

THE  
DIVINE RIGHT OF INFANT BAPTISM,  
EXAMINED AND DISPROVED;

Being an Answer to a Pamphlet, Entitled,

*'A Brief Illustration and Confirmation of the Divine Right  
of Infant-Baptism'*

*PRINTED AT BOSTON IN NEW-ENGLAND, 1746.*

By John Gill

*Thou hast given a standard to them that fear thee;  
that it may be displayed because of the truth  
— Psalm 60:4*

(LONDON: JOHN WARD, 1749)

Copyright (Public Domain)

[www.reformedontheweb.com/home/.html](http://www.reformedontheweb.com/home/.html)

(Reformed on the Web)

THE  
DIVINE RIGHT OF INFANT BAPTISM,  
EXAMINED AND DISPROVED;  
Being an Answer to a Pamphlet, Entitled,  
*'A Brief Illustration and Confirmation of the Divine Right  
of Infant-Baptism'*  
PRINTED AT BOSTON IN NEW-ENGLAND, 1746.

---

CHAPTER 1

*The Introduction, observing the Author, Title, method and  
occasion of writing the Pamphlet under consideration.*

Many being converted under the ministry of the word in New-England, and enlightened into the ordinance of believers baptism, whereby the churches of the Baptist persuasion at Boston and in that country have been much increased, has alarmed the paedobaptist ministers of that colony; who have applied to one Mr. Dickenson, a country minister, who, as my correspondent informs me, has wrote with some success against the Arminians, to write in favor of infant sprinkling; which application he thought fit to attend unto, and accordingly wrote a pamphlet on that subject; which has been printed in several places, and several thousands have been published, and great pains have been taken to spread them about, in order to hinder the growth of the Baptist interest. This performance has been transmitted to me, with a request to take some notice of it by way of reply, which I have undertook to do.

The running title of the pamphlet, is *The Divine Right of Infant-Baptism*; but if it is of divine right, it is of God; and if it is of God, if it is according to his mind, and is instituted and appointed by him, it must be notified somewhere or other in his word; wherefore the scriptures must be searched into, to see whether it is so, or no: and upon the most diligent search that can be made, it will be found that there is not the least mention of it in them; that there is no precept enjoining it, or directing to the observation of it; nor any instance, example, or precedent encouraging such a practice; nor any thing there laid or done, that gives any reason to believe it is the will of God that such a rite should be observed; wherefore it will appear to be entirely an human

invention, and as such to be rejected. The title-page of this work promises an *Illustration and Confirmation* of the said divine right; but if there is no such thing, as it is certain there is not, the author must have a very difficult task to illustrate and confirm it; how far he has succeeded in this undertaking, will be the subject of our following inquiry.

The writer of the pamphlet under consideration has chose to put his thoughts together on this subject, in the form of a *dialogue* between a *minister* and one of his *parishioners*, or *neighbors*. Every man, that engages in a controversy, may write in what form and method he will; but a by-stander will be ready to conclude, that such a way of writing is chose, that he may have the opportunity of making his antagonist speak what he pleases; and indeed he would have acted a very unwise part, had he put arguments and objections into his mouth, which he thought he could not give any tolerable answer to; but, inasmuch as he allows the person the conference is held with, to be not only *a man of piety and ingenuity, but of considerable reading*, he ought to have represented him throughout as answering to such a character; whereas, whatever piety is shewn in this debate, there is very little *ingenuity* discovered; since, for the most part, he is introduced as admitting the weak reasonings of the minister, at once, without any further controversy; or if he is allowed to attempt a defense of the cause and principles he was going over to, he is made to do it in a very mean and trifling manner; and, generally speaking, what he offers is only to lead on to the next thing that presents itself in this dispute: Had he been a man of considerable reading, or had he read Mr. *Stennett*, and some others of the Antipaedobaptist authors, as is said he had, which had occasioned his doubt about his baptism, he would have known what answers and objections to have made to the minister's reasonings, and what arguments to have used in favor of adult-baptism, and against infant-sprinkling. What I complain of is, that he has not made his friend to act in character, or to answer the account he is pleased to give of him: However he has a double end in all this management; on the one hand, by representing his antagonist as a man of ingenuity and considerable reading, he would bethought to have done a very great exploit in convincing and silencing such a man, and reducing him to the acknowledgment of the truth; and, on the other hand, by making him talk so weakly, and so easily yielding to his arguments, he has acted a wise part, and taken care not to suffer him to say such things, as he was not able to answer; and which, as before observed,

seems to be the view of writing in this dialogue-way.

## CHAPTER 2

### *Of the Consequences of renouncing Infant baptism.*

---

The minister, in order to frighten his parishioner out of his principle of adult-baptism, he was inclined to, suggests terrible consequences that would follow upon it; as his renouncing his baptism in his infancy; vacating the covenant between God and him, he was brought into thereby; renouncing all other ordinances of the gospel, as the ministry of the Word, and the sacrament of the Lord's-Supper; that upon this principle, Christ, for many ages, must have forsaken his church, and not made good his promise of his presence in this ordinance; and that there could be no such thing as baptism in the world now, neither among Paedobaptists, nor Antipaedobaptists.

*1st*, The first dreadful consequence following upon a man's espousing the principle of believers baptism, is a renunciation of his baptism; not of the ordinance of baptism, that he cannot be laid to reject and renounce; for when he embraces the principle of adult-baptism, and acts up to it, he receives the true baptism, which the word of God warrants and directs unto, as will be seen hereafter: But it seems it is a renunciation of his baptism in his infancy; and what of that? it should be proved first, that that is baptism, and that it is good and valid, before it can be charged as an evil to renounce it; it is right to renounce that which has no warrant or foundation in the word of God: But what aggravates this supposed evil is, that in it a person in his early infancy is dedicated to God the Father, Son, and holy Ghost; it may be asked, by whom is the person in his infancy dedicated to God, when baptism is said to be administered to him? Not by himself, for he is ignorant of the whole transaction; it must be either by the minister, or his parents: The parents indeed desire the child may be baptized, and the minister uses such a form of words, *I baptize thee in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the holy Ghost*; but what dedication is here made by the one, or by the other? However, seeing there is no warrant from the word of God, either for such baptism, or dedication; a renunciation of it need not give any uneasiness to any person so baptized and dedicated.

*2dly*, To embrace adult-baptism, and to renounce infant-baptism, is to vacate the covenant into which a person is brought by his baptism, page 4 by which covenant the writer of the dialogue means the covenant of grace, as appears

from all his after-reasonings from thence to the right of infants to baptism.

1. He supposes that unbaptized persons are, as to their external and visible relation, strangers to the covenants of promise; are not in covenant with God; not so much as visible Christians; but in a state of heathenism; without hope of salvation, but from the uncovenanted mercies of God, pages 4, 5, 6. The covenant of grace was made from everlasting; and all interested in it were in covenant with God, as early, and so previous to their baptism, as to their secret relation God-wards; but this may be thought to be sufficiently guarded against by the restriction and limitation, "as to external and visible relation:" But I ask, are not all truly penitent persons, all true believers in Christ, though not as yet baptized, in covenant with God, even as to their external and visible relation to him, which faith makes manifest? Were not the three thousand in covenant with God visibly, when they were pricked to the heart, and repented of their sins, and gladly received the word of the gospel, promising the remission of them, though not as yet baptized? Was not the Eunuch in covenant with God? or was he in a state of heathenism, when he made that confession of his faith, *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*, previous to his going down into the water, and being baptized? Were the believers in *Samaria*, or those at *Corinth*, in an uncovenanted state, before the one were baptized by *Philip*, or the other by the apostle *Paul*? Was *Lydia*, whose heart the Lord opened, and who attended to the things that were spoken; and the Jailer, that believed and rejoiced in God, with all his house, in an uncovenanted state, before they submitted to the ordinance of baptism? Are there not some persons, that have never been baptized, of whom there is reason to believe they have an interest in the covenant of grace? Were not the Old Testament saints in the covenant of grace, before this rite of baptism took place? Should it be said, that circumcision did that then, which baptism does now, enter persons into covenant, which equally wants proof, as this; it may be replied, that only commenced at a certain period of time; was not always in use, and belonged to a certain people only; whereas there were many before that, who were in the covenant of grace, and many after, and even at the same time it was enjoined, who yet were not circumcised; of which more hereafter: From all which it appears, how false that assertion is.

2. That a man is brought into covenant by baptism, as this writer affirms; seeing the covenant of grace is from everlasting; and those that are put into it, were put into it so soon; and that by God himself, whose sole prerogative it is.

Parents cannot enter their children into covenant, nor children themselves, nor ministers by sprinkling water upon them; it is an act of the sovereign grace of God, who says, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people*: The phrase of *bringing into the bond of the covenant*, is but once used in scripture; and then it is ascribed to God, and not to the creature; not to any act done by him, or done to him (Ezek. 20:37), and much less,

**3.** Can this covenant be vacated, or made null and void, by renouncing infant-baptism: The covenant of grace is ordered in all things, and sure; its promises are Yea and Amen in Christ; its blessings are the sure mercies of *David*; God will not break it, and men cannot make it void; it is to everlasting, as well as from everlasting; those that are once in it can never be put out of it; nor can it be vacated by any thing done by them. This man must have a strange notion of the covenant of grace, to write after this rate; he is said to have wrote against the Arminians with some success; if he has, it must be in a different manner from this; for upon this principle, that the covenant of grace may be made null and void by an act of the creature, how will the election of God stand sure? or the promise of the covenant be sure to all the seed? What will become of the doctrine of the faints perseverance? or of the certainty of salvation to those that are chosen, redeemed, and called?

**3dly**, Another consequence said to follow, on espousing the principle of adult-baptism, and renouncing that of infants, is a renouncing all other ordinances of the gospel, as the ministry of the word, and the sacrament of the Lord's supper, practically denying the influences of the Spirit in them, and all usefulness, comfort and communion by them. All which this author endeavors to make out, by observing, that if infant-baptism is a nullity, then those, who have received no other, if ministers, have no right to administer sacred ordinances, being unbaptized; and, if private persons, they have no right to partake of the Lord's supper, for the same reason; and so all public ordinances are just such a nullity as infant-baptism; and all the influence: of the Spirit, in conversion, comfort, and communion, by them, must be practically denied, pages 5, 6. To which may be replied, that though upon the principle of adult-baptism, as necessary to the communion of churches, it follows, that no unbaptized person is regularly called to the preaching of the word, and administration ordinances, or can be a regular communicant; yet it does not follow, that a man that renounces infant baptism, and embraces believers baptism, must renounce all other ordinances, and look upon them



just such nullities as infant-baptism is, and deny all the comfort and communion he has had in them; because the word may be truly preached, and the ordinance of the Lord's supper be duly administered, by an irregular man, and even by a wicked man; yea, may be made useful for conversion and comfort; for the use and efficacy of the word and ordinances, do not depend upon the minister or administrator; but upon God himself, who can, and does sometimes, make use of his own word for conversion, though preached by an irregular, and even an immoral man; and of his own ordinances, for comfort, by such an one, to his people, though they may be irregular and deficient in some things, through ignorance and inadvertency.

