

MINUTES

OF THE

NINTH ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE

COLUMBIA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

MAINTAINING

“The unity of God; the existence of three equal persons in the Godhead; the just condemnation and total depravity of all mankind by the fall of our first parents; eternal, personal, and unconditional election; the proper Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ; the necessity of his atonement, and its special relation to the sins of the elect only; justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ alone; effectual calling; perseverance of the saints; believers' baptism by immersion only; the Lord's Supper a privilege peculiar to baptized believers, regularly admitted to church fellowship; the resurrection of the body, and general judgment; the final happiness of the saints, and misery of the wicked, alike interminable; the obligation of every intelligent creature to love God supremely, to believe what God says, and practise what God commands; and the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the complete and infallible rule of faith and practice;”

HELD, BY APPOINTMENT,

AT NANJEMOY MEETING-HOUSE,

IN CHARLES COUNTY AND STATE OF MARYLAND.

AUGUST 21, 22, & 23,

1828.

SOUTHEASTERN BAPTIST
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
Wake Forest, North Carolina

WASHINGTON CITY:

PRINTED BY STEPHEN C. USTICK,

1828.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 21, 1828.

1. At 11 o'clock, A. M. brother Samuel Cornelius preached the Introductory Sermon from Isaiah liii. 8. "*For he was cut off out of the land of the living.*"

2. The business of the Association was opened with singing, and prayer by Brother O. B. Brown; when the letters from the Churches were read, and the Messengers' names enrolled, as follows:

SOUTHEASTERN BAPTIST
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
Wade Forest, North Carolina

CHURCHES.	MESSENGERS.	MINISTERS.	Days of Preaching.	Baptized.	Received by Letter.	Restored.	Dismissed.	Excluded.	Deceased.	Total number.	When constituted.
Chappawam-sick,	{ Henry Fairfax, John G. Rubleman.	JOHN JOHNSON.	4th	8	-	1	-	-	-	184	1767
Little River,	{ <i>Alexander H. Bennet</i> , James Hixon.*	JOHN JOHNSON.	1st	7	-	-	5	1	1	114	1769
Occoquan, Hartwood,	George Selectman, (No Messenger.)	JAMES REID.	2d	-	2	-	4	5	-	94	1778
Long Branch,	{ George Love, John C. Herndon.*	W. F. BRAUDUS.	4th	5	1	-	3	1	2	46	1786
Back Lick.	{ James Dawson, Benedict Jones.	S. CORNELIUS.	2d	3	-	2	3	1	7	66	1787
Fryingpan,	{ JOHN JOHNSON,* Thomas W. Lee.	JOHN JOHNSON.	3d	3	5	1	1	-	-	56	1792
Nanjemoy,	{ J. P. Dunnington, John Warder.	-----	---	-	-	-	1	-	2	61	1793
1st Washington,	{ O. B. BROWN, Joseph Thaw.	O. B. BROWN,	ev'y	2	9	-	3	1	4	153	1802
Alexandria,	{ SAMUEL CORNELIUS, Jacob Curtis.	S. CORNELIUS.	ev'y	32	2	-	10	4	1	228	1803
Bethlehem,	{ ROBERT LATHAM,* F. M. Lewis.	R. LATHAM.	1st	2	-	-	2	-	1	56	1812
Grove,	{ John Prim, Elias Fant,*	-----	---	2	5	-	-	-	-	64	1812
Rock Hill,	{ Ransom Hickerson, Thomas Gatewood.	-----	---	-	-	-	-	-	-	38	1812
Mount Pleasant,	{ Noah Martin, James Oliver.	JAMES REID,	4th	2	-	-	-	2	-	82	1819
Elk Run,	{ JOHN NEALE, E. Hansborough.	-----	1 & 3d	-	-	1	4	-	1	42	1822
Fredericksb'g,	{ ROBERT B. SEMPLE, Robert B. Fyfe.	R. B. SEMPLE.	2 & 4th	-	1	-	3	2	1	119	1825
Enon,	{ Charles Robey, Jesse Kidwell.	JAMES REID.	2d	2	-	-	-	-	-	21	1824
Pohick,	{ JAMES REID, Thompson Clark.	JAMES REID.	3d	-	-	-	-	-	1	16	1827
				68	23	5	39	17	23	1641	

NOTE. Ordained Ministers are in SMALL CAPITALS; licensed Preachers in *Italics*; those marked thus * were not present; a dash ----- denotes no settled Pastor.

3. Brother O. B. Brown was chosen Moderator.
4. Communications were received from the following Associations, and their Messengers affectionately invited to seats with us:
 KETOCTON; Messenger, brother JOSEPH BAKER.
 DOVER; Messenger, brother JOHN MICOU, with minutes and letter.
 BALTIMORE; Messenger, brother R. H. NEALE, with minutes and letter.
5. Brethren Semple, Cornelius, and Reid, with the Moderator and Clerk, were appointed a committee to arrange the business of the Association.
6. Brethren Thaw and Fyfe were appointed a committee to audit the Treasurer's account.
 Adjourned until to-morrow morning 9 o'clock.
 Prayer by brother Reid.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 22.

- Met pursuant to adjournment.
 The Association was opened with prayer by brother Semple.
7. The Circular Letter, written by brother Brown, was called for, read, and referred to brethren Semple, Cornelius, and the Author, who were authorized to examine, and cause it to be printed with the Minutes.
 8. The Committee of Arrangement made a report, which was adopted.
 9. The Committee on the Treasurer's account reported, that the disbursements for the past year have been as follow:
 viz. For printing the Minutes and boxing them for distribution, - - - - - \$ 25 75
 Paid the Clerk, - - - - - 10 00
 Total amount, - - - - - \$ 35 75;
- that the disbursements are supported by proper vouchers; and that just credits are given. Leaving a balance in the hands of the Treasurer of \$100 01. Which report was adopted.
10. The sum of \$1 25 was appropriated in favor of brother Robert B. Fyfe, for expenses heretofore paid by him on Minutes transported to his care for some of the churches.
 11. The Corresponding Letter, written by brother Cornelius, was read and adopted.
 12. At the request of the Nanjemoy church, who are laboring under some difficulties, a committee was appointed, con-

sisting of brethren Robert B. Semple, O. B. Brown, Robert B. Fyfe, Henry Fairfax, and Joseph Thaw, to visit them on the Saturday before the first Lord's-day in November next, to meet at Nanjemoy Meeting-House at 11 o'clock, A. M. in order to assist them in settling the difficulty; and in case of failure on the part of any member of the committee to attend, the members who shall attend are authorized to appoint some other brother to supply his place.

