

in the antitype co-existent—the one His own indeed, the other ours and only His as the Representative of fallen men, and amongst them of our prophet himself.

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THE BAPTISM OF JOHN :

ITS PLACE IN NEW TESTAMENT CRITICISM.

THE baptism of John is of more than doctrinal importance in the history of the apostolic age. There is reason to think that it has a critical significance in the growth and formation of the gospel tradition. The later disciples of the Baptist constituted a danger in the early Church, and the presence of the danger moulded to some extent the character of the gospel teaching.

It is at Ephesus that they first appear in the records of the Acts. It is said of Apollos that he had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and that he taught carefully the things concerning Jesus, "knowing only the baptism of John" (Acts xviii. 25). He is reckoned among Christian teachers, though it is implied that his teaching is defective. In the case of the Twelve, whom St. Paul found on reaching Ephesus, it is clear that their practice, as well as their teaching, was defective. They baptized into John's baptism, which St. Paul regarded as invalid. The fault in their teaching is touched by the first question he put to them: "Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?" They were, on their own confession, ignorant of the Holy Ghost; they neglected Christian baptism, yet they were spoken of as disciples (xix. 1-7). They "were Christians, though imperfectly informed Christians."¹ They were possibly, as Bishop Lightfoot suggests, whilst he warns against hasty conclusions, "early representatives

¹ Lightfoot, *Colossians*, p. 402.

of the Hemerobaptist sect"; and the suggestion gains strength when the authority of the record is examined more closely.

It is not sufficient to say that St. Paul met these disciples of the Baptist at Ephesus in the year 53 A.D. The question must be asked, on what authority the record rests. Are these notices of the baptism of John a part of the original source, or do they belong to the hand of the compiler? The literary criticism of the Acts must be considered, and its results weighed.

With regard to the narrative of Apollos, Jüngst¹ assigns the whole of xviii. 25 to the redactor. The source, A,² which forms the ground-work of the record, knows nothing of John the Baptist. The Jew Apollos is converted by Priscilla and Aquila in *v.* 26; yet in *v.* 25 he teaches accurately the things concerning Jesus, knowing only the baptism of John. This is only consistent with the position assigned to the disciples of John as Christian disciples in xix. 2.

The narrative of these disciples of John in xix. 1c-7 is introduced by the redactor on the authority of oral tradition. Jüngst endorses the remark of Spitta³ that according to the analogy of the parallel notices of this source,⁴ St. Paul's activity in *v.* 8 in the synagogue at Ephesus should follow immediately upon the record of his arrival in *v.* 1. The giving of the Holy Ghost, through the laying on of the Apostle's hands, compares with the similar record incorporated in the source B by the redactor (viii. 18b-24), and contrasts with the action in the original sources.⁵

¹ *Quellen der Apostelgeschichte*, p. 168.

² Cf. *EXPOSITOR*, Oct., 1896, pp. 298-9. With the exception of the B fragments (xiii. 40, 41 and xv. 13b-19a, 20b), the Gentile source A is the only one used from xiii. onwards.

³ Jüngst, pp. 169, 170.

⁴ Acts xiii. 5, 14; xiv. 1; xvi. 13; xvii. 1, 10, 17; xviii. 1-4, 27, 28.

⁵ Acts x. 44, 47; xi. 15, 17 B a; cf., ii. 38 A.

Both notices of the baptism of John rest, according to the latest result of literary analysis, on the authority of the redactor. It is well, therefore, to note the other references to St. John the Baptist in the Acts.

The writer of the introduction (i. 1-5) refers in the charge of our Blessed Lord to the promise of the Father recorded in the "former treatise" (St. Luke xxiv. 49). The comparison of the baptism of John and the baptism with the Holy Ghost expands the notice of the promise, and brings it into special connection with the preaching of the Baptist (St. Luke iii. 16). The word of the Baptist thus becomes a word of the Lord (Acts xi. 16).

The speech of St. Peter on the occasion of the choosing of St. Matthias lays stress on the apostolic witness to the resurrection. The chosen apostle was to be a fellow witness with the original apostles. This witness appears to Spitta¹ to be unduly extended by the period "from the baptism of John unto the day that he was received up from us"; it would be longer even than the witness of some of the original Twelve. The passage (i. 21*b*-22*a*) agrees, however, with the position taken by the writer of the introduction to St. Luke's Gospel, and is ascribed, for these reasons, to the hand of the redactor.