*4thly*, Another consequence following upon this principle, as supposed, is, that if infant-baptism is no institution of Christ, and to be rejected, then the promise of Christ, to be with his ministers in the administration of the ordinance of baptism, to the end of the world (Matthew 28:19, 20), is not made good; since for several ages, even from the fourth to the sixteenth century, infant baptism universally obtained, pages 6-8. To which the following answer may be returned; That the period of time pitched upon for the prevalence of infant, baptism is very unhappy for the credit of it, both as to the beginning and end; as to the beginning of it, in the fourth century, a period in which corruption in doctrine and discipline flowed into the church, and the man of sin was ripening apace, for his appearance; and likewise as to the end, the time of the reformation, in which such abuses began to be corrected: The whole is a period of time, in which the true church of Christ began gradually to disappear, or to be hidden, and at last *fled into the wilderness*; where she has not been forsaken of Christ, but is, and *will be, nourished, for a time, and times, and half a time*; this period includes the gross darkness of popery, and all the depths of Satan; and which to suffer was no ways contrary to the veracity of Christ, in his promise to be with his true church and faithful ministers to the end of the world. Christ has no where promised, that his doctrines and ordinances should not be perverted; but, on the contrary, has given clear and strong intimations, that there should be a general falling-away and departure from the truth and ordinances of the gospel, to make way for the revelation of antichrist; and though it will be allowed, that during this period infant-baptism prevailed, yet it did not universally obtain. There were witnesses for adult-baptism in every age; and Christ had a church in the wilderness, in obscurity, at this time; namely, in the

valleys of *Piedmont*; who were, from the beginning of the apostasy, and witnessed against it, and bore their testimony against infant-baptism, as will be seen hereafter, and with these his presence was; nor did he promise it to any, but in the faithful ministration of his word and ordinances, which he has always made good; and it will lie upon this writer and his friends, to prove the gracious presence of Christ in the administration of infant-baptism.

**5thly**, It is said, that, upon these principles, rejecting infant-baptism, and espousing believers-baptism, it is not possible there should be any baptism at all in the world, either among Paedobaptists or Antipaedobaptists; the reason of this consequence is, because the madmen of *Munster*, from whom this writer dates the first opposition to infant-baptism; and the first Antipaedobaptists in *England*, had no other baptism than what they received in their infancy; that adult-baptism must first be administered by unbaptized persons, if infant-baptism is no ordinance of Christ, but a mere nullity; and so by such as had no claim to the gospel ministry, nor right to administer ordinances; and consequently the whole succession of the Antipaedobaptist churches must remain unbaptized to this day; and so no more baptism among them, than among the Paedobaptists, until there is a new commission from heaven, to renew and restore this ordinance, which is, at present, lost out of the world, pages 6, 8, 9. As for the madmen of *Munster*, as this writer calls them, and the rife of the Antipaedobaptists from them, and what is said of them, I shall consider in the next chapter.

The English Antipaedobaptists, when they were first convinced of adult-baptism, and of the mode of administering it by immersion, and of the necessity of letting a reformation on foot in this matter, met together, and consulted about it: when they had some difficulties thrown in their way, about a proper administrator to begin this work; some were for fending messengers to foreign churches, who were the successors, of the ancient *Waldenses* in *France* and *Bohemia*; and accordingly did send over some, who being baptized, returned and baptized others. And this is a sufficient answer to all that this writer has advanced. But others thought that this was a needless scruple, and looked too much like the popish notion of an uninterrupted succession, and a right conveyed through that to administer ordinances; and therefore judged, in such a care as theirs, there being a general corruption as to this ordinance, that an unbaptized person, who appeared to be otherwise qualified to preach the word, and administer ordinances, should begin it; and

justified themselves upon the same principles that other reformers did, who, without any regard to an uninterrupted succession, let up new churches, ordained pastors, and administered ordinances: It must be owned, that in ordinary cases, he ought to be baptized himself, that baptizes another, or preaches the word, or administers other ordinances; but in an extraordinary case, as this of beginning a reformation from a general corruption, where such an administrator cannot be had, it may be done; nor is it essential to the ordinance that there should be such an administrator, or otherwise it could never have been introduced into the world at all at first; the first administrator must be an unbaptized person, as *John* the Baptist was.

According to this man's train of reasoning, there never was, nor could be any valid baptism in the world; for *John*, the first administrator, being an unbaptized person, the whole succession of churches from that time to this day must remain unbaptized. It will be said, that he had a commission from heaven to begin this new ordinance; and a like one should be shewn for the restoration of it. To which I answer, that there being a plain direction for the administration of this ordinance, in the Word, there was no need of a new commission to restore it from a general corruption; it was enough for any person, sensible of the corruption, to attempt a reformation, and to administer it in the right way, who was satisfied of his call from God to preach the gospel, and administer ordinances, according to the word. I shall close this chapter with the words of *Zanchy*,<sup>[1]</sup> a Protestant Divine, and a Paedobaptist, and a man of as great learning and judgment, as any among the first reformers:

"It is a fifth question, he says, proposed by *Augustin*, *contra Parmen.* 1.2. c. 13. col. 42 but not solved, whether he that never was baptized may baptize another; and of this question he says, that is, Austin, nothing is to be affirmed without the authority of a council. Nevertheless, *Thomas (Aquinas)* takes upon him to determine it, from an answer of Pope Nicholas, to the inquiries of the Dutch, as it is had in *Decr. de Consec.* dist. 4. can. 22"

where we thus read;

"You say, by a certain Jew, whether a Christian or a heathen, you know not, (that is, whether baptized or unbaptized) many were baptized in your country, and you desire to know what is to be done

in this care; truly if they are baptized in the name of the holy Trinity, or only in the name of Christ, they ought not to be baptized again."

And *Thomas* confirms the same, by a laying of *Isidore*, which likewise is produced in the same distinction, can. 21 where he says,

"that the Spirit of Christ ministers the grace of baptism, though he be a heathen that baptizes. Wherefore, says *Thomas*, if there should be two persons not yet baptized, who believe in Christ, and. They have no lawful administrator by whom they may be baptized, one may, without sin, be baptized by the other; the necessity of death obliging to it. All this, adds *Zanchy*, proceeds from hence, that they thought water-baptism absolutely necessary; but what cannot be determined by the word of God, we should not dare to determine. But, says he, I will propose a question, which, I think, may be easily answered; supposing a Turk in a country where he could not easily come at Christian churches; he, by reading the New Testament, is favored with the knowledge of Christ, and with faith; he teaches his family, and converts that to Christ, and so others likewise; the question is, whether he may baptize them whom he has converted to Christ, though he himself never was baptized with water-baptism? I do not doubt but he may; and, on the other hand, take care that he himself be baptized, by another of them that were converted by him; the reason is, because he is a minister of the Word, extraordinarily raised up by Christ; so that such a minister may, with them, by the consent of the church, appoint a colleague, and take care that he be baptized by him."

The reason which *Zanchy*, gives, will, I think, hold good in the case of the first Antipaedobaptists in *England*.

## CHAPTER 3

### *Of the Antiquity of Infant-baptism; when first debated; and concerning the Waldenses.*

---

The minister, in this dialogue, in order to stagger his neighbor about the principle of adult-baptism, he had espoused, suggests to him, that infant-baptism did universally obtain in the church, even from the apostles times; that undoubted evidence may be had from the ancient fathers, that it constantly obtained in the truly primitive church; and that it cannot be pretended that this practice was called in question, or made matter of debate in the church, till the madmen of *Munster* set themselves against it; and affirms, that the ancient *Waldenses* being in the constant practice of adult-baptism, is a mere imagination, a chimerical one, and to be rejected as a groundless figment, pages 7, 9.

**I.** This writer intimates, that the practice of infant-baptism universally and constantly obtained in the truly primitive church. The truly primitive church is the church in the times of Christ and his apostles: The first Christian church was that at *Jerusalem*, which consisted of such as were made the disciples of Christ, and baptized; first made disciples by Christ, and then baptized by his apostles; *for Jesus himself baptized none*, only they baptized by his order (John 4:1, 2; Acts 1:15). This church afterwards greatly increased; three thousand persons, who were pricked to the heart under *Peter's* ministry, repented of their sins, and joyfully received the good news of pardon and salvation by Christ, were baptized, and added to it; these were adult persons; nor do we read of any one infant being baptized, while this truly primitive church subsisted. The next Christian church was that at *Samaria*; for that there was a church there, is evident from Acts 9:31. This seems to have been founded by the ministry of *Philip*; the original members of it were men and women baptized by *Philip*, upon a profession of their faith in the things preached by him, concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 8:12); nor is there the least intimation given that infant-baptism at all obtained in this church. Another truly primitive Christian church, was the church at *Philippi*; the foundation of which was said in the two families of *Lydia* and the Jailer, and which furnish out no proof of infant-baptism obtaining here, as we shall see hereafter; for *Lydia's* household are

called brethren, whom the apostles visited and comforted; and the Jailer's household were such as were capable of hearing the word, and who believed in Christ, and rejoiced in God as well as he (Acts 16:14, 15, 32-34, 40). So that it does not appear that infant-baptism obtained in this church. The next Christian church we read of, and which was a truly primitive one, is the church at *Corinth*, and consisted of persons who, hearing the apostle *Paul* preach the gospel, believed in Christ, whom he preached, and were baptized (Acts 18:8): but there is no mention made of any infant being baptized, either now or hereafter, in this truly primitive church state. These are all the truly primitive churches of whole baptism we have any account in the *Acts of the apostles*, excepting *Cornelius*, and his family and friends, who very probably founded a church at *Caesarea*; and the twelve disciples at *Ephesus*, who very likely joined to the church there, and who are both instances of adult-baptism (Acts 10:48; Acts 19:1-7). Let it be made appear, if it can, that any one infant was ever baptized: in any of the above truly primitive churches, or in any other, during the apostolic age, either at *Antioch* or *Thessalonica*, at some, or at *Colosse*, or any other primitive church of those times. But though this cannot be made out from the writings of the New Testament, we are told,

**II.** That undoubted evidence may be had from the ancient fathers, that infant-baptism constantly obtained in the truly primitive church. Let us a little inquire into this matter:

**1.** The Christian writers of the first century, besides the evangelists and apostles, are *Barnabas*, *Herman*, *Clemens Romanus*, *Ignatius* and *Polycarp*. As to the two first of there, *Barnabas* and *Hermas*, the learned Mr. *Stennett*<sup>[2]</sup> has cited some passages out of them; and after him Mr. *David Rees*;<sup>[3]</sup> for which reason, I forbear transcribing them; which are manifest proofs of adult-baptism, and that as performed by immersion; they represent the persons baptized, the one<sup>[4]</sup> as hoping in the cross of Christ, the other<sup>[5]</sup> as having heard the word, and being willing to be baptized in the name of the Lord; and both as going down into the water, and coming up out of it. *Clemens Romanus* wrote an epistle to the *Corinthians*, still extant; but there is not a syllable in it about infant-baptism. *Ignatius* wrote epistles to several churches, as well as to particular persons; but makes no mention of the practice of infant-baptism in any of them: what he lays of baptism, favors adult-baptism; since he speaks of it as attended with faith, love and patience: "Let your baptism, says he<sup>[6]</sup> remain as armor; faith as an helmet, love as a



spear, and patience as whole armor." *Polycarp* wrote an epistle to the *Philippians*, which is yet in being; but there is not one word in it about infant-baptism. So that it is so far from being true, that there is undoubted evidence from the ancient fathers, that this practice universally and constantly obtained in the truly primitive church, that there is no evidence at all that it did obtain, in any respect, in the first century, or apostolic age; and which is the only period in which the truly primitive church of Christ can be said to subsist. There is indeed a work called *The constitutions of the apostles*, and sometimes the *constitutions of Clemens*, because he is laid to be the compiler of them; and another book of *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, ascribed to *Dionysius the Areopagite*, out of which, passages have been cited in favor of infant-baptism; but there are manifestly of later date than they pretend to, and were never written by the persons whose names they bear, and are condemned as spurious by learned men, and are given up as such by Dr. *Wall*, in his *History of Infant Baptism*.<sup>[7]</sup>