13. A proposition from Pohick church, for the introduction of Union Meetings within the bounds of this Association, was taken under consideration, and agreed to.

14. Brethren Reid, Hansborough, and Love were appointed a committee to arrange the *Visitation* and *Union Meetings*.

15. A letter from the Central Baptist Church in Washington was received and read; which letter relates to the subject contained in the 28th Article of the last year's Minutes, and proposing that this Association examine and decide their case. After some discussion, the letter was ordered to lie on the table until to-morrow.

16. *Ordered*, That the next Association be held at Little River Meeting-House, in Loudoun County, Virginia, commencing on the Thursday before the fourth Lord's-day in August, 1829, at 11 o'clock, A. M.; brother Robert B. Semple to preach the Introductory Sermon, and in case of failure, brother Brown.

17. Brother Semple appointed to write the next Circular Letter, *On the Connexion or Relation between Pastor and Church*; and in case of failure, brother Brown.

18. Brother Love was appointed to write the next Corresponding Letter.

19. Messengers were appointed to the following Associations, viz:

Ketockton; to be held at Zion Meeting House, Frederick County, Va. on the Thursday preceding the third Lord's-day in August, 1829; brethren O. B. Brown, Samuel Cornefius, Alexander H. Bennet, E. Hansborough, and George Love.

Dover; to be held at Grafton Meeting-House, in York County, on the second Saturday in October next, brethren R. B. Semple and R. B. Fyfe.

Shiloh; to be held at Thornton's Gap, Culpepper County, Virginia, on the Friday before the first Lord's-day in September, brethren R. Latham, T. Stringfellow, Samuel Cornelius, and George Love.

Goshen; to be held at County Line Meeting-House, Caroline County, Virginia, on the first Saturday in October, 1828, brethren T. Stringfellow, J. Neale, G. Love, and R. B. Fyfe.

Baltimore; to be held in the Meeting-House of the Second and Baptist Church in Washington City, on the Thursday preceding the third Lord's-day in May, 1829, brethren R. B. Semple, J. Neale, J. Johnson, S. Cornelius, and Jacob Curtis.

Albemarle; brethren James Reid and William Kidwell.

Patterson's Creek; brethren James Reid and Alexander H. Bennet.

General Association; to be held in the town of Petersburg, in Virginia, on the first Saturday in June next; brethren R. B. Semple, O. B. Brown, James Reid, and George Love.

20. *Resolved*, That in case any Messenger to corresponding Associations should fail to attend, any of our brethren attending may be substituted in his place.

21. Brethren Cornelius and Reid were appointed a committee to examine the minutes of Corresponding Associations.

22. On the motion of brother Joseph Baker, a collection, amounting to \$13 39, was made in the Association, for the use of the General Association; which, with \$2 contributed for that purpose by the First Church in Washington, making the sum of \$15 39, is ordered to be paid over to the Treasurer, to be forwarded by him to the General Association, by the Messengers appointed to attend that meeting.

Adjourned until 9 o'clock to-morrow morning.

Prayer by brother Micou.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 23.

Met pursuant to adjournment.

The Association was opened with praise, and prayer by brother Baker.

23. The report of the committee for arranging the Union and Visitation Meetings was received and adopted, as follows:

A general Union Meeting is appointed to be held at Mount Pleasant Meeting-House, in Fairfax county, Va. to commence on the Friday before the fourth Lord's-day in May, 1829; to continue Friday, Saturday, and Lord's-day, and the Lord's Supper to be administered, if the Church at which said meeting is held shall deem it expedient.

Visitation Meetings as follow:

Nanjemoy, 1st Lord's-day, and Saturday preceding, in November; brethren Semple and Brown to attend.

At Back Lick, the fifth Lord's-day, and Saturday preceding, in November; brethren Brown and Johnson to attend.

Hartwood, same time; brother Stringfellow to attend.

Brentown, same time; brethren J. Neale and Broders to attend.

Elk Run, fifth Lord's day, and Saturday preceding, in March; brethren Semple and Cornelius to attend.

Pohick, same time; brethren Brown and Johnson to attend.

Fryingpan, same time; brethren Latham and Bennet to attend.

Rock Hill, fifth Lord's-day, and Saturday preceding, in May; brethren Reid and Cornelius to attend.

Enon, same time; brethren Latham and Broders to attend.

Occoquan, same time; brethren Stringfellow and Bennet to attend.

Long Branch, on the *FOURTH* Lord's-day, and Saturday preceding, in March; brethren Semple, Cornelius, and Johnson to attend.

24. The committee to examine the Minutes of Corresponding Associations reported as follows: "That they find in the Minutes of the Baltimore Association the following article, copied from the Minutes of the New York and of the Hudson River Associations, of which they recommend the publication in our Minutes: '*The churches are warned of a Dr. Miller, Samuel Monger, John Smith, and Samuel J. Councilor, alias Council, alias Counsel, who are imposing themselves upon the churches as Baptist preachers.*' Which report is adopted

25. Query from Grove: "Can it be right in the sight of God for one called of God to preach the Gospel to refuse the oversight of churches, when called upon and solicited to take it upon him?" We shall be thankful for your answer to this query, brethren, if you will base it upon the word of the Lord. Or, to meet the case in hand, is there any thing, and if any thing, what, that will justify a Pastor in the resignation of his pastoral charge, when once taken?"

Answer. The subject of the above query, in the estimation of this Association, is too important to receive a full answer in the limits of a solution to a query; and, for this reason, it has been determined to have the next Circular Letter composed upon this subject. As, however, the Church from which this query came wishes an immediate answer, we will offer our counsel. We look upon the connexion between a Pastor and a Church to be of the most sacred nature, and one that should not be dissolved from trivial causes, nor without the most solemn and prayerful consideration. The union between a Pastor and a Church, we think, partakes of the nature of a covenant, implying conditions on both sides. If, then, the *conditions* are *grossly neglected* by either party, we deem it *no departure* from the path of duty for the other party to dissolve the contract. This, however, should not be done without long forbearance, and much waiting upon God. We have attended to the statement made by the letters from the

churches heretofore attended by our beloved brother, their late Pastor, and especially the one from Grove Church; and we must say, that we do not see in these statements sufficient reason for dissolving so sacred a connexion. If, therefore, no other causes exist, than those named in the letters, we would earnestly entreat our venerable brother again to resume his holy duties, and trust God to sustain him through all his trials and difficulties.

