

of water, as well as of the spirit, they can in no wise enter into his kingdom. The purpose then for which baptism for the dead was instituted, was that we might be baptized for our ancestors who died without having the privilege of hearing and obeying the Gospel in the flesh, that, though in the spirit, they may have the same chance of eternal life as we have. Jesus was very merciful to the antediluvians who perished before the flood. A host who lived in those days perished in the flood and were shut up in prison; and while the body of Jesus was sleeping in the tomb his spirit went and preached to them that were disobedient in the days of Noah. They probably did not have a good opportunity in the days of Noah. There were only four persons to warn them, and they were multiplied by millions and millions in all parts of the earth, and all except Noah and his family were swept off by the flood and cast into prison, and they were kept there some two thousand years, then Jesus went to preach the Gospel to them, as it is written in the fourth chapter of the first epistle of Peter—"For, for this cause was the Gospel preached them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, and live according to God in the Spirit." Now, if the Gospel was preached to those who were dead, to the old antediluvians who perished over two thousand years before Jesus was put to death, for what purpose was it preached? That they might have the same privilege of hearing and obeying the Gospel that those have who are in the flesh, and of being judged thereby. "But," says one, "they cannot obey it in the spirit world." They can in part, they can obey it so far as believing in Jesus is concerned, and repenting of their sins; for repentance and

faith are both acts of the mind; but when it comes to baptism, being born of or immersed in water, they cannot do it; God has ordained that men, here in the flesh, shall be baptized for those who are dead, in order that they may commemorate the death, sufferings, and burial of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that as he rose to newness of life, so may they, for whom the ordinance of baptism is administered, by those in the flesh, have a claim to a more glorious resurrection.

"But," says one, "how do you know that they who are in the spirit world can repent and believe?" Because agency always accompanies intelligence, and intelligence is not blotted out by death. The spirits of men and women who leave this world are intelligent, and intelligence is founded upon free agency, and hence, inasmuch as they who are in the spirit world are agents, they can exercise that agency in believing; when they have a testimony they can exercise that agency in repenting of sins of which they have been guilty. But they cannot exercise that agency in attending to an ordinance ordained for the body; and therefore God has instituted baptism for the dead, that our fathers may have the same chance that we have. What for? In order that, when they come up in the resurrection with us, if they will receive what is done for them, they may be perfected with us, that there may be no broken chain in the matter, no links left out of the chain, but that all persons who will comply may be united in the grand chain of genealogy, back even to the commencement. Therefore the ordinance of baptism was ordained by the Lord from the beginning of the world down until the days of Christ, and from the days of Christ down to the end, that in the dispensation of