2. The Christian writers of the second century, which are extant, are *Justin Martyr*, *Athenagoras*, *Theophilus of Antioch*, *Tatian*, *Minutius Felix*, *Irenaeus*, and *Clemens of Alexandria*; and of all these writers, there is not one that lays any thing of infant-baptism; there is but one pretended to, and that is *Irenaeus*, and but a single passage out of him; and that depends upon a single word, the signification of which is doubtful at best; and besides the passage is only a translation of *Irenaeus*, and not expressed in his own original words; and the chapter, from whence it is taken, is by some learned men judged to be spurious; since it advances a notion inconsistent with that ancient writer, and notoriously contrary to the books of the evangelists, making Christ to live to be fifty years old, yea, to live to a senior age: The passage, produced in favor of infant-baptism, is this; speaking of Christ, he says,<sup>[8]</sup>

"Sanctifying every age, by that likeness it had to him; for he came to save all by himself; all, I say, *qui per eum renascuntur in Deum*, "who by him are born again unto God;" infants, and little ones, and children, and young men, and old men; therefore he went through every age, and became an infant, to infants sanctifying infants; and to little ones a little one, sanctifying those: of that age; and likewise became an example of piety, righteousness, and subjection."

Now, the question is about the word *renascuntur*, whether it is to be rendered

*born again*, which is the literal sense of the word, or *baptized*; the true sense of *Irenaeus* seems to be this, that Christ came to fare all that are regenerated by his grace and spirit; and none but they, according to his own words (John 3:3, 5), and that by assuming human nature, and parting through the several stages of life, he has sanctified it, and let an example to men of every age. And this now is all the evidence, the undoubted evidence of infant-baptism, from the fathers of the first two centuries; it would be easy to produce passages out of the above writers, in favor of believers-baptism; I shall only cite one out of the first of them; the account, that *Justin Martyr* gave to the emperor *Antoninus Pius* of the Christians of his day; though it has been cited by Mr. *Stennett* and Mr. *Rees*, I shall choose to transcribe it; because, as Dr. *Wall* says,<sup>[9]</sup> it is the most ancient account of the way of baptizing next the scripture.

"And now, says *Justin*,<sup>[10]</sup> we will declare after what manner, when we were renewed by Christ, we devoted ourselves unto God; lest, omitting this, we should seem to act a bad part in this declaration. As many, as are persuaded, and believe the things, taught and said by us, to be true, and promise to live according to them, are instructed to pray, and to ask, fasting, the forgiveness of their past sins of God, we praying and fasting together with them. After that, they are brought by us where water is, and they are regenerated in the same way of regeneration, as we have been regenerated; for they are then washed in water, in the name of the Father and Lord God of all, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the holy Spirit."

There is a work, which bears the name of *Justin*, called *Answers to the orthodox, concerning some necessary questions*; to which we are sometimes referred for a proof of infant-baptism; but the book is spurious, and none of *Justin's*, as many learned men have observed; and as Dr. *Wall* allows; and is thought not to have been written before the fifth century. So stands the evidence for infant-baptism, from the ancient fathers of the first two centuries.

3. As to the third century, it will be allowed, that it was spoken of in it; though as loon as it was mentioned, it was opposed; and the very first man that mentions it, speaks against it; namely, *Tertullian*. The truth of the matter is, that infant-baptism was moved for in the third century; got footing and



establishment in the fourth and fifth; and so prevailed until the time of the reformation: Though, throughout these several centuries, there were testimonies bore to adult-baptism; and at several times, certain persons rose up, and opposed infant-baptism; which brings me,

**III.** To consider what our author affirms, that it cannot be pretended that this practice was called in question, or made matter of debate in the church, until the madmen of *Munster* let themselves against it, page 7. Let us examine this matter, and,

**1.** It should be observed, that the disturbances in *Germany*, which our Paedobaptist writers so often refer to in this controversy about baptism, and so frequently reproach us with, were first begun in the wars of the boors, by such as were Paedobaptists, and them only; first by the Papists, some few years before the reformation; and after that, both by Lutherans and Papists, on account of civil liberties; among whom, in process of time, some few of the people called Anabaptists mingled themselves; a people that scarce in any thing agree with us, neither in their civil, nor religious principles; nor even in baptism itself; for if we can depend on those that wrote the history of them, and against them; they were for repeating adult-baptism, not performed among them; yea, that which was administered among themselves, when they removed their communion to another society; nay, even in the same community, when an excommunicated person was received again;<sup>[11]</sup> besides, if what is reported of them is true, as it may be, their baptism was performed by sprinkling, which we cannot allow to be true baptism; it is laid, that when a community of them was satisfied with the person's faith and conversation, who proposed for baptism, the payor took water into his hand, and sprinkled it on the head of him that was to be baptized, using these words, *I baptize thee in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the holy Ghost*.<sup>[12]</sup> And even the disturbances in *Munster*, a famous city in *Westphalia*, were first begun by *Bernard Rotman*, a Paedobaptism minister of the Lutheran persuasion, assisted by other ministers of the reformation, in opposition to the Papists in the year 1532; and it was not till the year 1533, that *John Matthias* of *Harlem*, and *John Bocolodus* of *Leyden* came to this place;<sup>[13]</sup> who, with *Knipperdolling* and others, are, I suppose, the madmen of *Munster* this writer means; and he may call them madmen, if he pleases; I shall not contend with him about it; they were mad notions which they held, and mad actions they performed; and both dip avowed by the people who are now called

Anabaptists; though it is not reasonable to suppose, that there were the only men concerned in that affair, or that the number of their followers should increase to such a degree in so small a time, as to make such a revolution in so large a city: However, certain it is, that it was not their principle about baptism, that led them into such extravagant notion, and actions: But what I take notice of all this for, is chiefly to observe the date of the confusions and distractions, in which there madmen were concerned; which were from the year 1533 to 1536: And our next inquiry therefore is, whether there was any debate about the practice of infant-baptism before this time. And,

2. It will appear, that it was frequently debated, before these men set themselves against it, or acted the mad part they did: In the years 1532 and 1528, there were public disputations at *Berne* in *Switzerland*, between the ministers of the church there and some Anabaptist teacher;<sup>[14]</sup> in the years 1529, 1527 and 1525, *Oecolampadius* had various disputes with people of this name at *Basil* in the same country;<sup>[15]</sup> in the year 1525, there was a dispute at *Zurich* in the same country about Paedobaptism, between *Zwinglius*, one of the first reformers, and *Balthasar Hubmeierus*,<sup>[16]</sup> who afterwards was burnt, and his wife drowned at *Vima*, in the year 1528; of whom *Meshovius*,<sup>[17]</sup> though a Papist, give, this character; that he was from his childhood brought up in learning; and for his singular erudition was honored with a degree in divinity; was a very eloquent man, and read in the scriptures, and fathers of the church. *Hoornbeck*<sup>[18]</sup> calls him a famous and eloquent preacher, and says he was the first of the reformed preachers at *Waldshut*. There were several disputations with other, in the same year at this place; upon which an edict was made by the senate at *Zurich*, forbidding rebaptization, under the penalty of being fined a silver mark, and of being imprisoned, and even drowned, according to the nature of the offense. And in the year 1526, or 1527, according to *Hoornbeck*, *Felix Mans*, or *Mentz*, was drowned at *Zurich*; this man, *Meshovius* says,<sup>[19]</sup> whom he calls *Felix Mantscher*, was of a noble family; and both he, and *Conrad Grebel*, whom he calls *Cunrad Grebbe*, who are said to give the first rise to Anabaptism at *Zurich*, were very learned men, and well skilled in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages. And the same writer affirms, that Anabaptism was set on foot at *Wittenberg*, in the year 1522, by *Nicholas Pelargus*, or *Stork*, who had companions with him of very great learning, as *Carolostadius*, *Philip Melancthon*, and others; this, he says, was done, whilst *Luther* was lurking as an exile in the castle of *Wartburg* in

*Thuringia*; and that when he returned from thence to *Wittenberg* he banished *Carolostadius*, *Pelargus*, *More*, *Didymus*, and others,<sup>[20]</sup> and only received *Melancthon* again. This carries the opposition to Paedobaptism within five years of the reformation, begun by *Luther*; and certain it is, there were many and great debates about infant-baptism at the first of the reformation, years before the affair of *Munster*. And evident it is, that some of the first reformers were inclined to have attempted a reformation in this ordinance, though they, for reasons best known to themselves, dropped it; and even *Zwinglius* himself, who was a bitter persecutor of the people called Anabaptists afterwards, was once of the same mind himself, and against Paedobaptism. But,

3. It will appear, that this was a matter of debate, and was opposed before the time of the reformation. There was a set of people in *Bohemia*, near a hundred years before that, who appear to be of the same persuasion with the people, called Anabaptists; for in a letter, written by *Costelecus* out of *Bohemia* to *Erasmus*, dated October 10, 1519,<sup>[21]</sup> among other things said of them, which agree with the said people, this is one; "such as come over to their sect, must every one be baptized anew in meer water;" the writer of the letter calls them *Pyghards*; so named, he says, from a certain refugee, that came thither ninety-seven years before the date of the letter. Pope *Innocent* the third, under whom was the Lateran council, A.D. 1215, has, in the decretals, a letter, in answer to a letter from the bishop of *Arles* in *Provence*, which had represented to him,<sup>[22]</sup> that

"some Heretics there had taught, that it was to no purpose to baptize children, since they could have no forgiveness of sins thereby, as having no faith, charity, etc."

