's changes are all over we may meet you all where parting never comes. I would suggest that you secure, as soon as possible, the services of a pastor—if possible two—who may love and proclaim the whole truth. "Finally brethren, farewell."

As ever, &c.,

J. C. BLEAKNEY.

Lower Granville, N. S., July 21, 1874.

"Christian Visitor" please copy.

For the Christian Messenger.

BAPTIZED FOR THE DEAD.

Dear Mr. Editor,—

Thanks for inserting my letter on the above subject, and thanks to Bro. Chipman and Mr. Lithgow for their replies. Will you allow me to make a remark or two on Bro. C's letter. First I am obliged to him for his kindly references to my letter, and pleased that he sees so far with me. I am quite willing to give up the preposition "into" and was aware when I wrote it that "uper" meant "because of," "on account of," "in behalf of" and my use of "into" was not so much in connexion

with "uper" as with "being baptized," inasmuch as those who are baptized are baptized into Christ. If we read either "because of" or "on account of" the meaning I wish to give it is equally good. "What shall they do who are being baptized because of (on account of) one who belongs to the dead." I still believe that to be the meaning, though I am quite open to conviction. By the way, does not Bro. C. translate "uper" by "into" in the passage beginning, "Else what shall those do," &c., . . . baptized into a belief of the resurrection of the dead." This is all I see in Bro. C's letter that needs my referring to, save his exposure of the "dead in Adam, dead in sin," error of Mr. Lithgow, which like your own on Mr. L's placing Christ and his apostles on an equality, is to the point. If not occupying too much space, allow me to remark on one or two things in Mr. L's letter. I still consider his explanation "strained." Dean Alford, who is generally considered a good authority says, "not 'nekroi' (dead) in any figurative sense." "Dead" being plural too, is not altogether against my interpretation, inasmuch as in several places in the New Testament the plural is used for the singular. Macknight gives seven cases.—Among others, Mark xvi. 19, "Sat on the right hand of God" 1 Thess. v. 1, "Concerning the times and seasons" for "time and season" of Christ's coming.

I don't think Mr. L. quite intended to say what he has in the following: "Is my explanation of Paul's hitherto inexplicable phrase a rather strained one? . . . It is therefore quite proper to read . . . immersed in suffering on behalf of the dead ones." The italics are mine. Mr. L. seems to say Eureka, Eureka.

The only remaining point to be noticed is that in which Mr. L. remarks that if my view be right, Paul would have said, "What shall you do," &c., inasmuch as "all to whom Paul wrote had been immersed in water." It may be sufficient to say that in the original "are baptized" is in the present participle.

Hoping this correspondence may be the means of bringing some new light upon this difficult passage.

I am, Yours truly, J. BROWN.

For the Christian Messenger.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

Brother Selden,—

Will you please publish in your valuable paper, the following report of moneys collected in Nova Scotia for the American and Foreign Bible Society:—

Table with 2 columns: Location and Amount. Includes Dighy, Bear River, Smiths Cove, Little River, Freeport, Westport, Beaver River, Hebr., Chegoig, Oil, First Church, Milton Church, Temple Church, Liverpool, Milton, Annapolis, Bidgetown, Paradise, Pine Grove, N. S. Aux., Aylsford, Upper Aylsford, New Minas, Wolfville, Cornwallis, Canning, Han-sport, Wind-or, Falmouth, Halifax, North Church, Truro, Amherst.

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With heartfelt thanks to the friends for their contributions, and their kindness to myself, and hoping they may prosper in every lawful enterprise, and especially in every christian grace.

I subscribe myself, Yours, &c., S. BOOTHBY.

Mr. Editor,—

Allow me to acknowledge through the columns of your paper the receipt of \$30 from our Cape Canso friends, to aid in defraying the expenses of repairing our Meeting house.

We are grateful to God for what he has done, and what he is doing for us, and grateful to our friends who have so cheerfully and liberally assisted us. Our earnest prayer is that God's rich blessing may rest upon them and all others who willingly labor for the upbuilding of our Master's glorious cause.

In christian love, Mrs. ROBERT MCKEEN. Melrose, July 27th, 1874.