There is a similar reference to the baptism of John, as the starting-point of the Galilean ministry, in the long interpolation in the speech of St. Peter (x. 36-43), an interpolation which, on other grounds, is attributed to the redactor.² It is important in this passage to note the reference, not only to the witness, but to the gospel teaching itself. "The word which he sent unto the children of Israel, preaching good tidings [the gospel] of peace by Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all), that saying ye yourselves know, which was published throughout all Judæa, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached."

¹ Jüngst, p. 24.

² Jüngst, pp. 97, 98.

The writer has in view the early progress of catechetical instruction in the districts of Galilee and Judæa.

The speech of St. Paul at Antioch contains a reference to the preaching and baptism of St. John in xiii. 24, 25; but it is introduced when the speech has passed away from the early promises to their fulfilment in the Saviour. For this reason, as well as the close sequence of xiii. 23 and 26, the passage, like the other notices of the Baptist, is ascribed to the redactor.

In addition to these references in the Acts, there is an interesting notice in St. Luke's Gospel in our Lord's discourse on the Baptist (vii. 24-35). The record is closely parallel to that in St. Matthew; but contains the following words in vii. 29, 30: "And all the people, when they heard, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God, being not baptized of Him." It is a question whether these words are part of the discourse or a narrative comment introduced, and therefore a reflection of the age of the compiler. The doubt is as old as the condemned reading, "and the Lord said." J. Weiss¹ does not pronounce definitely; but Mr. Wright regards it without hesitation as an editorial note.² The passage implies that the Hemerobaptists, like the Essenes, were received with suspicion by the Pharisees.

In these scattered notices of the baptism of John, the writer of the Acts brings three points into prominence: the defect in teaching and in practice of the disciples of the Baptist; the position of St. John as the Forerunner; and the importance of the baptism of John as the beginning of the period of apostolic witness.

i. The first of these points is treated historically, in

¹ Meyer-Weiss, *Evang. d. Markus u. Lukas*, p. 407.

² A. Wright, *Synopsis*, p. 164.

reference to some irregularity in the early Christian teaching at Ephesus. The disciples of the Baptist taught the baptism of repentance, but did not know the true doctrine of the Holy Ghost. The baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus, and the gift of the Holy Ghost through the laying on of hands, was the apostolic refutation of their heresy—the Church's witness to the true faith.

The historic value of the narrative depends upon the date to which the compilation of the Acts, and therefore the interpolations of the redactor, may be assigned. The character of the persecution reflected in the work of the redactor is a test of the period at which he wrote. Jüngst recognises this, and on the ground of (v. 41) "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonour for the Name," he places the compilation in the time of Trajan or the beginning of the reign of Hadrian, giving as the most probable limit 110 to 125 A.D. He also brings forward in favour of this late date the wide range of Christian teaching (xiii. 49; xix. 10*b*, 25–27; xx. 29), and the contact between xix. 37–40 and the rescript of Hadrian to Minucius Fundanus.¹

In coming to this conclusion he does not appear to have given consideration to the argument of Professor Ramsay, in his studies on *The Church in the Roman Empire*. There are other references to persecution besides that in v. 41; and in them definite crime is regarded as a motive for persecution. Gallio would have listened to a matter of wrong or of wicked villany (xviii. 14); the town-clerk at Ephesus would have been more tolerant of the rabble had St. Paul and his friends been robbers of temples, or blasphemers of the goddess (xix. 37, 38); the chief captain thinks St. Paul is the Egyptian who had stirred up sedition (xxi. 38); Lysias finds nothing to charge against St. Paul worthy of death or of bonds (xxiii. 29); and

¹ Jüngst, p. 219.