So that it is a clear point, that there were some that let themselves against infant-baptism in the thirteenth century, three hundred years before the reformation; yea, in the twelfth century there were some that opposed Paedobaptism. Mr. *Fax*, the martyrologist, relates from the history of *Robert Guisburne*,<sup>[23]</sup> that two men, *Gerhardus* and *Dulcinus*, in the reign of *Henry* the second, about the year of our Lord 1158; who, he supposes, had received some light of knowledge of the *Waldenses*, brought thirty with them into *England*; who, by the king and the prelates, were all burnt in the forehead, and so driven out of the realm; and after were slain by the Pope. *Rapin*<sup>[24]</sup>

calls them German Heretics, and places their coming into *England* at the year 1166: But *William* of *Newbury*<sup>[25]</sup> calls them *Publicans*, and only mentions *Gerhardus*, as at the head of them; and whom he allows to be somewhat learned, but all the rest very illiterate, and says they came from *Gascoigne*; and being convened before a council, held at *Oxford* for that purpose, and interrogated concerning articles of faith, said perverse things concerning the divine sacraments, detesting holy baptism, the Eucharist and marriage: And his annotator, out of a manuscript of *Radulph Picardus*, the monk, shews, that the Heretics, called *Publicans*, affirm, that we must not pray for the dead; that the suffrages of the saints were not to be asked; that they believe not purgatory; with many other things; and particularly, *afferunt isti parvulos non baptisandos donec ad intelligibilem perveniant etatem*; "they assert that infants are not to be baptized, till they come to the age of understanding."<sup>[26]</sup>

In the year 1147, *St Bernard* wrote a letter to the earl of *St Gyles*, complaining of his harboring *Henry*, an Heretic; and among other things he is charged with by him, are there;

"the infants of Christians are hindered from the life of Christ, the grace of baptism being denied them; nor are they suffered to come to their salvation, though our Savior compassionately cries out in their behalf, *Suffer little children to come unto me*, etc."

and, about the same time, writing upon the *Canticles*, in his 65th and 66th sermons, he takes notice of a sort of people, he calls *Apostolici*; and who, perhaps, were the followers of *Henry*; who, says he, laugh at us for baptizing infants;<sup>[27]</sup> and among the tenets which he ascribes to them, and attempts to confute, this is the first, "Infants are not to be baptized." In opposition to which, he affirms, that infants are to be baptized in the faith of the church; and endeavors, by instances, to show, that the faith of one is profitable to others;<sup>[28]</sup> which he attempts from *Matthew 9:2* and *Matthew 15:28*; 1 *Timothy 2:15*.

In the year 1146, *Peter Bruis*, and *Henry* his follower, set themselves against infant-baptism. *Petrus Cluniacensis*, or *Peter* the Abbot of *Clugny*, wrote against them; and among other errors he imputes to them, are there:

"That infants are not baptized, or saved by the faith of another, but ought to be baptized and saved by their own faith; or, that baptism without their own faith does not save; and that those, that are

baptized in infancy, when grown up, should be baptized again; nor are they then rebaptized, but rather rightly baptized:" [29]

And that there men did deny infant-baptism, and pleaded for adult-baptism, Mr. *Stennett*[30] has proved from *Cassander* and *Prateolus*, both Paedobaptists: And Dr. *Wall*[31] allows these two men to be Antipaedobaptists; and says, they were "the first Antipaedobaptist preachers that ever let up a church, or society of men, holding that opinion against infant-baptism, and rebaptizing such as had been baptized in infancy;" and who also observes,[32] that the *Lateran*[33] council, under *Innocent* the II, 1139, did condemn *Peter Bruis*, and *Arnold of Brescia*, who seems to have been a follower of *Bruis*, for rejecting infant-baptism: Moreover, in the year 1140, or a little before it, *Evervinus*, of the diocese of *Cologne*, wrote a letter to *St Bernard*; in which he gives him an account of some heretics, lately discovered in that country; of whom he says,

"they condemn the sacraments, except baptism only; and this only in those who are come to age; who, they say, are baptized by Christ himself whoever be the minister of the sacraments; they do not believe infant-baptism; alleging that place of the gospel, *he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.*" [34]

There seem also to be the disciples of *Peter Bruit*, who began to preach about the year 1126; so that it is out of all doubt, that this was a matter of debate, four hundred years before the madmen of *Munster* let themselves against it: And a hundred years before there, there were two men, *Bruno*, bishop of *Angiers*, and *Berengarius*, archdeacon of the same church, who began to spread their particular notions about the year 1035; which chiefly respected the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's-Supper. What they said about the former, may be learned from the letter sent by *Deodwinus*, bishop of *Liege*, to *Henry I. King of France*; in which are the following words:[35]

"There is a report come out of *France*, and which goes through all *Germany*, that there two (*Bruno* and *Berengarius*) do maintain, that the Lord's body (the Host) is not the body, but a shadow and figure of the Lord's body; and that they do disannul lawful marriages; and, as far as in them lies, overthrow the baptism of infants:"

And from *Guimundus*, bishop of *Aversa*, who wrote against *Berengarius*, who says, "that he did not teach rightly concerning the baptism of infants, and



concerning marriage."<sup>[36]</sup> Mr. *Stennett*<sup>[37]</sup> relates from Dr. *Allix*, a passage concerning one *Gundulphus* and his followers, in Italy; divers of whom, *Gerard*, bishop of *Cambray* and *Arras*, interrogated upon several heads in the year 1025. And, among other things, that bishop mentions the following reason, which they gave against infant-baptism;

"because to an infant, that neither wills, nor runs, that knows nothing of faith, is ignorant of its own salvation and welfare; in whom there can be no desire of regeneration, or confession; the will, faith and confession of another seem not in the least to appertain."

Dr. *Wall*, indeed, represents these men, the disciples of *Gundulphus*, as Quakers and Manichees in the point of baptism; holding that water-baptism is of no use to any: But it must be affirmed, whatever their principles were, that their argument against infant-baptism was very strong. So then we have testimonies, that Paedobaptism was opposed five hundred years before the affair of *Munster*. And if the Pelagians, Donatists, and Luciferians, so called from *Lucifer Calaritanus*, a very orthodox man, and a great opposer of the Arians, were against infant-baptism, as several Paedobaptist writers affirm; this carries the opposition to it still higher; and indeed it may seem strange, that since it had not its establishment till the times of *Austin*, that there should be none to let themselves against it: And if there were none, how comes it to pass that such a canon should be made in the Milevitan council, under pope *Innocent* the first, according to *Carranza*;<sup>[38]</sup> and in the year 402, as say the Magdeburgensian centuriators;<sup>[39]</sup> or be it in the council at *Carthage*, in the year 418, as says Dr. *Wall*<sup>[40]</sup> which runs thus,

"Also, it is our pleasure, that whoever denies that new-born infants are to be baptized; or says, they are indeed to be baptized for the remission of sins; and yet they derive no original sin from *Adam* to be expiated by the washing of regeneration; (from whence it follows, that the form of baptism for the forgiveness of sins in them, cannot be understood to be true, but false) let him be anathema:"

But if there were none, that opposed the baptism of new-born infants, why should the first part of this canon be made, and an anathema annexed to it? To say, that it respected a notion of a single person in *Cyprian's* time, 150 years before this, that infants were not to be baptized, until eight days old; and that it seems there were some people still of this opinion, wants proof.

But however certain it is, that *Tertullian*<sup>[41]</sup> in the beginning of the third century, opposed the baptism of infants, and dissuaded from it, who is the first writer that makes mention of it: So it appears, that as soon as ever it was set on foot, it became matter of debate; and sooner than this, it could not be: And this was thirteen hundred years before the madmen of *Munster* appeared in the world. But,

**IV.** Let us next consider the practice of the ancient Waldenses, with respect to adult-baptism, which this author affirms to be a chimerical imagination, and groundless figment. It should be observed, that the people called Waldenses, or the Vaudois, inhabiting the valleys of *Piedmont*, have gone under different names, taken from their principal leaders and teachers; and so this of the Waldenses, from *Peter Waldo*, one of their barbs, or pastors; though some think, this name is only a corruption of Vallenses, the inhabitants of the valleys: And certain it is, there was a people there before the times of *Waldo*, and even from the apostles time, that held the pure evangelic truths, and bore a testimony to them in all ages,<sup>[42]</sup> and throughout the dark times of popery, as many learned men have observed; and the sense of there people concerning baptism may be best understood,

**1.** By what their ancient barbs or pastors taught concerning it. *Peter Bruis*, and *Henry* his successor, were both, as *Morland* affirms,<sup>[43]</sup> their ancient barbs and pastors; and from them there people were called Petrobrussians and Henricians; and we have seen already, that there two men were Antipaedobaptists, denied infant-baptism, and pleaded for adult-baptism. *Arnoldus* of *Brixia*, or *Brescia*, was another of their barbs, and is the first mentioned by *Morland*, from whom there people were called Arnoldists. Of this man Dr. *Allix* says,<sup>[44]</sup> that besides being charged with some ill opinions, it was said of him, that he was not found in his sentiments concerning the sacraments of the altar and the baptism of infants; and Dr. *Wall* allows,<sup>[45]</sup> that the Lateran council, under *Innocent* the second, in 1139, did condemn *Peter Bruis*, and *Arnold* of *Brescia*, who seems to have been a follower of *Bruis*, for rejecting infant-baptism, *Lollardo* was another of their barbs, who, as *Morland* says, was in great reputation with them, for having conveyed the knowledge of their doctrine into *England*, where his disciples were known by the name of Lollards; who were charged with holding, that the sacrament of baptism used in the church by water, is but a light matter, and of small effect; that Christian people be sufficiently baptized in the blood of Christ, and need

no water; and that infants be sufficiently baptized, if their parents be baptized before them:[46] All which seem to arise from their denying of infant baptism, and the efficacy of it to take away sin.

2. By their ancient confessions of faith, and other writings which have been published. In one of there, bearing date A.D. 1120, the 12th and 13th articles run thus:[47]

"We do believe that the sacraments are signs of the holy thing, or visible forms of the invisible grace; accounting it good that the faithful sometimes use the said signs, or visible forms, if it may be done. However we believe and hold, that the above said faithful may be saved without receiving the signs aforesaid, in case they have no place, nor any means to use them. We acknowledge no other sacrament but baptism and the Lord's-Supper."

And in another ancient confession, without a date, the 7th article is:[48]

"We believe that in the sacrament of baptism, water is the visible and external sign, which represents unto us that which (by the invisible virtue of God operating) is within us; namely, the renovation of the Spirit, and the mortification of our members in Jesus Christ; *by which also we are received into the holy congregation of the people of God, there protesting and declaring openly our faith and amendment of life.*"

In a tract,[49] written in the language of the ancient inhabitants of the valleys, in the year 1100, called *The Noble Lesson*, are there words; speaking of the apostles, it is observed of them,

"they spoke without fear of the doctrine of Christ; they preached to Jews and Greeks, working many miracles, and *those that believed* they baptized in the name of Jesus Christ."

And in a treatise concerning Antichrist, which contains many sermons of the barbs, collected in the year 1120, and so speaks the sense of their ancient pastors before this time, stands the, following passage:[50]

"The third work of antichrist consists in this, that he attributes the regeneration of the holy Spirit, unto the dead outward work (or faith) *baptizing children in that faith*, and teaching, that thereby baptism and regeneration must be had, and therein he confers and



bellows orders and other sacraments, and groundeth therein all his Christianity, which is against the Holy Spirit."

There are indeed two confessions of theirs, which are said to speak of infant-baptism; but there are of a late date, both of them in the sixteenth century; and the earliest: is not a confession of the *Waldenses* or *Vaudois* in the valleys of *Piedmont*, but of the *Bohemians*, said to be presented to *Ladislaus* king of *Bohemia*, A.D. 1508, and afterwards amplified and explained, and presented to *Ferdinand* king of *Bohemia*, A.D. 1535; and it should be observed, that those people say, that they were fairly called *Waldenses*;<sup>[51]</sup> whereas it is certain there were a people in *Bohemia* that came out of the valleys, and sprung from the old *Waldenses*, and were truly so, who denied infant-baptism, as that sort of them called *Pyghards*, or *Picards*; who, near a hundred years before the reformation, as we have seen by the letter sent to *Erasmus* out of *Bohemia*, rebaptized persons that joined in communion with them; and *Scultetus*,<sup>[52]</sup> in his annals on the year 1528, says, that the united brethren in *Bohemia*, and other godly persons of that time, were rebaptized; not that they patronized the errors of the Anabaptist's, (meaning such that they were charged with which had no relation to baptism) but because they could not see how they could otherwise separate themselves from an unclean world. The other confession is indeed made by the ministers and heads of the churches in the valleys, assembled in *Angrogne*, September 12, 1532.<sup>[53]</sup> Now it should be known, that this was made after that

"*Peter Masson* and *George Morell* were sent into Germany in the year 1530, as *Morland*<sup>[54]</sup> says, to treat with the chief ministers of Germany, namely, *Oecolampadius*, *Bucer*, and others, touching the reformation of their churches; but *Peter Masson* was taken prisoner at *Dijon*."