For the Christian Messenger.

IN MEMORIAM.

ROBERT HORTON,

departed this life on the 2nd inst., at Yarmouth, in the 90th year of his age.—For some time past it seems to have been his earnest desire to "go home and be at rest." He was ripe for the sickle. In early life he was converted; but, owing to disposition naturally retiring and timid, he did not for many years openly profess faith in Christ. This he evidently regretted in subsequent years. Nearly half a century ago he was enabled "to take up his cross and follow the Master." Since that time his life has been that of a humble, quiet and earnest christian. No one in the community has been more favorably spoken of than "uncle Robert Horton." He was a constant attendant on the services of the sanctuary. Rainy Sundays did not keep him at home. In the social meetings he was always ready to take some part, though he was conscious of being by no means highly gifted. As old age advanced, his faculties became much impaired, yet when all other things were forgotten, his countenance would beam with joy and gratitude at the very mention of the precious name of Jesus. He passed peacefully onward to his glorious reward.—Com. by W. H. W.

Died at Overton, Yarmouth, on the 23rd June, 1874, Margaret J., the beloved wife of Mr. James K. Rose, and daughter of Dea. John Rose, of Hebron, in the 31st year of her age. Our departed sister was baptized and united with the West Yarmouth Baptist Church in 1856. Though at this time quite young, she failed not to illustrate in her life the principles of true discipleship. Dutiful and affectionate as a child, a sister, and a wife, she was firm in her convictions of right. From childhood she loved the scriptures, and would recite extensive portions in the Sabbath School. In the Bible class she was a good student. She was one of a class by far too small in our churches, who is a comfort to the pastor. She laid up treasure in heaven, and enjoyed the advantage of it in her last trials. Her last illness, though crowded into the brief period of ten days, was terribly agonizing and severe; but amidst the surging of the storm she knew whom she had believed. Jesus said "It is I be not afraid." Her faith triumphed and she entered the dark waters more than conqueror. Com. by J. H. S.

Religious Intelligence.

BRIDGEWATER, N. S., July 27th, 1874.—

Dear Bro. Selden,—I am happy to know that the work of the Lord is still progressing in many localities. It was my privilege to administer the ordinance of christian baptism to two happy converts yesterday, a father and his son, at New Canada, the field in which Bro. B. H. Shafner is laboring under the direction of the Board of the

Home Missionary Union. Our brother is laboring to good acceptance, and we trust that the seed sown by him will issue in a rich harvest to the praise of Divine grace.

Bro. J. M. Longley is also earnestly working for the Master in a portion of my field, and is scattering the good seed of the kingdom.

On the 25th I was called upon to visit New Germany in connection with the death of a valued son of Bro. B. Rhodes, aged 26 years, who departed this life on the 23rd inst., after a protracted and painful sickness, which he bore with christian resignation. He found peace in Jesus some few months ago, and has without doubt gone to swell the ranks of the redeemed above. His funeral took place on Saturday last, a large congregation was in attendance, and he was borne to the tomb with Masonic honors, he being a member of the fraternity. It was my privilege to preach on the occasion from Job. xiv. 10. May God comfort the bereaved with the sweet assurance of a happy re-union above. STEPHEN MARCH.

REVIVAL IN SOUTH AFRICA.—A missionary at a station in South Africa, connected with the Scotch Free Church, speaks of a recent revival at his station in connection with a week of special prayer. Whole nights were spent by some of the people on the hills in sending up their united cries to God for his presence and the outpouring of his Spirit. As a fruit of this effort, the Church was greatly revived, and fifty-three new-born souls added to the Church.

There are more Baptists in England than there are Episcopalians in the United States.

SEVENTY YEARS IN BENGAL.—The census shows that the total Christian population of Lower Bengal is 93,098. Of these, more than 70,000 are Asiatics, 50,000 being natives of Bengal, and a little over 20,000 persons of mixed blood, born in the country, while 22,000 are Europeans or non-Asiatics. "A native or semi-native Church of 70,000 members," says a correspondent of the Pall Mall Gazette, from whom we have these figures, "does not seem a very inadequate result of seventy years of missionary enterprise in a single governorship."