Festus has the same opinion (xxv. 25, 27). These examples must be taken into account as well as the distinct case of persecution for the name in v. 41; and the position will be found similar to that in the First Epistle of St. Peter. The Christian communities in Asia are represented in this Epistle as suffering for the Name (1 Pet. iv. 14-16), and yet by avoiding crime, and living in obedience to the laws of the state, they may silence their accusers and keep themselves clear of persecution (ii. 11-15). The writer of the Epistle "stands at the beginning of the new period. He still clings to the idea that the Christians are persecuted because they are believed to be guilty of great crimes; the old charges of the Neronian time are still in his memory, and he hopes, if the absurdity of these charges be fully brought home to the minds of men, the persecution must be stopped." "This attitude belongs to one whose experience has been gained in the first period of Christianity in the time of Claudius and Nero, and who is now at the beginning of a new period. He recognises the fact that Christians now suffer as witnesses to the Name, and for the Name pure and simple; but he hardly realizes all that was thereby implied."¹ This statement meets the case of the writer of the Acts, as well as that of the writer of the Epistle; and if the argument thus based on Jüngst's analysis be correct, the interpolations in the Acts must be added to the list of the authorities for the Flavian period given by Ramsay.

The date assigned by Ramsay to the First Epistle of St. Peter is *c.* 80 A.D.; and by the same line of reasoning the compilation of the Acts may be placed in the same period. And this is the conclusion to which Professor Ramsay comes by a study of the synchronisms in St. Luke iii. 1, 2: "His chronological calculations were probably inserted as the finishing touches of Book i. (the Gospel) while Titus was

¹ Ramsay, *Church in Rom, Emp.*, p. 282.

reigning as sole Emperor, 79–81 A.D.; and the composition of that book belongs to the years immediately preceding, while the composition of Book ii. (the Acts) belongs to the years immediately following. The argument taken by itself would be insufficient, but it is confirmed by the impression which the book as a whole makes.”¹

The irregularity in the Christian teaching at Ephesus was a matter of special interest and anxiety to the writer of 80 A.D. Jüngst suggests Ephesus as one of the places where the Acts was possibly composed.² The attitude of the disciples of John, hitherto of little serious note, had now become a danger, and apostolic teaching and action now acquired a new meaning in the Church. The defect in teaching had to be noticed; the definite gift of the Holy Ghost through the laying on of the Apostles’ hands emphatically confirmed the Church’s teaching on the Person of the Comforter. The narrative in xix. 1–7 implies the existence of a Jewish-Christian sect which was already endangering the purity of the Faith.

The spread of Hemerobaptist principles had developed widely after the destruction of the temple and the Jewish polity. There was a considerable movement among the Jews in favour of frequent baptism, as the one rite of purification essential to salvation. The name and unique position of the Baptist gave a high authority to their practice. There was at the period of the composition of the Acts an active propaganda of these principles in Asia Minor.³ “The Sibylline oracle, which forms the fourth book in the existing collection, is discovered by internal evidence to have been written about A.D. 80.”⁴ The writer was a Hemerobaptist rather than an Essene; and though not distinctly Christian, Alexandre says of it: “Ipse liber haud dubie Christianus est.”⁵ The interest of the work lies in

¹ Ramsay, *St. Paul*, p. 387.

² Jüngst, p. 219.

³ Lightfoot, *Col.*, pp. 403–406.

⁴ *Col.*, p. 96.

⁵ *Col.*, p. 97 n.

Asia Minor, especially in the cities of the Neander. It gives weight therefore to the internal evidence which points in the Acts to the presence of these principles at Ephesus.

It is possible that the Hemerobaptists of Ephesus had what may be called a pseudo-apostolic constitution. Weisäcker¹ suggests that the Twelve in xix. 7 has reference to the original apostolic college of Jerusalem. The suggestion must not be pushed too far, but it helps to elucidate a difficult point in the Epistle to the Church of Ephesus in the Apocalypse (Rev. ii. 2) : "I know that thou canst not bear evil men, and didst try them which call themselves apostles, and they are not, and didst find them false." There may be other allusions in this group of epistles to the propaganda in Asia, but it is only traceable through the Book of Elchasai² and the practice of the Essenes.³ The seven spirits and the angels (iii. 1, 5), the hidden manna and the new name which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it (ii. 17) have points of contact with the teaching of this book. The zeal for purity (ii. 24, iii. 4) and the white garments (iii. 4, 18) suggest the principles and practices of the Essenes. These epistles probably belong to the years 90-95 A.D.,⁴ and are therefore about ten years later than the composition of the Acts. They show, if they do refer to this teaching, a somewhat later and more dangerous development than that presented in the earlier work.