However, as *Fox* says<sup>[55]</sup>

"*Morell* escaped, and returned alone to *Merindol*, with the books and letters he brought with him from the churches of Germany; and declared to his brethren all the points of his commission; and opened unto them how many and great errors they were in; into the which their old ministers, whom they called *Barbs*, that is to say *Uncles*, had brought them, leading them from the right way of true religion."

After which, this confession was drawn up, signed, and swore to: From hence

we learn, where they might get this notion, which was now become matter of great debate in *Switzerland* and *Germany*; and yet, after all this, I am inclined to think, that the words of the article in the said confession, are to be so understood, as not to relate to infant-baptism: They are these;[56]

"We have but two sacramental signs left us by Jesus Christ; the one is baptism; the other is the *Eucharist*, which we receive, to shew that our perseverance in the faith, is such, as we promised, when we were baptized, being little children."

This phrase, *being little children*, as I think, means, their being little children in knowledge and experience, when they were baptized; since they speak of their receiving the Eucharist, to shew their perseverance in the faith, they then had promised to persevere in: Besides, if this is to be understood of them, as infants in a literal sense; what promise were they capable of making, when such? Should it be said, that "they promised by "their sureties;" it should be observed, that the *Waldenses* did not admit of godfathers and godmothers in baptism; this is one of the abuses their ancient Barbs complained of in baptism, as administered by the Papists.[57]

Besides, in a brief confession of faith, published by the reformed churches of *Piedmont*, so late as A.D. 1655, they have there words in favor of adult-baptism;[58]

"that God does not only instruct and teach us by his word, but has also ordained certain sacraments to be joined with it, *as a means to unite us unto Christ, and to make us partakers of his benefits*. And there are only two of them belonging in common *to all the members of the church* under the New Testament; to wit, baptism and the *Lord's-Supper*; that God has ordained the sacrament of baptism to be a testimony of our adoption, and of our being cleansed from our sins by the blood of Jesus Christ, and renewed in holiness of life:"

Nor is there one word in it of infant-baptism.

Upon the whole, it will be easily seen, what little reason the writer of the dialogue under consideration had to say, that the ancient *Waldenses*, being in the constant practice of adult-baptism, is a chimerical imagination, and a groundless fiction; since there is nothing appears to the contrary, but that they were in the practice of it until the sixteenth century; for what is urged against it, is since that time: And even at that time, there were some, that continued in

the practice of it; for *Ludovicus Vives*, who wrote in the said century, having observed, that

"formerly no person was brought to the holy baptistery, till he was of adult age, and when he both understood what that mythical water meant, and desired to be washed in it, yea, desired it more than once,"

adds the following words;

"I hear, in some cities of Italy, the old custom is still in a great measure preferred."<sup>[59]</sup>

Now, what people should he mean by some cities of *Italy*, unless the remainders of the *Petrobrussians*, or *Waldenses*, as Dr. *Wall* observes,<sup>[60]</sup> who continued that practice in the valleys of *Piedmont*: And it should be observed, that there were different sects, that went by the name of *Waldenses*, and some of them of very bad principles; some of them were *Manichees*, and held other errors: And indeed, it was usual for the Papists in former times, to call all by this name, that dissented from them; so that it need not be wondered at, if some, bearing this name, were for infant-baptism, and others not. The *Vaudois* in the valleys, are the people chiefly to be regarded; and it will not be denied, that of late years infant-baptism has obtained among them: But that the ancient *Waldenses* practiced it, wants proof.

## CHAPTER 4

*The Argument for Infant-baptism, taken from the Covenant made with Abraham, and from Circumcision, the Sign of it, considered.*

---

The minister in this debate, in answer to his neighbor's requiring a plain scripture institution of infant-baptism, tells him; if he would

"consider the covenant of grace, which was made with Abraham, and with *all* his seed, both after the flesh, and after the Spirit, and by God's express command to be sealed to infants, he would there find a sufficient scripture instance for infant-baptism:"

And for this covenant he directs him to Genesis 17:2, 4, 7, 10, 12. He argues, that this covenant was a covenant of grace; that it was made with all *Abraham's* seed, natural and spiritual, Jews and Gentiles; that circumcision was the seal of it; and that the same institution, which requires circumcision to be administered to infants, requires baptism to be also administered to them, that succeeding circumcision, page 10-18. Wherefore,

**First**, The leading inquiry is, whether the covenant made with *Abraham* (Gen. 17), was the covenant of grace; that is, the pure covenant of grace, in distinction from the covenant of works; which is the sense in which it is commonly understood, and in which this writer seems to understand this covenant with *Abraham*; for of it, he says p. 13, "it was the covenant of grace, that covenant by which alone we can have any grounded hope of salvation:" But that it was the covenant of grace, or a pure covenant of grace, must be denied: For,

**1.** It is never called the covenant of grace, nor by any name which shews it to be so; it is called the *covenant of circumcision*, which God is said to give to *Abraham* (Acts 7:8) but not a covenant of grace; circumcision and grace are opposed to one another; circumcision is a work of the law, which they that sought to be justified by, fell from grace (Gal. 5:2-4).

**2.** It seems rather to be a covenant of works, than of grace; for this was a covenant to be kept by men. *Abraham* was to keep it, and his seed after him were to keep it; something was to be done by them; they were to circumcise their flesh; and not only he and his seed were to be circumcised, but all that were born in his house, or bought with his money; and a severe penalty was

annexed to it: In care of neglect, or disobedience, such a soul was to "be cut off from his people" (Gen. 17:9-14). All which favor nothing of a covenant of grace, a covenant by which we can have a grounded hope of salvation, but the contrary.

**3.** This was a covenant that might be broken, and in some instances was (Gen. 17:14); but the covenant of grace cannot be broken; God will not break it (Ps. 89:34), nor man cannot: It is *a covenant ordered in all things, and sure*; it cannot be moved; it stands firmer than hills, or mountains.

**4.** It must be owned, that there were temporal things promised in this covenant, such as a multiplication of *Abraham's* natural seed; a race of kings from him, with many nations, and a possession of the land of *Canaan* (Gen. 17:6, 8). Things which can have nothing to do with the pure covenant of grace, any more than the change of his name from *Abram* to *Abraham* v. 5.

**5.** There were some persons, included in this covenant made with *Abraham*, of whom it cannot be thought they were in the covenant of grace, as *Ishmael*, *Esau*, and others; and on the other hand, there were some, and even living at the time when this covenant was made, and yet were not in it; who, nevertheless, were in the covenant of grace, as *Arphaxad*, *Melchizedek*, *Lot*, and others; wherefore this can never be reckoned the pure covenant of grace.

**6.** The covenant of grace was only made with Christ, as the federal head of it; and who is the only head of the covenant, and of the covenant-ones; wherefore, if the covenant of grace was made with *Abraham*, as the federal head of his natural and spiritual seed, of Jews and Gentiles; then there must be two heads of the covenant of grace, contrary to the nature of such a covenant, and the whole current of scripture: Yea, this covenant of *Abraham's*, so far as it respected his spiritual seed, or spiritual blessings for them, it and the promises were made to Christ (Gal. 3:16). No mere man is capable of covenanting with God, of stipulation and restipulation; for what has man to restipulate with God? The covenant of grace is not made with any single man; and much less with him on the behalf of others: When, therefore, at any time we read of the covenant of grace, being made with a particular person, or with particular persons, it must always be understood of making it manifest to them; of a revelation of the covenant, and of an application of covenant-blessings to them; and not of any original contract with them; for that is only made with them in Christ. To which may be added,

7. That the covenant of grace was made with Christ, and with his people, as considered in him, from everlasting; for so early was Christ set up as the mediator of it; the promise of eternal life in it was before the world was; and those interested in it, were blessed with all spiritual blessings and grace before the foundation of it; now could there be a mediator so early, a promise of eternal life so soon, and blessings of grace provided, and no covenant subsisting? wherefore the covenant made with *Abraham* in time, could not, strictly and properly speaking, be the covenant of grace. But,

8. To shorten this debate, it will be allowed, that the covenant made with *Abraham* was a peculiar covenant, such as was never made with any before, or since; that it was of a mixed kind; that it had in it promises and mercies of a temporal nature, which belonged to his natural seed; and others of a spiritual sort, which belonged to his spiritual seed: The former are more numerous, clear, and distinct; the latter are comprised chiefly in *Abraham's* being *the father of many nations*, or of all, that believe, and in God being a God to him and them (Rom. 4:11, 12, 16, 17). Which observation makes way for the next inquiry,

**Secondly**, With whom this covenant was made, so far as it respected spiritual things, or was a revelation of the covenant of grace; as for the temporal things of this covenant, it does not concern the argument. It is allowed on all hands, that they belonged to *Abraham*, and his natural seed: But the question is, whether this covenant, so far as it may be reckoned a covenant of grace, or a revelation of it, or respected spiritual things, was made with all *Abraham's* seed after the flesh, and with all the natural seed of believing Gentiles? This question consists of two parts,

**1st**, Whether the covenant made with *Abraham*, so far as it was a covenant of grace, was made with all *Abraham's* seed, according to the flesh? Which must be answered in the negative. For,

1. If it was made with all the natural seed of *Abraham*, as such, it must be with his more immediate offspring; and so must be equally made with a mocking and persecuting *Ishmael*, *born after the flesh, the son of the bond-woman*, as with *Isaac*, *born after the Spirit, and the son of the free woman*; and yet we find, that *Ishmael* was excluded from having a share in spiritual blessings, only temporal ones were promised him; and, in distinction and opposition to him, the covenant was established with *Isaac* (Gen. 17:19, 20,



21). Again, if this was the case, it must be equally made with a profane Esau, as with plain-hearted *Jacob*; and yet it is said, *Jacob have I loved*, and *Esau have I hated* (Mal. 1:1, 2).