26. *Resolved*, That the surplus fund belonging to the Association be carefully preserved, and that the churches be requested to increase it by liberal contributions, and the pledge of the Association be given that it shall be sacred to the temporary relief of the families of such ministers, members of this Association, as may die in destitute circumstances, leaving their families in a situation calling for immediate aid: *Provided* a majority of the churches shall express their approbation of the measure in their letters, at the next meeting of the Association. Ministers, though called by particular churches, and laboring more among some churches than others, are in a considerable degree the property of all. Their labors in the Lord often prevent their accumulating property, and subject their families to want after their labors are closed. A very small sum, in such cases, would often afford a happy relief; and, by liberal contributions, and judicious management of the fund, resources to a considerable amount might in a few years be provided, the interest alone of which would often make the widow's heart to sing for joy. The subject is submitted to your consideration.

27. The letter from the Central Church at Washington, laid over yesterday, was taken up, and, on motion, was indefinitely postponed.

28. The following contributions were made by the churches to the fund of the Association, viz. Chappawamsic, \$2; Little River, \$1; Occoquan, \$2; Long Branch, 2; Back Lick, \$2; Fryingpan, \$2; Nanjemoy, \$1 18 $\frac{1}{2}$; Washington, \$3; Alexandria, \$3; Bethlehem, \$1; Rock Hill, \$1; Mount Pleasant, \$2; Elk Run, \$1; Fredericksburg, \$2; Enon, \$2; Pohick, \$2 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ —in all, \$29 31: which amount was put into the hands of Br. O. B. Brown, to be paid over to the Treasurer.

29. *Resolved*, That ten dollars be paid the Clerk, by the Treasurer, for his services and stationary.

30. *Resolved*, That the deadly mischief arising from the improper use of spirituous liquors, renders it highly necessary that every measure should be adopted, by the friends of piety, morality, or sobriety, to lessen, or, if possible, wholly extirpate this crying evil. We therefore recommend to our churches and brethren, to encourage all associations or com-

binations of good men to discountenance and put down this horrid practice; that they circulate, as far as possible, any tracts or other publications calculated to place the subject in a clear point of view; that they be very cautious in even the temperate use of strong drink, as it is found by observation that the habitual, though at first temperate, use of spirituous liquors, often ends in inveterate habits of drunkenness; that our preachers take frequent opportunities to speak, publicly and privately, against this ruinous practice; and, that private members, also, seize every opportunity to warn saint and sinner against the evils of this destructive vice.

31. *Ordered*, That 1200 copies of the Minutes be printed; that brethren O. B. Brown and Samuel Cornelius be appointed to superintend their printing and distribution, and that the Constitution and Rules of Decorum be appended to the same.

32. Our Messengers to the Baltimore Association having failed to attend at its last meeting,

Resolved, That our brethren appointed this year be, and they are hereby, respectfully urged to attend the next meeting, and endeavor to effect an amicable adjustment of the matter in difference between the two Associations.

33. Verbal communications were made by brother Cornelius respecting the "Young Men's Bible Society" of Alexandria. He stated, that that Society had resolved to supply every destitute family in the counties from Fairfax downward, forming the Northern Neck of Virginia, with a copy of the Sacred Scriptures.

Resolved, That we highly approve of the object of said society, and that it be recommended to the churches and brethren to assist, in every way in their power, to accomplish the benevolent and important undertaking.

34. *Resolved, unanimously*, That it be recommended to the ministers and churches of this Association, that a chapter, or larger portion of the Holy Scriptures, be read publicly at every meeting for public worship; and that it be also recommended to the churches to keep a Bible and Hymn Book in their Meeting-Houses, for the use of their ministers and members.

35. *Resolved, unanimously*, That the thanks of this Association be presented to the friends and brethren in this vicinity, for the hospitable entertainment which we have received; and especially for the measures adopted by them to prevent molestation, and preserve good order, during our meeting.

The Session was then closed with praise, and prayer by brother Cornelius. Adjourned.

O. B. BROWN, *Moderator*.

GEO. LOVE, *Clerk*.

PREACHING AT THE STAND.

On THURSDAY, by brother Baker.

FRIDAY, by brethren Micou, R. H. Neale, J. Broders.

SATURDAY, by brethren Baker, Reid, and Semple.

Lord's-day, by brethren Brown, Semple, and Cornelius.

Preaching, also, every evening at the different places of entertainment.

Large and attentive congregations attended the preaching; more than ordinary solemnity prevailed; and there is strong ground for hope, that the Lord has confirmed the Word.

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

COLUMBIA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

AS AMENDED.

ART. 1. This Association shall be known by the name of *The Columbia Baptist Association.*

ART. 2. As an Association is a body unknown in the Scriptures, but is formed in the exercise of Christian prudence, for the purpose of obtaining a more general acquaintance with the state of the churches—maintaining a friendly intercourse with each other—giving advice in cases of difficulty—supplying destitute churches—guarding against innovations, &c. this Association shall exercise no authority over the several churches; but shall regard them as entirely independent—shall give full credit to their acts—and shall never pass any censure or animadversion thereon.

ART. 3. The churches belonging to this Association shall be such as hold the following doctrines, viz: *The unity of God; the existence of three equal persons in the Godhead; the just condemnation and total depravity of all mankind, by the fall of our first parents; eternal, personal, and unconditional election; the proper Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ; the necessity of his atonement, and its special relation to the sins*

of the elect only; justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ alone; effectual calling; perseverance of the saints; believer's baptism by immersion only; the Lord's Supper a privilege peculiar to baptized believers regularly admitted to church fellowship; the resurrection of the body, and general judgment; the final happiness of the saints, and misery of the wicked, alike interminable; the obligation of every intelligent creature to love God supremely, to believe what God says, and practise what God commands; and the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the complete and infallible rule of faith and practice.

ART. 4. Any church desirous of being received into this Association, shall make application by letter, and give an explicit and satisfactory declaration of her faith and practice; and any church departing from the articles of faith expressed in this Constitution, shall be excluded from the privileges of the Association.

ART. 5. The Association shall receive no charge brought by one church against a sister church, unless the church bringing such charge shall have pursued a course of conduct towards the other, similar to that commanded in the 18th chapter of Matthew, with regard to individual members.