Ephesus became in the later apostolic age the sphere of the Apostle St. John, and it would appear that his authority and standing as a true disciple of the Baptist⁵ had great weight in exposing the errors of the false disciples who rallied round the name of his early master. The Gospel of St. John brings out the true relation between the Baptist and the Christ: "The same came for witness, that he

¹ *Apost. Zeitalter*, p. 341.

² Lightfoot, *Col.*, pp. 374-5.

³ Lightfoot, *Col.*, pp. 387-8.

⁴ Ramsay, *Church in Rom. Emp.*, p. 300.

⁵ Westcott on St. John i. 35.

might bear witness of the Light" (i. 7); "he was not the Light" (i. 8); "he confessed, I am not the Christ" (i. 20); "he saith, Behold the Lamb of God" (i. 36); "He must increase, I must decrease" (iii. 30); "He was the lamp that burneth and shineth, and ye were willing to rejoice for a season in His light" (v. 35); "John indeed did no sign: but all things whatsoever John spake of this man were true" (x. 41). These passages give emphasis to the transitory character of the ministry of the Baptist, and meet the false claims set up by his so-called disciples. "In other words, this Gospel indicates the spread of Hemerobaptist principles, if not the presence of a Hemerobaptist community, in proconsular Asia, when it was written."¹

The presence of St. John at Ephesus after the Fall of Jerusalem had made Ephesus to some extent the headquarters of apostolic Christendom.² He was followed or accompanied thither by the Apostles St. Andrew and St. Philip,³ all intimately associated with the early ministry of the Baptist. Is it not to their joint influence that this particular form of Judaistic Christianity died out in the Churches of Asia after the close of the first century? There appear to be no clear intimations of Hemerobaptism in the Ignatian epistles. The baptism of Christ is alluded to in two passages: "For our God, Jesus the Christ, was conceived in the womb by Mary according to a dispensation of the seed of David but also of the Holy Ghost; and He was born and was baptized that by His passion He might cleanse water" (Ep. Ephes., 18). He was "truly born of a virgin and baptized by John, that all righteousness might be fulfilled by Him" (Ep. Smyrn., 1). The former passage in the Epistle to the Ephesians might be said to have reference to the sanctifying of the water of the One Baptism, taken as it is in connection with the ministry of the

¹ Lightfoot, *Col.*, p. 403.

² Lightfoot, *St. Ign.*, vol. i., p. 422.

³ Lightfoot, *Col.*, p. 46; ep. St. John i. 35-44.

Holy Ghost; the latter, on the fulfilment of all righteousness through the baptism of Christ, may be a reflection of Christian teaching on Baptism as opposed to the frequent lustrations practised by the Jews of the period and by their followers among the Hemerobaptists. But if there be any reference, it is so faint that it implies the passing away of the danger threatened in the years immediately after the Fall of Jerusalem. Christian baptism is upheld in the same language as is used on more than one occasion of the Eucharist: "It is not lawful apart from the bishop either to baptize or to hold a lovefeast" (Ep. Smyrn., 8). Its unity is recognised in the saying: "Let your baptism abide with you as your shield" (Ep. Polyc., 6). The Christian doctrine of the One Baptism had triumphed on the lines laid down in the teaching of St. Paul (Eph. iv. 1-6).

ii. The second point emphasized by the redactor of the Acts is the position of St. John as the forerunner (xiii. 24, 25, xi. 16, i. 5). The prophecy of Malachi iii. 1 is bracketed by Mr. Wright¹ in St. Mark i. 2*b* as not belonging to the first source. It occurs in the source from which St. Luke and St. Matthew draw in the section on the greatness of St. John the Baptist (St. Luke vii. 18-28=St. Matt. xi. 2-11). Its transference to the prelude of St. Mark implies definite purpose. The prophecy of Isaiah with which the original source opens introduces the historic framework of the ministry of the Baptist, "the voice crying in the wilderness"; the prophecy of Malachi points on from the Baptist to Christ, and would therefore be an adequate argument from prophecy against those who regarded the Baptist as the Christ.² Our Lord's discourse on Elijah (St. Mark ix. 11-13) is based on the same prophecy (Mal. iii. 5), and the additional comment in St. Matthew draws attention to its

¹ *Synopsis*, p. 2.