2. If it was made with all *Abraham's* seed according to the flesh, it must be made with all his remote posterity, and if and good to them in their most corrupt state; it must be made with them who believed not, and whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, and entered not into rest; it must be made with the ten tribes, that revolted from the pure service of God, and who worshipped the calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*; it must be made with the people of the Jews in *Isaiah's* time, when they were *a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that were corrupters*; whose rulers are called the *rulers of Sodom*, and the people *the people of Gomorrah* (Isa. 1:4, 6, 10), it must be made with the Scribes and Pharisees, and that wicked, adulterous, and hypocritical generation of men in the time of our Lord, who were his implacable enemies, and were concerned in his death; who killed him, persecuted his apostles, *pleased not God, and were contrary to all men*. What man, that seriously considers these things, can think that the covenant of grace belonged to these men, at least to all; and especially when he observes, what the apostle says, they are not all Israel, which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children? (Rom. 9:6, 7). Yea,

3. If it was made with all that are the seed of Abraham according to the flesh then it must be made with Ishmaelites and Edomites, as well as with Israelites; with his posterity by *Keturah*, as well as by *Sarah*; with the Midianites and Arabians; with the Turks, as well as with the Jews, since they descended and claim their descent from *Abraham*, as well as these. But,

4. To shut up this argument; this covenant made with *Abraham*, be it a covenant of grace, seeing it could be no more, at most, than a revelation, manifestation, copy, or transcript of it, call it which you will; it can never be thought to comprehend more in it than the original contract, than the eternal covenant between the Father and the Son. Now the only persons interested in the everlasting covenant of grace, are the *chosen of God and precious*; whom he has loved with an everlasting love; gave to his Son to be redeemed by his blood; for whom provision is made in the same covenant for the sanctification of their nature, for the justification of their persons, for the

pardon of their sins, for their perseverance in grace, and for their eternal glory and happiness: So that all that are in that covenant are chosen to grace here, and glory hereafter, and shall certainly enjoy both: they are all secured in the hands of Christ, and are redeemed from sin, law, hell, and death, by his precious blood; and shall be saved in him with an everlasting salvation; they have all of them the laws of God put into their minds, and written on their hearts; they have new hearts and new spirits given them, and the stony heart taken away from them; they have the righteousness of Christ imputed to them; they have their sins forgiven them for his sake, and which will be remembered no more; they have the fear of God put into their hearts, and shall never finally and totally depart from him; but, being called and justified, shall be glorified (Jer. 31:33, 34; 32:40; Ezek. 36:25-27; Rom. 8:30).

Now if this covenant was made with all *Abraham's* natural seed, and comprehends all of them, then they must be all *chosen of God*; whereas there was only a remnant among them, *according to the election of grace* (Rom. 11:5): they must be all given to Christ, and secured in his hands; whereas there were some of them, that were not of his sheep, given him by his Father, and so did not believe in him (John 10:26); they must be all redeemed by his blood; whereas he laid down his life for his sheep, his friends, his church, which all of Abraham's seed could never be said to be: In a word, they must be all regenerated and sanctified, justified and pardoned; must all have the grace of God, and persevere in it to the end, and be all eternally saved; and the same must be said of all the natural seed of believing Gentiles, if they also are all of them in the covenant of grace. But what man, in his senses, will affirm these things? And, upon such a principle, how will the doctrines of personal election, particular redemption, regeneration by efficacious grace, not by blood or the will of man, and the saints' final perseverance, be established?

This Gentleman, whose pamphlet is before me, is said to have written with some success against the Arminians; but sure I am, that no man can write with success against them, and without contradiction to himself, that has imbibed such a notion of the covenant of grace, as this I am militating against.

**2dly**, The other part of the question is, whether the covenant made with Abraham, so far as it was a covenant of grace, was made with all the natural



seed of believing Gentiles? which also must be answered in the negative: For,

**1.** It will be allowed, that this covenant respects *Abraham's* spiritual seed among the Gentiles; even all true believers, all such that walk in the steps of his faith; for he is the Father of all them that believe, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, Jews or Gentiles (Rom. 4:11, 12, 15); but not the natural seed of believing Gentiles. They, indeed, that are of the faith of *Abraham*, are his children in a spiritual sense, and they are blessed with him with spiritual blessings, and are such, as Christ has redeemed by his blood; and they believe in him, and the blessing of *Abraham* comes upon them: But then this spiritual seed of *Abraham* is the same with the spiritual seed of Christ, with whom the covenant was made from everlasting, and to them only does it belong; and to none can spiritual blessings belong, but to a spiritual seed, not a natural one. Let it be proved, if it can, that all the natural seed of believing Gentiles, are the spiritual seed of *Abraham*, and then they will be admitted to have a claim to this covenant. But, though it appears, that believing Gentiles are in this covenant, what clause is there in it, that respects their natural seed, as such? Let it be shown, if it can; by what right and authority, can any believing Gentile pretend to put his natural seed into *Abraham's* covenant? The covenant made with him, as to the temporal part of it, belonged to him, and his natural seed; and with respect to its spiritual part, only to his spiritual seed, whether Jews or Gentiles and not to the natural seed of either of them, as such.

**2.** The covenant made with *Abraham*, and his spiritual seed, takes in many of the seed of unbelieving Gentiles; who being called by grace, and openly believing Christ, are *Abraham's* spiritual seed, with whom the covenant was made: That there are many among the Gentiles born of unbelieving parents, who become true believers in Christ, and so appear to be in the covenant of grace, must be allowed; since many are received as such into the communion of the Paedobaptists, as well as others; and, on the other hand, there are many born of believing Gentiles, who do not believe in Christ, are not partakers of his grace, on whom the spiritual blessings of *Abraham* do not come; and so not in his covenant. Wherefore, by what authority do men put in the infant seed of believing Gentiles, as such, into the covenant, and restrain it to them, and leave out the seed of unbelieving Gentiles; when, on the contrary, God oftentimes takes the one, and leaves the other?

3. That all the natural seed of believing Gentiles cannot be included in the covenant of grace, is manifest, from the reason above given, against all the natural seed of *Abraham* being in it; shewing, that all that are in it are the elect of God, the redeemed of Christ, are effectually called by grace, persevere to the end, and are eternally saved; all which cannot be said of all the natural seed of believing Gentiles: And if all the natural seed of *Abraham* are not in this covenant made with him, as it was a covenant of grace, it can hardly be thought that all the natural seed of believing Gentiles should.

4. Seeing it is so clear a case, that some of the seed of unbelieving Gentiles are in this covenant, and some of the seed of believing Gentiles are not in it, and that it cannot be known who are, until they believe in Christ, and so appear to be *Abraham's* spiritual seed; it must be right to put off their claim to any privilege supposed to arise from covenant interest, until it appear that they have one.

5. After all, covenant interest gives no right to any ordinance, without a positive order and direction from God. So, for instance, with respect to circumcision; on the one hand, there were some persons living at the time that ordinance was instituted, who undoubtedly had an interest in the covenant of grace, as *Shem, Atrphaxad, Lot*, and others, on whom that was not enjoined, and who had no right to use it; and, on the other hand, there have been many that were not in the covenant of grace, who were obliged to it: And so with respect to baptism, it is not covenant interest that gives a right to it; if it could be proved, as it cannot, that all the infant seed of believers, as such, are in the covenant of grace, it would give them no right to baptism, without a positive command for it; the reason is, because a person may be in covenant, and as yet not have the prerequisite to an ordinance, even faith in Christ, and a profession of it; which are necessary to baptism and the Lord's Supper. This leads me on,

*Thirdly*, To another inquiry, whether circumcision was a real of the covenant of grace to *Abraham's* natural seed; the writer, whole performance I am considering, affirms, that it was by God's express command to be sealed to infants; and that circumcision is the real of it p. 10, 36. But this must be denied: circumcision was no seal of the covenant of grace; for,

1. If it was, the covenant of grace, before that took place, must be without a real; the covenant subsisted from everlasting, and the revelation of it was

quickly made after the fall of *Adam*; and there were manifestations of it to particular persons, as *Noah*, and others, before this to *Abraham*, and no circumcision enjoined: Wherefore, from *Adam* to *Abraham*, according to this notion, the covenant must be without a seal; nay, there were some persons living at the time it was instituted, who were in the covenant, yet this was not enjoined them; as it would, if this had been designed as a seal of it.

2. Circumcision, in the institution of it, is called a sign, but not a seal; it is said to be **אוֹת** *Oth*, a *Token*, or *Sign* (Gen. 17:11); but not **חוֹתֶם** *Chothem*, a *Seal*; it was a sign or mark in the flesh, which Abraham's natural seed were to bear, until the promises made in this covenant were accomplished; it was a typical sign of the pollution of human nature, propagated by natural generation, and of cleansing from it by the blood of Christ, and of the inward circumcision of the heart; but did not seal or confirm any spiritual blessing of the covenant, to those on whom this mark or sign was let; it is never called a *seal* throughout the whole Old Testament; and so far is there from being any express command, that the covenant of grace should be sealed to infants by it, that there is not the least hint of it given.

3. It is indeed in the New Testament called *a seal of the righteousness of faith* (Rom. 4:11); but it is not said to be a seal of the covenant of grace, nor a seal to infants: it was not a seal to Abraham's natural seed; it was only so to himself. The plain meaning of the apostle is, that circumcision was a seal to Abraham, and assured him of, or confirmed his faith in this, that he should be the father of many nations, in a spiritual sense; and that the righteousness of faith which he had, when he was an uncircumcised person, should also come upon, and be imputed unto the uncircumcised Gentiles: and accordingly, this mark and sign continued until the gospel, declaring justification by the righteousness of Christ, was preached, or ordered to be preached to the Gentiles; and could it be thought that circumcision was a seal to others besides him, it could at most be only a seal to them that had both faith and righteousness, and not to them that had neither.

4. If it was a seal of the covenant of grace to *Abraham's* natural seed, it must be either to some or all; if only to some, it should be pointed out who they are; and if to all, then it must be sealed, that is, confirmed, and an interest in it assured of, to a mocking Ishmael; to a profane *Esau*; to *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, and their accomplices, whom the earth swallowed up alive; to

*Achitophel*, that hanged himself; to *Judas*, that betrayed our Lord; and to all the Jews concerned in his crucifixion and death; since there is reason to believe they were all circumcised. But,

5. The covenant made with *Abraham*, so far as it was a covenant of grace, was not made, as we have seen, with all *Abraham's* natural seed; and therefore circumcision could not be a seal of it to them. I pass on,

**Fourthly**, To another inquiry, whether baptism succeeded circumcision, and so became a seal of the covenant: of grace to believers, and their natural seed? This must be answered in the negative; for,

1. There is no agreement between them, in the subjects to whom they are administered; circumcision was administered to Jews only, or such as became proselytes; baptism both to Jews and Gentiles, without any distinction, that believe in Christ; circumcision was administered to infants, baptism only to adult persons; circumcision belonged only to the males, baptism to male and female: Seeing then the subjects of the one and the other are so different, the one cannot be thought to succeed the other.

2. The use of the one and the other is not the same; the use of circumcision was to distinguish the natural seed of *Abraham* from others, until Christ was come in the flesh; the use of baptism is to be a distinguishing badge of the spiritual seed of Christ, such as have believed in him, and put him on; the use of circumcision was to signify the corruption of human nature, the necessity of regeneration, of the circumcision without hands, and of cleansing by the blood of Christ; the use of baptism is to answer a good conscience towards God to represent the sufferings, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and prerequisites repentance and faith.