ART. 6. The Association shall meet on Thursday preceding the 4th Lord's-day of August, in each year, at such place as shall have been designated by the Association at the preceding meeting. Every church shall have the privilege of sending two Messengers, who shall be entitled to vote in all cases; but no proxies shall ever be received. It is expected that each church will send a letter to the Association, containing the names of the Messengers appointed; her numbers baptized; received by letter; restored; dismissed by letter; excluded; deceased; and the total number belonging to her communion.

ART. 7. The officers of the Association shall be a Moderator, Clerk, and Treasurer; all of whom shall be chosen by ballot; the first annually, and to continue in office until a new election; the others to remain in office during the pleasure of the Association.

ART. 8. It shall be the duty of the Moderator to preside in the Association during its session; to preserve order; propose questions, and announce the decisions of the Association; but, except on questions of order, he shall never speak himself upon subjects before the Association, unless he shall call some other member to fill the chair for the time; and then he shall be governed by the same rules and restrictions as other members.

ART. 9. It shall be the duty of the Clerk to keep a true minute of all the proceedings of the Association, and prepare the same for publication, as the Association shall direct.

ART. 10. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to take charge of all the moneys of the Association, to pay the same, or any part thereof, at any and all times, to the order of the Association, which order shall always be furnished him in writing, signed by the Clerk; to keep a regular account of all receipts and disbursements, and present it for examination, annually, to the Association.

ART. 11. Whenever any church shall desire counsel from the Association, it is expected that she will state the case by way of query, in her letter; and the Association may give the best advice in her power thereon, provided such advice shall not be considered in the least degree binding upon any church: nevertheless, no query shall be acted upon by the Association, which has not first been deliberately considered by the church from which it comes, without her being able to obtain satisfaction thereon.

ART. 12. Alterations and amendments to this Constitution, may be made by a proposition agreed to by a majority of the members present at one meeting, and confirmed by two-thirds of the members present at the next annual meeting, subsequent to that at which the proposition was made.

RULES OF DECORUM.

ART. 1. When the Association convenes for business, it shall be opened and closed by prayer.

ART. 2. The Constitution and Rules of Decorum, shall be read by the Clerk at the opening of the Association, and lie on the table for the perusal of the members.

ART. 3. The Clerk shall call over the names of the members as often as the Association may require.

ART. 4. Each speaker shall rise from his seat and address the Moderator; he shall strictly adhere to the subject under immediate consideration, and shall not be allowed to speak more than three times to one subject, without permission from the Association.

ART. 5. Every motion, made and seconded, shall come under the consideration of the Association, unless it be withdrawn by the mover.

ART. 6. Every query sent to the Association shall be twice read; and if it be decided by a majority of votes to consider the same, it shall be discussed; if not, it shall be withdrawn.

ART. 7. Only one person shall speak at a time; and when two or more members rise to speak, at nearly the same moment, the Moderator shall decide who is entitled to the preference.

ART. 8. When a member in speaking has occasion to mention the name of another member, he shall use the appellation of brother.

ART. 9. The Moderator shall not interrupt any member in, or prohibit him from, speaking, unless he break these rules.

ART. 10. Any thing debated in this Assembly, which may not be thought proper to appear on the Minutes, may be expunged by a majority of two-thirds of the members present.

ART. 11. Alterations, additions, or amendments, may be made at any time to the foregoing rules, by a majority of the members present.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

The Columbia Baptist Association, convened at Nanjemoy, Charles County, Maryland, the 21st, 22d, and 23d, of August, 1828;

To the several Churches of which it is composed, Greeting:

BELOVED IN THE LORD,

In presenting our annual address, we would call your attention to a subject which we deem of the first importance; and on which it is our earnest prayer that you may be well established. The day in which we live is pregnant with great events. The word of life is rapidly diffusing itself through the regions of darkness. A general combination of effort is made for evangelizing the world. The gospel is beaming its genial rays on lands that have endured centuries of midnight darkness. Churches are rising in different parts of our own country, and the number of professing Christians is rapidly multiplying. If we cannot send you the cheering intelligence of great doings among us, we are favored with the good tidings from other Associations, and in some instances from those with which we maintain correspondence.

Cheering as these things are, it must be acknowledged that the picture has also its dark side. If great things are accomplished in the cause of truth, it is much to be feared that the progress of error is also great. There are times when the Church of Christ is replenished with numbers; and there are

times when professors are tried. When the rising superstructure begins to disclose the beauty of the design, the foundation is but superficially examined; but when the building is completed, both its beauty and utility will soon be marred, if there exist but an imperfection in the foundation. This is strictly true in relation to the Church of Christ, and to every professing Christian. Nor would we conceal our conviction, that erroneous doctrines are indications not less unfavorable of character than erroneous conduct. A Christian may be betrayed into actions which he does not approve: but his doctrine is his own; voluntarily embraced, and cordially adhered to; and, if erroneous, will generally eventuate in corresponding error of practice. That we may contribute, as far as in us lies, to your stability in every thing which should characterize and adorn the Christian life, we shall here present to you our views of the *Covenant of Redemption*. It constitutes the foundation of our faith; and if properly taught in this, we shall not greatly err in any point of doctrine. It involves, by necessary implication, every principle of Divine truth, in doctrine, in experience, and in practice; so that without glaring inconsistency, too obvious to admit of defence, a reflecting mind cannot fail to detect every important error, if clearly initiated into a correct understanding of the doctrine of the Covenant. The limits of our Circular will permit us to give but a brief outline. Let your prayerful investigations supply the deficiency.

The word COVENANT, which occurs more than a hundred times in the Old Testament, and more than twenty times in the New, properly signifies a mutual agreement between parties, with respect to something in which they are interested. Its primitive signification has been a subject of some doubt, and of considerable controversy.