² "Ex discipulis Johannis, qui magistrum suum veluti. Christum prædicarunt." Clem., *Recogn.*, i. 54; *ap.* Lightfoot, *Col.*, p. 404.

significance: "Then understood the disciples that He spake unto them of John the Baptist" (St. Matt. xvii. 13). These additions show that the false teaching connected with the name of the Baptist called for special emphasis in the later editions of the gospel narratives. They support the teaching of the compiler of the Acts as to the true position of the Baptist as only the forerunner of the Christ.

iii. The third point in the interpolations of the Acts is the place of the baptism of John in the apostolic witness. The witness extends, according to the compiler, from the baptism of John to the day on which Christ was received up (i. 22; cp. x. 37). The interpolation of i. 22 refers the reader to the recognised limits of the Gospel narrative. It is more than mere coincidence that it corresponds with the limits which the writer imposed upon himself in his own record of our Lord's ministry (St. Luke iii. 3, xxiv. 51). There is ground for believing that these limits had already received some sort of apostolic authority in the original form of gospel tradition as preserved in St. Mark. This earliest record of apostolic witness may very probably have been drawn up on the lines of the catechetical teaching in the Aramaic¹ Churches of Galilee and Judæa when Aramaic Christianity took refuge at Pella from the threatening disasters at Jerusalem.

This codification of Aramaic tradition, called forth by the demands of a Greek environment in the Decapolis, would take place between the years 70 and 80 A.D.; and if this supposition be reasonable, the presence at that time of Hemerobaptist teaching will have had some influence in determining the mould in which this tradition took final shape. The limits of the Baptism of John and the Ascension being once settled, were adopted in the other Gospels.

The opening sections of St. Mark's Gospel are important

¹ Meyer, *Jesu Muttersprache*, pp. 67-70.

in their bearing on these false principles. The ministry of our Lord not only follows after the ministry of the Baptist, as is implied in Mark i. 14, it supersedes it (i. 7-8). The meaning of the prophetic prelude (i. 2*b*) has already been stated. The attractive power of the Baptist's preaching is presented, while its transitory nature is pointed out: "I baptized you with water, but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." The Baptist's own words are recorded as the best argument against the defective teaching of his disciples. The coming of the Holy Ghost upon our Lord at the baptism was a further proof to them of their error. It has been said "that the identification in the Gospels of the Holy Ghost with a dove grew out of the symbolism which was in vogue among the Hellenized Jews at the very beginning of the first century."¹ This familiar symbol would help them to understand the meaning of the narrative, and the authority conveyed by the Holy Spirit in the baptism of our Lord. The energy with which this authority is wielded is illustrated in the brief record of the temptation: "The Spirit driveth Him forth into the wilderness" (i. 12).

These three sections form the opening of St. Mark's record of the apostolic witness, and it is difficult in view of the defective teaching of the disciples of John to avoid the conclusion that the emphasis laid on the personal authority of the Holy Ghost was called out by their ignorance of Him. If the view thus taken is correct, the purpose of the gospel narrative in its earliest shape was as much influenced by the thought of the age and the circumstances of the district for which it was intended, as the purpose of the Gospel of St. Luke was moulded by the influence of Gentile ideas.

The ending of the original gospel records requires to be

¹ F. C. Conybeare, *EXPOSITOR*, June, 1894, p. 458. The citations used in support of this statement are mainly from Philo.

treated with somewhat more detail. It has been said above that there are grounds for believing that the limit of the apostolic witness given in Acts i. 22 represents the limit recognised at that time in the Church. The statement has been denied. "The result of textual criticism is to make it doubtful if there is any account of the ascension of our Lord in the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, and John contain no account of it. And the passage in Luke, which gives it, is put in the column of doubtful passages. On the other hand, there is no doubt that Luke means by 'he was parted from them,' a final separation from the disciples on that first day following the resurrection."¹

It is not necessary for the purpose of this argument to say more than that the word in St. Luke xxiv. 51 is equivalent to Acts i. 22. This does not, however, prove that it formed part of the original record. It is in a sense true to say that St. Mark contains no account of the ascension; this does not exclude the possibility that it formed the conclusion of the original apostolic witness as followed by St. Mark.