3. The manner of administering the one and the other is very different; the one is by blood, the other by water; the one by an incision made in one part of the body, the other by an immersion of the whole body in water; the one was done in a private house, and by a private hand; the other, for the most part, publicly, in open places, in rivers, and before multitudes of people, and by a person in public office, a public minister of the word. Now, ordinances so much differing in their subjects, use, and manner of administration, the one can never be thought to come in the room and place of the other. But,

4. What puts it out of all doubt, that baptism can never be said to succeed circumcision is, that baptism was in force and use before circumcision was

abolished, and its practice discontinued, or ought to be discontinued. Circumcision was not abolished till the death of Christ when, with other ceremonies of the law, it was made null and void; but, unto that time, it was the duty of Jewish parents to circumcise their infants; whereas some years before this, *John* came preaching the doctrine of baptism, and administered it to multitudes; our Lord himself was baptized, three or four years, according to the common computation, before his death; now that which is in force before another is out of date, can never, with any propriety, be said to succeed or come in the room of that other.

5. It has been proved already, that circumcision was no seal of the covenant of grace to *Abraham's* natural seed; and therefore, could it be proved, as it cannot, that baptism succeeds it, it would not follow that baptism is a real of the covenant of grace; there are many persons who have been baptized) and yet not in the covenant of grace, and to whom it was never sealed, as *Simon Magus*, and others; and, on the other hand, a person may be in the covenant of grace, and it may be sealed to him, and he may be comfortably assured of his interests in it, though, as yet, not baptized in water. The author of the dialogue before me says, p. 16 that it is allowed on all hands, that baptism is a token or real of the covenant of grace; but it is a popular clamor, a vulgar mistake, that either that or the Lord's-Supper are seals of the covenant of grace. The blood of Christ is the seal, and the only seal of it, by which its promises and blessings are ratified and confirmed; and the holy Spirit is the only earnest pledge, seal, and sealer of the saints, until the day of redemption. [61] And so all that fine piece of wit of our author, about the red and white seal, is spoiled and lost: p. 17.

Upon the whole, we may see what sufficient scripture institution for infant-baptism is to be found in the covenant made with *Abraham*; since the spiritual part of that covenant did not concern his natural seed, as such, but his spiritual seed, and so not infants, but adult persons, whether among Jews or Gentiles, that walked in the steps of his faith; and seeing there is not one word of baptism in it, and much less of infant-baptism; nor was circumcision a seal of it, nor does baptism succeed that, or is a seal of the covenant of grace: Hence also, it will appear, what little reason there is for that clamorous outcry, so often made, and is by our author, of lessening and abridging the privileges of infants under the gospel dispensation, and of depriving them of what they formerly had; or for an harangue upon the valuable blessing, and

great and glorious privilege they had, of having the covenant of grace sealed unto them by circumcision; or for that demand, how, why, and when, children were cut off from this privilege? or for such a representation, this being the care, that the gospel is a less glorious dispensation, with respect to infants, than the former was, pp. 19, 20, 22,30. Seeing the covenant of grace was never sealed to infants by circumcision; nor was that bloody and painful rite accounted a rich and glorious privilege; far from it; especially as it bound them over to keep the whole law, it was a yoke of bondage, an insupportable one: and it is a rich mercy, and glorious privilege of the gospel, that the Jews and their children are delivered from it; and that Gentiles and their children are not obliged to it: And as for the demand, how, why, and when, children were cut off from it, it is easily answered, that this was done by the death of Christ, and at the time of it, when all ceremonies were abolished; and that for this reason, because of the weakness, unprofitableness, and burdensomeness of that, and them: And as for the gospel-dispensation, that is the more glorious, for infants being left out of its church-state; that is to say, for its being not national and carnal, as before, but congregational and spiritual; for its consisting, not of infants without understanding, but of rational and spiritual men, of believers in Christ, and professors of his name; and these not in a single and small country, as *Judea*, but in all parts of the world, as it has been, at one time or another, and it will be in the latter day: And as for infants themselves, their care is as good, and their privileges as many and better, than under the legal dispensation; their salvation is not at all affected by the abrogation of circumcision, or through want of baptism to succeed it. As the former did not real the covenant to them, and could not fare them, so neither could the latter, were it administered to them: To which may be added, that being born of Christian parents, and having a Christian education, and the advantage of hearing the gospel, as they grow up, and this not in one country, but many, must exceed all the privileges the Jewish children had under the former dispensation.



## CHAPTER 5

### *A consideration of the several texts of scripture produced in favor of Infant-baptism.*

---

The minister in the dialogue before me, being pressed by his neighbor to declare what were the numerous texts of scripture he referred to, as proving the continuance of children's privileges under the gospel-dispensation, meaning particularly baptism, mentions the following.

*Ist*, The passage in Acts 2:39, For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. This scripture is often made use of by our author, and seems to be his dernier resort on all occasions, and the sheet-anchor of the cause he is pleading for. The promise spoken of, he says, undoubtedly, was the covenant made with *Abraham*; and was urged as a reason with the Jews, why they and their children ought to be baptized; and as a reason with the Gentiles, why they and their children, when called into a church-state, should be also baptized p. 11, 12. He makes use of it, to prove that this promise gives a claim to baptism, and that an interest in it gives a right unto it p. 15, 16, 18, 29, 30.

1. It is easy to observe the contradictions, that such are guilty of, that plead for infant-baptism, from the covenant or promise made with *Abraham*, as this writer is. One while, he tells us, that persons are by baptism brought into the covenant of grace; and what a dreadful thing it is to renounce baptism in infancy; whereby the covenant is vacated, and the relation to the glorious God disowned, they were brought into by baptism p. 4. And yet here we are told, that interest in this promise gives a right and claim to baptism; but how can it give a previous right and claim to baptism, when it is by baptism, according to this writer, that persons are brought into this covenant?

2. The promise here observed, be it what it will, is not taken notice of, as what gives a claim and right to baptism, but as an encouraging motive to persons pricked in the heart, and in distress, both to repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins, and as giving them hope of receiving the holy Ghost, since such a promise was made; wherefore repentance and baptism were urged, in order to the enjoyment of the promise; and, consequently, can be understood of no other than adult persons, who were capable of

repentance, and of a voluntary subjection to the ordinance of baptism.

3. The *children*, here spoken of, do not design infants, but the posterity of the Jews, and such, who might be called children, though grown up: And nothing is more common in scripture,<sup>[62]</sup> than the use of the phrase in this sense; and, unless it be so understood in many places, strange interpretations must be given of them: wherefore the argument, from hence, for Paedobaptism, is given up by some learned men, as Dr. *Hammond*, and others, as inconclusive; but some men, wherever they meet with the word *children*, it immediately runs in their heads, that infants must be meant.

4. The promise, be it what it will, is restrained *to as many as the Lord our God shall call*, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, as well as to repenting and baptizing persons; and therefore can furnish out no argument for infant-baptism, but must be understood of adult persons, capable of being called with an holy calling, of professing repentance, and of desiring baptism upon it; and of doing this, that their faith might be led to the blood of Christ, for the remission of sin,

5. It seems clear from the context, that not the covenant made with *Abraham*, but either the promise of the Messiah, and salvation by him, the great promise made in the Old Testament to the Jews, and their posterity; or the particular promise of remission of sins, a branch of the new covenant made with the house of *Israel*, and mentioned in the preceding verse, and which was calculated for comfort, and pertinently taken notice of; or of the pouring out of the holy Ghost, which is last mentioned: And indeed all may be included in this promise, and used as a means to comfort them under their distress, and as an argument to encourage them to do the things they are pressed to in the foregoing verse.

**2dly**, To the former is added another scripture in Matthew 19:14. Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Upon which, it is asked, how, and which way, should we bring our little children to Christ, but in the way of his ordinances? If they belong to the kingdom of heaven, they must have a right to the privileges of that kingdom, p. 20. To which I answer,

1. These little children do not appear to be new-born babes; the words used by the evangelists do not always signify such, but are sometimes used of such as are capable of going alone, yea, of receiving instructions, of understanding



the scriptures, and of one of twelve years of age (Matthew 18:2; 2 Tim. 3:15; Mark 5:39, 42). Nor is it probable that children just born, or within the month, should be had abroad. Moreover, these were such as Christ called unto him (Luke 18:16), and were capable of coming to him of themselves, as these words suppose; nor does their being brought unto him, or his taking them in his arms, contradict this; since the same things are said of such as could walk of themselves (Matthew 12:22; 17:16; Mark 9:36).

2. It is not known whose children these were, whether the children of those that brought them, or of others; and whether their parents were believers in Christ, or not, or whether their parents were baptized or unbaptized; and if they were unbelievers and unbaptized persons, the Paedobaptists themselves will not allow that their children ought to be baptized.

3. Certain it is, that they were not brought to Christ, to be baptized by him; for the ends for which they were brought are mentioned; *Matthew* says, they brought them unto him, *that he should put his hands on them, and pray*; that is, for them, and bless them; as was usual with the Jews to do (Gen. 49:14-16); and it was common with them to bring their children to venerable persons, men of note for religion and piety, to have their blessing and their prayers; and such an one the persons that brought these children might take Christ to be, though they might not know him to be the Messiah. *Mark* and *Luke* say, they were brought to him, *that he would touch them* (Mark 10:13; Luke 18:15); as he sometimes used to do, when he healed persons of diseases; and probably some of these children, if not all of them, were diseased, and were brought to be cured; otherwise it is not easy to conceive what they should be touched by him for; however, they were not brought to be baptized: If the persons that brought them had their baptism in view, they would not have brought them to Christ, but to his disciples; seeing not he but they baptized the persons fit for it; they might have seen the disciples administer that ordinance, but not Christ; and from hence it is certain, that they were not baptized by Christ, since he never baptized any.

4. This passage concludes against Paedobaptism, and not for it; for it seems, by this, that it had never been the practice of the Jews, nor of *John* the Baptist, nor of Christ and his disciples, to baptize infants; for had this been then in use, the apostles would scarcely have rebuked and forbid those that brought these children, since they might have concluded they brought them to

be baptized; but knowing of no such usage, that ever obtained in that nation, neither among those that did or did not believe in Christ, they forbade them; and Christ's entire silence about the baptism of infants at this time, when he had such an opportunity of speaking of it to his disciples, had it been his will, has no favorable aspect on such a practice.

**5.** This writer's reasoning upon the passage, is beside the purpose for which he produces it; if he brings it to prove any thing respecting baptism, it must be to prove that infants were brought to Christ, in order to be baptized by him, and not to him in the way of his ordinance, or in the way of baptism: the reason our Lord gives why they should be suffered to come to him, *for of such is the kingdom of heaven*, is to be understood of such as were comparable to little children, for modesty, meekness, and humility, and for freedom from rancor malice, ambition, and pride (Matthew 18:2). And so the *Syriac* version is, *who are as these*; and the *Parsic* version, which is rather a paraphrase, shewing the sense, *who have been humble as these little children*; and such are the proper subjects of a gospel church-state, sometimes called *the kingdom of heaven*, and shall inherit eternal happiness. If the words are to be literally understood of infants, and of their belonging to the kingdom of heaven, interpreted of the kingdom of grace, or of the gospel church-state, according to this author's reasoning, they will prove too much, and more than he cares for; namely, that belonging to that kingdom, they have a right to the privileges of it, even to all of them, to the Lord's supper, as well as to baptism; but the kingdom of glory seems to be designed: And we are not unwilling to admit the literal sense, for the eternal salvation and happiness of infants dying in infancy, is not denied by us; and, according to this sense, our Lord's reasoning is strong, that seeing he thought fit to save the souls of infants, and introduce them into the kingdom of heaven, why should they be forbid being brought to him, to be touched by him, and healed of their bodily diseases? The argument is from the greater to the lesser; but furnishes out nothing in favor of Paedobaptism.