It is, in the original language of the Old Testament, BERTH; and, from its application, our translators have evidently given its proper translation. The root from which it is generally understood to be derived, is BERA, *to cut down*; because covenants, from the remotest periods of antiquity, were entered into by a solemn oath of the parties over a victim designed for sacrifice to God; immediately after which, the victim was slain, cut asunder, and the parties, before the burning of it, passed between its parts, with imprecation that God would so deal with him who should violate his covenant vow. To this practice is the allusion in Jeremiah, xxxiv. 18, 19, 20. *And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made before me, when they cut the calf in twain and passed between the parts thereof, the princes of Ju-*

dañ, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land which passed between the parts of the calf, I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life; and their dead bodies shall be meat unto the fowls of heaven, and to the beasts of the earth. It would appear that Saul had allusion to the same metaphor, when he summoned his subjects to the relief of Jabesh-Gilead, 1, Sam. xi. 7. Nor was the practice confined to the Jews. Livy, a Latin historian, born about fifty years before Christ, has given us a form of these execrations as used by the ancient Romans, to this effect: "If the Roman people should, through base deceit, fail in these conditions, do thou, O Jupiter, on that day, strike down the Roman people as I now do this beast; and strike so much the heavier as thou art stronger than I." To make a covenant, the Hebrews call, in reference to this practice, *to strike a covenant*; so the expression is not uncommon at this day, *to strike a bargain*; and sometimes, when persons would give more than an ordinary pledge of their sincerity in confirming an agreement, they join their right hands, and a third person, with the edge of his hand, as with a sharp instrument, strikes them asunder. The parties in a covenant, in passing between the parts of the victim, intimated their union in the closest bond of religion, as forming one body; and therefore closed the ceremonies of a covenant by a feast, the token of sincere and permanent friendship. So Isaac and Abimelech, Jacob, and Laban, David and Abner, after entering into covenant, united in their feasts. This ancient custom probably originated in the first institution of sacrifices for worship; intimating that the promised Messiah should be the victim of God's Covenant; that, by his sacrifice, sinners should be brought into covenant with God, and united together in a bond of everlasting friendship; that safety from destruction depended entirely upon an interest in this covenant, and that a feast of love, as illustrated in the Lord's supper, should follow the confirmation of the covenant in their souls.

The same word, when quoted from the Old Testament, is called, in the language of the New, *DIATHEKE*, which Hesychius calls a confederacy. It is also sometimes used to signify a last will and testament, because the blessings of the new covenant come to us, not like those of the old, in virtue of our works, but in the nature of a legacy, bequeathed according to the good pleasure of our Saviour, and confirmed by the death of the testator. The same word, therefore, which, in the Old Testament, is rendered covenant, is, in the New Testament, rendered, by our translators, sometimes covenant, and sometimes testament; and in reading the scriptures, we

should bear in mind that the expressions are the same in the original text which we find in our version, old testament, and old covenant—blood of the testament, and blood of the covenant—new testament, and new covenant—*by so much was Jesus made surety of a better testament, or better covenant.* It is sometimes used in a limited sense, as other words also are, for a part, and not for all that is included in a covenant. It is used for the condition of the covenant, and then it becomes a precept—for the stipulation of the covenant, and then it becomes a promise—for God's providential government in the accomplishment of the covenant, and then it becomes an ordinance or decree. But, in its full sense, a covenant is an agreement betwixt two or more parties; as the matrimonial obligation, Prov. ii. 17. Mal. ii. 14; the agreement between Abraham and Abimelech, between Jonathan and David, and many other confederacies in scripture, called covenants, may illustrate the signification of the word.

In a covenant, there must be *contracting parties* called *covenantees—stipulations—conditions*—and if the parties are fallible, a *penalty* in case of violation.

There must also be an equality betwixt the parties to such a degree, as that either party may freely assent or dissent, so that the agreement shall be perfectly voluntary, and entirely cordial.

The covenants between God and man are two; one with Abraham and his seed, in which temporal mercies are stipulated, on condition of their obedience; the other with Christ and his seed, in which eternal life, with all its preparatory and all its concomitant blessings is stipulated, on the condition of perfect obedience to the moral law, the tables of which are called the tables of the covenant.

We are sometimes told of a covenant of works which God made with Adam, in which a higher state of bliss was stipulated when his days of probation in Paradise should terminate, on condition of his continued obedience to the command of prohibition from the forbidden fruit. But as nothing of this appears in scripture, we reject it. There does not seem to have been any thing of the nature of a covenant with Adam. A law was given him, with a penalty; but his own consent was not consulted, nor any promise given as the reward of obedience, unless it might be inferred that he should continue to live in Eden, if he should not commit the act for which death was threatened, the natural implication of every law. We conclude, then, that, to innocent man, God gave a law of works; to guilty man, a covenant of grace.

The covenant with Abraham and his seed contained no stipulation of blessings beyond this life. Its conditions were

such as a natural man could perform, and its promises such as an unregenerate man could enjoy. It was made after the calling of Abraham out of Haran, and after he had received and believed the promise of the Messiah. The promise, *I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee, and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed,* (in Gen. xii. 2, 3,) was before the making of the covenant with him, and independent of its condition. The promise of a posterity in whom the blessing should be confirmed, and from whom the promised Messiah should arise, to extend the more permanent blessings of Divine mercy beyond the bounds of his own, even to *all the families of the earth,* was antecedent to the covenant with Abraham; and the testimony of God, that *He believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness,* [Gen. xv. 6.] constituted no part of the stipulation of the covenant which was not yet made with Abraham. The first intimation of a covenant with Abraham is given in Gen. xv. 18—*In that same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, unto thy seed have I given this land.* The word *covenant* here appears to be used for its stipulation, rather than for the entire compact; and is, therefore, a promise rather than a complete *covenant*. But its design is more fully exhibited in the seventeenth chapter, where the covenant between God and Abraham is revealed. *And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram and said unto him, I am the Almighty God: walk before me, and be thou perfect; and I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations; neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee; and kings shall come out of thee; and I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, thou shalt keep my covenant, therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee, in their generations. This is my covenant which ye shall keep, between me and you, and thy seed after thee: every man child among you shall be circumcised: and ye shall circumcise the*

flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you; and he that is eight days old, shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations; he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised; and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant: and the uncircumcised man child, whose flesh is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people: he hath broken my covenant, Gen. xvii. 1—14. The stipulations of this covenant are, a numerous progeny, and the land of Canaan for an inheritance. Circumcision is its condition. Neither the enjoyment of the one, nor the fulfilment of the other, required regeneration. If spiritual and eternal blessings had been stipulated, they would not have been suspended on so feeble a condition as circumcision. That soul, that is, the soul of *the uncircumcised man child, shall be cut off from his people: he hath broken my covenant.* But it would be contrary to the whole analogy of faith, and to the vital principles of the Gospel, to conclude that a soul should go to hell for want of circumcision, or to heaven by reason of circumcision; or, of any external ordinance, depending solely on human volition. We are warranted, then, in the conclusion, that eternal blessings are not involved in the covenant with Abraham.

