

BAPTISMAL TRACTS FOR THE TIMES :

THE

DESIGN OF BAPTISM,

VIEWED IN ITS RELATION TO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE ;

BY IRAH CHASE, D. D.

WITH

AN APPENDIX ; TO WHICH ARE ADDED SEVERAL ARTICLES,

OCCASIONED BY

DR. ROBINSON'S LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT,
AND THE DOGMA OF BAPTISMAL
REGENERATION.

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P R E F A C E.

THE view here presented of the design of Baptism is one which has deeply impressed the mind of the writer. The years that have passed away since it was given, at Cambridge, September 27, 1828, as an introductory discourse before the Boston Association of Baptist Churches, have served to make the impression yet more deep. The considerations then urged not only continue in all their force, appealing to the understanding and to the heart, but they have gathered strength from recent events, and from the circumstances by which we are now surrounded. Heaven grant that their appeal may not be in vain!

Baptism is here viewed in its relation to the Christian life, not as being its source, but as being the divinely appointed, the suitable and most impressive acknowledgement of its source, and of the obligations that rest on every disciple of Christ. If the representation be found to accord with the Holy Scriptures, the reader's duty is plain. If there be any doubt in respect to such accordance, let the subject be examined seriously, and candidly, and thoroughly. We may hope to succeed, if, in a becoming spirit, we earnestly endeavor to ascertain what our Lord has taught, and what he requires. *The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way.*

The notes in the Appendix have been revised, and some of them much enlarged.

Even where, for the entire satisfaction of some of the readers, it has been necessary to introduce ancient or foreign words, special care has been taken to make the whole argument easily intelligible to all.

In one of the great contests now agitating the Church of England, and awakening, in a remarkable degree, the attention of many in various countries, great prominence, it will be perceived, has been given to the authority of Irenæus. This, in the memorable trial before the Privy Council of the Queen, the Bishop of Exeter brings forward as a leading consideration. Perhaps the subsequent article on the expression alluded to, as used by Irenæus, will therefore be read with the greater interest.

Respecting the next three articles no remark seems to be required to show that they are timely. Their value will be manifest when they have been carefully read. It is no small pleasure to be able to present them to the Christian public.

The sketch relative to the dogma of Baptismal Regeneration, it is hoped, will furnish some *aids to reflection* on a subject not yet so fully understood by many sincere and devoted Christians as the interests of a pure Christianity demand. It has been drawn from authentic sources. The original Latin of most of these may be seen in Mansi's collection of Decrees, Bellarmine's chapter on the Effects of Baptism, and Augusti's edition of the Protestant Symbolical Books. The sketch might have been greatly extended; but it was not designed to be a complete discussion; and the proposed limits of these Baptismal Tracts for the Times had already been exceeded.

BOSTON, September 8, 1851.

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