The Canadian Baptist informs us that some of the churches in the Upper Provinces are enjoying tokens of God's blessing on their labors:—

FOREST.—Elder Hillyard writes thus:—I baptized a young man on the 26th of April, four miles west of Warwick village, and last Lord's day, 21st, I preached in a barn to a large congregation, from the commission in the last of Matthew, after which I had the privilege of baptizing two young mothers of families in the same place, in presence of a large concourse of people who behaved very respectfully indeed, as they crowded round the water to witness the solemn rite performed.

WATERDOWN.—Bro. Ratchiff writes, that by request of the Waterdown brethren, he spent Sabbath 21st of June with the church in that place. Four believers were baptized into the likeness of their blessed Saviour's death and resurrection. It was a pleasing sight to behold the youth of scarce 14 summers, a gray-haired man upwards of 60, and side by side the young husband and wife, the united representatives of youth, age, and middle life, thus presenting themselves in willing bonds to their adorable Redeemer.

On the last Lord's day in June, Pastor R. McClelland of Fallston baptized two believers residing in Mitchell, both sisters of our Bro. Claxton of Montreal.

PETERBOROUGH.—Rev. T. Dyall, of Smith, had the pleasure of baptizing two young converts last Sabbath evening in the Shemong Lake.

Bro. A. Stewart baptized four believers recently on the Indian Mission.

OSHAWA.—Pastor Montgomery, of Oshawa, baptized two rejoicing believers last Sabbath evening, in the presence of a full house.

GLAMMIS.—On Sabbath the 21st ult., the Rev. James Couits, pastor of the church in Glammis recently organized, baptized 21 rejoicing converts. The constituent members of the church, 12 in number, were all, or nearly so, from the Church in Tiverton; and although they were few at first, are now nearly 50.

TIVERTON.—Last Sabbath morning Bro. Baldwin of St. Thomas, preached a soul-inspiring discourse to an immense congregation of, it was believed, 1,000 people, after which Bro. Couits read select passages of Scripture bearing on baptism, making a few remarks as he passed along, and at the close, baptized 14 happy converts, several of whom formerly adhered to the Presbyterian Church. Others are awaiting the ordinance. The churches in that whole region of country owe very much to the labours of Father Fraser; and we trust ere long the beacon-light of Bible truth will be seen shining forth from many a New Testament church in that region.

The christian Chinese in San Francisco recently began to hold a prayer-meeting of their own, which is well sustained, as many as eighty having sometimes been present.

Within twenty-five years, eighty three Baptist churches have been formed among Germans in the United States, and many of them dis-fellowship members for not giving of their means for religious uses.

MONTREAL.—The pastor of the first church, the Rev. W. Cheetham, had the pleasure of baptizing eleven rejoicing believers on Sabbath evening, June 14th, in the presence of a large congregation. The net increase of this church for the associational year, just closed, is 56.

ST. CATHARINE'S ST.—We are glad to learn that on a recent Lord's day, pastor Denovan had the privilege of baptizing three candidates.

PETROLIA.—On the 21st inst. we had the privilege of again administering the ordinance of believer's baptism. This makes 16 since last July. One thing worthy of note in connection with our baptisms is, that 16 out of the 19 were heads of families.

HAMILTON.—In the Park Street church, last Lord's day, the Pastor, Bro. Steward, baptized nine recent converts, all of whom are members of the sabbath school. The church is greatly encouraged, and praying earnestly and unitedly for a yet larger blessing.

CANFIELD.—Elder Stilwell writes:—I received a letter from Canfield to pay them a visit, and after spending a few days in that place, I had the pleasure of baptizing 19 believers in Christ. It is proposed to organize a church with 13 in number to commence with, and many others are anxious to come in.

MARCHMONT.—The Rev. E. D. Sherman says that on Sabbath the 28th inst., after a sermon on baptism at Marchmont, their out station, the congregation proceeded to Bass Lake and witnessed the baptism of two believers.

*Read before the Central Conference of Baptist Ministers some time since at Niagara, N. S., and published by request of that body.