Nor did its provisions extend to all his posterity. Abraham had eight sons; but, by the special direction of God, the covenant was confirmed to Isaac alone; and Ishmael, though circumcised, was, by the express command of Jehovah, rejected, whilst yet in a state of childhood. Isaac had two sons, twin brothers, both circumcised; but the elder was rejected, and the covenant confirmed to the younger. These three patriarchs, the father of the faithful, the child of promise, the prevailing Jacob, each stood alone; but to all the tribes of Israel was the covenant confirmed. It was not till the fourth generation after Jacob, that God established the covenant with his posterity. He then, through Moses his servant, brought them out of Egypt, in the wilderness of Arabia, and there confirmed to them the covenant which he had made with their father Abraham. In its confirmation, he enlarged both its stipulations, and conditions promising them safety and plenty in the land; and annexing the whole ritual of the Levitical law. Because circumcision was its first and leading condition, it is called, Acts vii. 8. *the covenant of circumcision.* It was made with Abraham when a pilgrim in Canaan; and with the seed of Jacob at Horeb, when pilgrims in Arabia.

The design of this covenant was, to typify the covenant of grace. Circumcision, which was to Abraham *a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, being yet uncircumcised*, and to his offspring, a sign of their relation to Abraham, and their interest in the covenant which God made with *him, and his seed after him*, was a type of regeneration, which is called the circumcision of the heart, and is the sign of our relation to Christ, the head of the new covenant, and our interest in the covenant which God the Father made with him and his seed. So, the Passover, the stated sacrifices, the Levitical priesthood, the sanctuary, the legitimate descent and physical perfection of those who were permitted to enter the sanctuary, together with the whole ritual given at Sinai, are *the patterns of heavenly things*, designed to illustrate the Gospel to the ancient worshippers, and to confirm us in its Divine authenticity. But that covenant, though it answered the design of God in its establishment, could not give life and salvation. It was therefore declared to be *not faultless*; consequently it gave place to another, *established on better promises*.

That covenant which secures to us the blessings of eternal life, in Christ, is what we call the *covenant of grace*. It is, in scripture, called the *covenant of peace*, the *new covenant*, and, by the prophet Zachariah, *the counsel of peace*, as if the sacred persons had held a council to deliberate upon the best method of developing the glorious attribute of divine grace; which counsel resulted in the *covenant of peace*.

In a perfect covenant, there must be an equality of persons. Man is not equal with God, and, therefore, could not enter into covenant with his Maker, to secure to himself the blessings of his favor. There is not only an inequality of nature, but man, in his present estate, is a rebel against God, and under the penalty of the Divine law, consequently incapable of entering into an engagement which could save him. A mediator, therefore, is necessary. An angel could not satisfy the penalty of that law, as the eternal punishment of the fallen angels demonstrates: an angel, therefore, cannot mediate for man. Perfect obedience is the obligation of every creature to his Creator: the obedience of a creature, therefore, however exalted his nature, could not justify offending man. A covenant of life, then, requires that the persons forming the compact should be all Divine. Here appears the necessity for the doctrine of three equal persons in the God-head; one in nature, distinct in official relation. Nor should the incomprehensibility of this doctrine shake our belief, any more than the distinct existence of our material body, our animal life, and our immortal soul, and the manner in which

they mutually act upon each other, which is a subject equally incomprehensible. The one is essential to our salvation, the other to our present state of existence: the one is a matter of revelation, the other of consciousness.

The *covenant of grace* is an engagement between these three persons, having for its object the illustration of the Divine glory in the redemption of fallen man. The names which they distinctly bear, are characteristic of their several offices in this covenant. That person who sustains the supreme majesty of the Divine essence, is called the Father. The stipulations of the covenant are of him to the Son. That person who represents inferior beings, who assumes the responsibility of their obligation, to humble himself to subjection and obedience for them, is called the Son. The conditions of the covenant rest upon him, and, on their performance, he receives the stipulations. That person who executes in its subjects, the provisions of the covenant, is called the Holy Ghost. He is the executor of the testament. He witnesses the fulfilment of the conditions, and conveys the stipulations of the covenant.

The stipulations of the covenant are from the Father to the Son. *Behold the man whose name is the BRANCH: and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even He shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both, Zech. vi. 12, 13. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me, Psalm lxxxix. 34, 35, 36.* David in this Psalm personates Christ; and, from the 20th to the 37th verse, we have a beautiful revelation of the stipulations of the covenant to him. They include every thing which Christ receives of his Father. In his simple character as God, every thing belongs to him of right, and he needs nothing by gift; but, in his official character as Mediator, he can claim nothing, but by covenant stipulation; therefore, in this character he receives all his blessing and his glory from the Father, who hath exalted him, given him a name, and put all things under him. This view of the relation which he bears to the Father, in covenant, will furnish a satisfactory explanation of all those passages of scripture in which Christ is represented as inferior to the Father, and show a beautiful harmony with different expressions, which might otherwise seem to clash. *My Father is greater than I, John xiv. 28. I and my Father are one, John x. 30. It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to*

grief, Isaiah liiii. 10. He thought it not robbery to be equal with God, Phil. ii. 6. He is essentially equal with the Father, but officially inferior. The Father stipulated to the Son, dominion over the whole universe of being. All power is GIVEN unto me, in Heaven and in earth, said our Saviour, Matthew xxviii. 18. As God, it was eternally his of right; but as our covenant God, it was not his, but by gift of the Father; and as a covenant stipulation, he testifies that he has received it from the Father as a gift. It is in virtue of this stipulation, that Jesus Christ, and not the Father in his proper person, is the Creator of all worlds, and of all creatures. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, John i. 3. 10. Whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds, Heb. i. 2. For by Him were all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist, Col. i. 16, 17. It is in virtue of this stipulation, that Jesus Christ governs angels and men, and controls all the events of Divine Providence. He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, Phil. ii. 8, 9, 10. Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet, Heb. ii. 8. This authority is set forth in the declaration that he is exalted to the right hand of God; that is, he executes all Divine power according to the will of his Father; and he shall continue to exercise it as our Mediator, by the covenant stipulation of the Father, till the general consummation of all things. Then will the object of the delegation have been fully accomplished, and the Kingdom shall be delivered up to the Father, 1 Cor. xv. 24.

It is in virtue of this stipulation, that Jesus Christ is the Judge of the world. The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. He hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man, John v. 22. 27.

It is in virtue of this stipulation, that Jesus Christ is the Prince of Life, Acts iii. 15.; disposing of spiritual life at his sovereign pleasure, and raising the body to a life of immortality. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself, John v. 26. Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him, John xvii. 2. All that are in their

graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, John v. 26, 29.