St. Matthew's Gospel preserves some part at least of the lost verses of St. Mark. The key to it is the promised meeting in Galilee (St. Mark xiv. 28, xvi. 7 = St. Matt. xxvi. 32, xxviii. 7). This parallelism proves it to be part of the original source. The sequel is lost in St. Mark; it is preserved in St. Matthew: "Thus saith Jesus unto them, Fear not: go and tell My brethren that they depart into Galilee, and there shall they see Me" (St. Matt. xxviii. 10).

¹ Gould, *St. Mark*, p. 309. Cp. the *διέστην* of St. Luke xxiv. 51 with the *παρέστησεν* of Acts i. 3; also the Ascension of St. John xx. 17 with the gift of the Holy Ghost xx. 22, and note St. John vii. 39 and 1 Timothy iii. 16, "received up in glory." This notice in St. John is a record of the Ascension on the day of Resurrection, distinct from that on the fortieth day, Barnabas xv. 9. It is therefore scarcely correct to say that St. John has no account of the Ascension. J. Weiss says plainly that the record belongs to the Gospel, the Acts opening with the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. Meyer-Weiss, *Mark: Luk*: p. 666.

The sequence is also traceable in the "fear" of St. Mark xvi. 8 = St. Matthew xxviii. 8, which is dispelled by the "fear not" in St. Matthew xxviii. 10.¹ The following section (xxviii. 11-15) does not belong to the same source; it connects with St. Matthew's narrative (xxvii. 62-66). The lost ending is resumed in St. Matthew xxviii. 16, where the promise of the meeting in Galilee is fulfilled. The original source containing the last words of Jesus is followed² until xxviii. 19, where it ends, the closing sentence (xxviii. 20) being distinctively Matthaean.³ Has it been substituted for the original ending to give finish to the purpose of the Gospel, or did the source end with the great baptismal charge? It is more probable that the former view is the correct one, and that the promise of the presence of Christ has been substituted for the fact of the Ascension.

The lost ending has been traced so far through St. Matthew; is it possible to follow it back again into the appendix of St. Mark? In this appendix Zahn has narrowed down the actual work of Ariston to xvi. 14-18.⁴ The two earlier appearances are not in narrative form. They are mere records dependent on the account of St. John and St. Luke. "Neither can the verses xvi. 19, 20 be termed a narrative of the Ascension and of the missionary activity of the apostles."⁵ But if not, whence are they derived? The reference to the preaching of the

¹ Beshch will not allow this, *T. und Unt.*, x. 3, *Par. zu Lucas*, p. 767. The breaking off in different directions of Matthew and Luke after the parallels Mark xvi. 8 = Matthew xxviii. 8 = Luke xxiv. 9 precludes all possibility of restoring the original ending. But does not the parallelism between Matthew and Mark on the words from the cross, not to mention the special character of the Passion record in Luke, imply that there is in this portion of the records closer affinity between Matthew and Mark than between Luke and Mark, and that a negative inference based upon a divergence after the above-named parallelism is not warranted.

² It is doubtful whether xxviii. 19b, 20a, belong to the original source.

³ The phrase, "End of the World," occurs only in St. Matthew xiii. 39, 40, 49; xxiv. 3, xxviii. 20.

⁴ ⁵ *EXPOSITOR*, September, 1894, p. 224.

apostles and the "signs following" in *v.* 20 makes that verse dependent on the narrative of Ariston *xvi.* 15, 17. And is not *v.* 19 derived from the original source, preserved, perhaps, in some gospel known to the writer of the appendix, but since lost? The *λαλῆσαι* of *v.* 19 does not connect with *xvi.* 14-18, but it does continue the narrative broken off at St. Matthew *xxviii.* 19, where the charge of our Lord had been introduced by the words *ἐλάλησεν αὐτοῖς*.

"Jesus came to them, and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto Me in heaven and on earth. Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And Jesus, after He had spoken to them, was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God."

The witness of *i.* 22 represents the true witness of the early apostolic record. The limits afford an adequate refutation of the defective teaching of the disciples of the Baptist. The opening record contains our Lord's baptism, the closing words are our Lord's baptismal charge. Thus definitely and clearly the baptism of John is superseded by the baptism of Jesus.

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