The Father gave to the Son, as covenant stipulations, an innumerable multitude of angels, and of men, to be the willing subjects of his government, to enjoy his glory, and to serve him forever. The angels thus given are called the elect angels, 1 Tim. v. 21. They are not redeemed, but confirmed in Christ; *that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, [in the heavens,] and which are on earth; even in him; in whom we also have obtained an inheritance, Eph. i. 10. 11. All in the heavens,* (for it is plural in the original,) must embrace the native inhabitants of Heaven who have not lost their original inheritance; and, if in Christ they are in one communion with the redeemed, they are not liable to lose their inheritance, but are confirmed in Him; *That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth.* Angels, then, as well as men, have a confirming interest in this covenant, and owe the perpetuity of their bliss to the doctrine of Election, according to the sovereign pleasure of God.

But the revelation of his holy word is to men, and not to angels; and the covenant relation in which we stand to God in Christ, is what principally concerns us. Let it be our care to understand this now, and the remainder we shall know hereafter. The Father gave to the Son, in covenant, an innumerable multitude of the human family to be his children. *Behold I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and for wonders in Israel, Isaiah viii. 18. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, John vi. 37. My Father, who gave them me, is greater than all, John x. 29. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, John xvii. 6.* These are chosen from the mass of the human family, according to the sovereign pleasure of God; and the specific designation of the individuals thus given to Christ, is what we call the doctrine of Election. Their names are registered in Heaven, *written in the Lamb's Book of Life, Rev. xxi. 27,* and distinguished in the archives of Heaven from those *whose names were not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, Rev. xvii. 8.* Their election, therefore, as well as all its consequent blessings, is not in themselves, but in Christ. *According as he hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, Eph. i. 4.*

The Father stipulated to the Son all the promises of the Gospel. *For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us, 2 Cor. i. 20.* The promises, therefore, of the Father to the Son belong to

the children of the covenant; and every promise which we can justly plead, is a covenant stipulation of the Father, not to us in ourselves, but in Christ our covenant Head. *Because I live, ye shall live also*, John xiv. 19. *That where I am, there ye may be also*, John xiv. 3. It is in virtue of this stipulation, that Christ claims for his people a common relation and a common inheritance with himself. *Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God*, John xx. 17. Thus Christ acknowledges them as brethren, and declares to them that God is their common Father. These, with every Gospel promise, are summed up in that of the Holy Spirit, by whom they are applied to our consciences, and verified in our souls.

He is therefore called the *Holy Spirit of Promise*, Eph. i. 13.; and our Saviour, before he was taken from his disciples, promised them another Comforter, the Spirit of truth, to abide with them forever.

In virtue of these covenant stipulations, then, Jesus Christ is made the sole medium of communication from God to his creatures, and all the glories of the Father are revealed in Him, and in him alone. He is *the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person*, Heb. i. 3. *It pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell*, Col. i. 19. *For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*, Col. ii. 9.

The conditions of the covenant rest upon the Son. Jesus Christ engaged to fulfil them, in the righteous government of the universe, the confirmation of angels, and the eternal redemption of men. He pledged himself, as the surety of his people, to be responsible for their conduct, whatever character they might assume, and to *present them holy and unblameable, and unreprouvable in his sight*, Col. i. 22. These constitute his Church; which, from their unity in himself, are called the body of Christ, and he the Head. *Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish*, Eph. v. 25, 26, 27; and because he has rendered satisfaction according to his engagement, *he is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy*, Jude 24. This pledge we conceive to have been irrespective of the character of his people, either good or bad; but when they afterwards rebelled against God, their transgressions involved the responsibility of Jesus Christ their surety, and made it requisite for him to assume their nature, to bear the penalty of the law for their redemption

from it, and to obey its precept for their title to the reward. *By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament, or covenant, Heb. vii. 22. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed, Isaiah liii. 5. So by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous, Rom. v. 19.* The conditions of the covenant, then, are expressed in the *life, the death, the resurrection of Christ*, and in his providential government of the universe, especially his tender regard and watchful care over his people. His blood, therefore, is called the blood of the covenant, shed for his covenant people, and in virtue of his engagement with the Father as the surety of the covenant. It is obvious, then, that the doctrine of particular atonement, as it is commonly called, is involved in the revelation of the covenant.

The fulfilment of the condition entitles him to the reward. *For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the throne of God, Heb. xii. 2.* He has paid for his Church the debt of justice, and now claims her as his own. She is his *purchased possession—bought with his own blood, Eph. i. 14. Acts xx. 28.* The glory and majesty which he receives in his kingdom, he receives on behalf of his people, and holds it in reversion for them. His honor, his kingdom, his inheritance are theirs; and his presence in heaven constitutes for them a perpetual and a prevailing intercession. *All are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.*

The Holy Ghost engaged to execute, in the subjects of the covenant, its provisions. To effect our salvation, regeneration is as necessary as an expiatory sacrifice. We must be united to Christ in spirit, both to receive in him the kingdom and to qualify us for its enjoyment. We must be partakers of the Divine nature, or we cannot enjoy divine communion. Justification is necessary to entitle us to heaven; sanctification is necessary to the enjoyment of heaven. Both are provided in the covenant of grace. Justification is by the imputed righteousness of Christ; sanctification by his imparted holiness. It is the covenant office of the Spirit of Christ to unite us to him, like the branch to the vine, that we may possess in him both justification and sanctification. He has witnessed the fulfilment of the conditions of the covenant, and delivers the testimony in the hearts of the redeemed. *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself, 1 John v. 10.* Our confidence in the truth of the Gospel is from this testimony, and not simply from historical evidence. We are *born of the Spirit*; because it is his office to impart to us the Divine nature. Repentance flows from his operation upon the heart, because it is his office to convince

the world of sin, John xvi. 8. The confidence of hope is of him; because *the Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God*, Rom. viii. 16. It is his office to work in us every grace, to kindle in us the flame of Divine love, and to keep it alive to all eternity; hence we are said to be *sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory*, Eph. i. 13, 14. The Father has loved us, and given us to his Son. The Son has made a sacrifice of himself for us, and is now governing the universe for our benefit; but it is the Holy Ghost who works in us, and brings us to the enjoyment of the blessings. To transgress against him, then, is a sin of peculiar aggravation. The sin of blasphemy against him has no forgiveness; and to grieve him by our own indulgencies, is ungrateful in the extreme.

Because it is in virtue of a covenant engagement that his inward graces are effected by the Holy Spirit, our Saviour said to his disciples, when about to leave them, *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. But the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things. When he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; for whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come: he shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore, said I, that he shall take of mine, and show it unto you*, John xiv. 16, 17—26, and xvi. 13, 14, 15.

We should learn, then, not to put our trust in doctrines foreign from the heart, and to regard Christian experience and practical godliness as the accidents, rather than the essentials of religion; but we should always recollect, that the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart, infusing life to the soul, and the work of holiness in our lives, is as much a covenant provision, and as essential a part of the religion of our Saviour, as the death of Christ, or the doctrine of his divinity.

This covenant is from eternity. It is called the new covenant; not in reference to its existence, but because the clear revelation, or manifestation of it, was deferred till the personal coming of Christ, who is called its Messenger; and in contradistinction from the covenant of circumcision, by which it was typified, and which had then waxed old, and was ready to vanish away.

The first clear exhibition which was given of it in this world, was when our Saviour was entering upon his public ministry. He dedicated himself to the service, as he has taught his covenant people to declare their devotion to him, in the solemn ordinance of baptism. As he arose out of the water, *the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him, while a voice from heaven proclaimed, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,* Math. iii. 16, 17. Here was a glorious manifestation of a *triune* God in covenant for the redemption of man. The Son, devoting himself to the work which devolved on him, as the surety of the covenant; the Holy Spirit witnessing and sealing the engagement; and the Father, by an audible voice from heaven, declaring his pleasure in the surety.

The redemption of fallen man is the end to be accomplished; and the grandest display of the Divine perfections, the glorious result. When united to Christ by regeneration, this covenant is confirmed in us, and its benefits sealed on our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

Such, brethren, are our views of that covenant which brings us into a closer relation with God than angels ever knew. It lays the foundation of our brightest hopes, and opens to our view the clear analogy of Gospel faith. We ask your prayerful attention to what we here present. Examine with care the Scriptures which we have quoted; and search diligently the whole volume of Divine inspiration, whether these things are so. If we have sustained the subject, according to *the law and the testimony*, then ask yourselves what Gospel doctrine does it not involve? or what is there in the Christian religion, with all its magnitude of excellence, that is not here embraced? The sovereignty of God—his eternal unchanging love—his election of grace—the Divinity and the vicarious work of Christ—justification by his imputed righteousness alone—particular redemption—the experience of religion in the soul, with the power of godliness in our lives—the superintending providence of God over all our concerns—the Spirit and communion of the Son of God, in whom we are made heirs, and with whom we are joint heirs—and a perseverance in faith and holiness to the resurrection of the body and the enjoyment of eternal life, with all their kindred doctrines and consolations, are clearly involved and fully embraced in this everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. Let it be all your salvation, and all your desire. Let not the subject be to you a matter of vain speculation, or of idle curiosity. You have too deep an interest at stake to admit of lightness. Your souls are immortal; and without

the life and power of religion they are lost forever. While you meditate upon the subject, beseech the God of mercy to reveal his covenant mercies in your hearts; that being led by the Spirit of God, you may be the children of God; and giving diligence to make your calling and election sure, you may never fall.

Signed by order and in behalf of the Association,

O. B. BROWN, *Moderator.*

GEO. LOVE, *Clerk.*

CORRESPONDING LETTER.

The Columbia Baptist Association, to the Associations with whom we correspond :

BELOVED BRETHREN,

OBSERVATION and experience have demonstrated the utility and value of well regulated Christian Associations. When conducted in the fear of the Lord, and under the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, they are the means of promoting a spirit of power and love, and of a sound mind; of provoking to good works; and of suggesting, if not furnishing, the means for diffusing Divine truth.

A number of pious and intelligent brethren, being here associated, have an opportunity, not only to give advice and assistance to such Churches as desire either, but also, by a free interchange of views and feelings—of doubts and temptations—of knowledge and experience—to communicate and receive instruction, encouragement, and comfort.

How often, when Christians are thus conferring together, does Jesus himself draw near, and go with them? Then what inexpressible satisfaction do they find in each others' society! Their hearts burn within them; the treasures of the Divine word are opened to their view; they have fellowship one with another, and "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth them from all sin."

When the hour of separation arrives, though they part with regret, yet each feels and cherishes a sacred determination to bear the ills, and discharge the duties, of his earthly pilgrimage, and to press forward to that heavenly world, where the redeemed from among men shall enjoy perfect, uninterrupted, and eternal communion with one another, and with their covenant God.

Brethren, we speak the language of experience. Our present meeting has been a happy, and, we hope, a profitable one. By the letters from the Churches we represent, we are informed that they are, generally, walking in love; most of them in the comfort of the Holy Ghost; and some of them are greatly edified and increased in numbers.

Your Messengers have assisted us much in our deliberations, and in the dispensation of the Bread of Life.

We have listened with wonder and delight to accounts of the goings forth of God our King, in the past year, among the Churches of his

saints in our land. Oh ! how cheering the prospect, now opening to the view of faith ! “ The Lord is appearing in his glory ”—the glory of his power, wisdom, and love—to build up Zion. “ The North gives up—the South keeps not back ; his sons are coming from afar, and his daughters from the ends of the earth.”

The glorious Mediator, seated on the right hand of power, is now seen distinctly fulfilling his promise, “ Behold I make all things new.” “ And if he work, who shall let it ?” Let the Deist, under another name, deny his Godhead, and his Atonement ; let the infidel mock at his Revelation, deny his power, or hate his truth ; let “ the Kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his Anointed ;” let “ hell from beneath be moved at his coming ;” let her marshal her numerous legions, and put on her most dreadful forms of impotent rage—Let all these unite their forces, and “ make war with the Lamb ;” and “ the Lamb shall overcome them :” For,

“ Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journey run ;
His Kingdom spread from shore to shore,
Till suns shall rise and set no more.”

With such hopes as these to sustain us, with what unyielding perseverance should we adhere to “ the doctrine according to godliness ?” with what earnestness should we contend for “ the faith once delivered to the saints ?” with what enterprising zeal should we labor for the spread of the Gospel ? with what sacred joy should we contemplate the victories of the Cross ?

Brethren, would we *abound* in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost, let us abound in every good word and work ; and let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

Our next Anniversary will be held at Little River Meeting-House, in Loudoun County, Virginia, on the Thursday preceding the fourth Lord's-day in August, 1829 ; when we hope again to be refreshed by the presence of your Minutes and Messengers.

Signed by order and in behalf of the Association,

O. B. BROWN, *Moderator.*

GEO. LOVE, *Clerk.*