**3dly**, The next text mentioned is Matthew 18:6. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him, that a mill stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

Upon which it is observed, that the little one referred to was in an infant state,

as appears from verse 21, and Mark 9:36 and that little children are reputed, by Christ, believers in him: And so here is a full anticipation of the common objection against the baptism of infants, and a justification of their claim to the seal of the righteousness of faith; as well as a strong declaration of the awful danger of offending there little ones, by denying them the covenant privileges, to which they have a righteous claim, pages 20, 21, 23, 27. But,

1. Though the little child, in verse 2d, which our Lord let in the midst of his disciples, and took an occasion from thence to rebuke and instruct them, was in an infant-state, yet those our Lord here speaks of, were not little ones in age; for how capable soever they may be of having the principle or habit of faith implanted in them, they cannot be capable of exercising it, or of acting faith, which the phrase used expresses; for if they are not capable of exerting reason, though they have the principle of it in them, they cannot be capable of exercising faith; nor indeed of being offended in the sense the word is here used, and to such a degree, that the offenders of them had better have died a violent death, than to be guilty of such offense. But,

2. The disciples of Christ are meant, his apostles, who were contending among themselves who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven; which ambition our Lord rebukes, by placing a little child in the midst of them, verses 1, 2, saying to them, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven; adding, that whoever humbled himself as the child before him, should be the greatest in it; and that such who received such humble disciples of his, received him; but those that offended them, would incur his resentment, and the greatest danger expressed in the words under consideration vv. 3-6. And there were such, not only who by faith looked to Christ, and received him as their Savior, and made a profession of him; but preached the doctrine of faith; who, *having believed, therefore spoke*; and who may be said to be offended, when their persons were despised, their ministry rejected, and they reproached and persecuted; and, when it would go ill with them that should treat them in this manner. There were such, who were *little ones*, in their own esteem, and in the esteem of others.

3. Admitting that infants in age could be meant, and there to have the principle and habit of faith in them, yet this would not justify their claim to baptism, which this writer means, by the seal of the righteousness of faith;

though not baptism, but circumcision is designed by that phrase; since actual faith, yea, a profession of it, is a necessary prerequisite to baptism; If thou *believest with all thine heart, thou mayest* (Acts 8:37).

4. This writer seems conscious to himself, that faith in Christ is necessary to baptism, and is that which justifies a claim unto it; since he seems glad to lay hold on this text, and the sense he puts upon it, in order to anticipate the objection to infant-baptism taken from faith in Christ, being a pre-requisite to it; which he knows not how otherwise to get rid of, than to suppose that infants have faith, and that this is a proof of it. But,

5. Supposing this, either all infants have faith, or only some: If all; how comes it to pass, that there are so many, when grown up, that are manifestly destitute of it: Can the grace be lost? Is it not an abiding one? Is not He, who is the Author, the Finisher of it? If only some have it, how can it be known, who have it, and who not? Wherefore, to baptize upon this supposed faith, is to proceed on a very precarious foundation: It seems, therefore, much more eligible, to defer their baptism, till it appears, that they do truly and actually believe in Christ.

*4thly*, The next passage of scripture, produced in favor of infant-baptism, is 1 Corinthians 7:14. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband, else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. Upon which, our author thus reasons; "If either of the parents be a believer, the children are reputed holy; that is, they have a covenant holiness, and have, therefore, a claim to covenant-privileges; — they are holy, by virtue of their covenant-relation to God, and must therefore, have a right to have that covenant sealed to them in baptism" p. 21. But,

1. It ought to be told, what there covenant-privileges are, that children have a claim unto, by virtue of their covenant-relation, this writer so often speaks of. If baptism is one of them, as it seems to be his intention, that must be denied to be a covenant-privilege, or a privilege of the covenant of grace; for then all the covenant ones in all ages, ought to have enjoyed it; whereas they have not: And we have seen already, that covenant interest gives no right to any positive institution, or ordinance, without a divine direction; and that baptism is no real of the covenant.

2. It should be told, what this covenant is, whether it is a real or imaginary

thing; it seems to be the latter, by our author's way of expressing himself. He says, children are *reputed* holy; that is, have a covenant-holiness: So that covenant-holiness is a reputed holiness; but such a holiness can never qualify persons for a New Testament ordinance; nor has the covenant of grace any such holiness belonging to it; that provides, by way of promise, for real holiness, signified, by putting and writing the laws of God in the heart, by giving new hearts and new spirits, and taking away the stony heart, and by cleansing from all impurity; this is real, inward holiness, and shews itself in an outward holy conversation: Where this appears, such have an undoubted right to the ordinance of baptism, since they must have received the holy spirit, as a spirit of sanctification (Acts 10:47).

3. A holiness, appertaining to the covenant of grace, can never be meant, since it is such a holiness, as unbelievers, yea, as heathens are said to have; it is such a holiness, as unbelieving husbands, and unbelieving wives are said to have, by virtue and in consequence of their relation to believing wives and believing husbands; and which they have prior to the holiness of their children; and on which their children's holiness depends. Now, surely, unbelievers and heathens, will not be allowed to be in covenant, or to be possessed of a covenant holiness, by virtue of their yoke-fellows; and yet, theirs, and their children's holiness, must be of the same kind and nature. Wherefore,

4. If children, by virtue of this holiness, have a claim to covenant-privileges, and to have the covenant sealed to them by baptism; then, much more, their unbelieving parents, because they are sanctified before them, by their believing yoke-fellows, and they are as near to them, as their children; and if the holiness of the one gives a right to baptism, why not the holiness of the other? And yet, our Paedobaptists do not pretend to baptize the unbelieving husband or wife, though sanctified, whose holiness is the more near; but the children, that become holy through the sanctification of both, whose holiness is the more remote. For, it should be observed, that the holiness, spoken of in the text, be it what it will, is derived, or denominated, from both parents, believing and unbelieving; yea, the holiness of the children depends upon the sanctification of the unbelieving parent; for if the unbeliever is not sanctified, the children are unclean, and not holy. Besides, the words are not necessarily to be understood of infants, or young children, but of the posterity of such persons, whether of 40, or 50 years of age, or of what age soever; and must



be unclean in the sense of the word, here used, if their unbelieving parent is not sanctified by, or to the believing one. But,

5. These words are to be understood of a matrimonial holiness; not merely of the holiness of marriage, as it is an institution of God, but of the very act of marriage, which, in the language of the Jews, is frequently expressed, by being *sanctified*, innumerable instances might be given of this; I have produced one in my exposition of this place, in which the word, מקדש *Kadash*, "to sanctify," is used no less than ten times, *to espouse*. And, for the sake of those who have it not, I shall transcribe the passage: And it is, as follows;<sup>[63]</sup>

"a man מקדש *Mekaddesh*, "sanctifies," or espouses a wife by himself, or by his messenger; a woman, מתקדש *Mithkaddesh*, "is sanctified," or espoused by herself, or by her messenger; a man, מקדש *Mekaddesh*, "sanctifies," or espouses his daughter, when she is a young woman, by himself, or by his messenger: If any one says to a woman, התקדשי *Hitbkaddeshi*, "be thou sanctified," or espoused to me by this date (the fruit of the palm tree) התקדשי *Hithkaddeshi*, "be thou sanctified," or espoused by this (or any other thing:) If there is in any one of these things the value of a farthing, מקורשת *Mekuddesheth*, "she is sanctified," or espoused; and if not, she is not מקורשת *Mekuddesheth*, "sanctified," or espoused: If he says, by this, and by this, and by this; if there is the value of a farthing in them all, מקורשת *Mekuddesheth*, "she is sanctified," or espoused; but if not, she is not, מקורשת *Mekuddesheth*, "sanctified," or espoused: If she eats one (date) after another, she is not, מקורשת *Mekuddesheth*, "sanctified," or espoused, unless one of them is the value of a farthing."

In the Misnah, the oral law of the Jews, there is a whole treatise of קידושין *Kiddushin*, "sanctifications," or espousals; out of which the above passage is taken: And in the *Gemara* is another, full of the disputes of the doctors on this subject: And *Maimonides* has also written a treatise of women and wives; out of which might be produced almost innumerable instances, in proof of the observation; and such, as can read, and have leisure to read the said tracts, may fully satisfy themselves in this matter. And in the same sense, the apostle uses the word ακαζς, here: And the passage should be rendered thus; *the*



*unbelieving husband is espoused, or married to the wife, or rather has been espoused; for it relates to the act of marriage past, as valid; and the unbelieving wife has been espoused to the husband.* The preposition **ἐν**, translated *by*, should be rendered *to*, as it is in the very next verse, *God hath called us, ἐν οἰκῇ*, "to peace." The passage is introduced, to support the advice the apostle had given to believers married to unbelievers, not to depart from them, but live with them, who had had some scruple upon their minds, whether they ought to cohabit with them, being unbelievers; he advises them, by all means, to dwell with them, unless the unbeliever departed, seeing they were duly, rightly, and legally espoused to each other; and, therefore, ought not, notwithstanding their different sentiments of religion, to separate from one another; otherwise, if they were not truly married to one another, as such a departure and separation would suggest, this consequence must necessarily follow, that children, born in such a state of cohabitation, where the marriage is not valid, must be spurious, and not legitimate: which is the sense of the next clause, *else were your children unclean, but now are they holy*; that is, they would have been accounted illegitimate, but now legitimate. And,

**6.** This sense of the words is not novel, nor singular: It is agreeable to the minds of several interpreters, ancient and modern; as *Jerom, Ambrose, Erasmus, Camerarius, Musculus*, and others: which last writer, and who was a zealous Paedobaptist, makes this ingenuous confession;

"formerly, says he, I have abused this place against the Anabaptists, thinking the meaning was, that the children were holy for the parents faith; which, though true, the present place makes nothing for the purpose"

**5thly**, To all which, this writer adds the commission in Matthew 28:19. *Go, teach all nations, baptizing them*, etc. Concerning which, he says, that as the commission to the sacred ministry enjoined the baptizing of *all nations*, whereof infants are a very great part; it also enjoined the baptizing infants, as a part of the nations they were to *disciple* and *baptize*, p. 21. And, elsewhere, he says, the words ought to be read, *Go, disciple all nations, baptizing them*;—and should be understood, as requiring the ministers of the gospel to make all nations disciples by baptizing them,—whereby every one is constituted a *learner* of Christ: And to prove, that infants are called disciples, he refers to Acts 15:10. *Why tempt ye God to put a yoke on the neck of the disciples*, etc.

and to all, such scriptures, that respect the education of children, pp. 24, 25.  
But,

1. The commission does not enjoin the baptizing of all nations, but the baptizing of such as are taught; for the antecedent to the relative *them* cannot be *all nations*, since παντοτα ηθνη, the words for "all nations," are of the neuter gender; whereas αυτους "them," is of the masculine; but μαθευτας, "disciples;" is supposed and contained in the word μαθητευσατε, "teach, or make disciples;" such as are first taught, or made disciples by teaching under the ministry of the word, by the Spirit of God, Christ's orders are to baptize them.

2. If infants, as a part of all nations, were to be baptized, and because they are such; then the infants of Heathens, Turks and Jews, ought to be baptized, for they are a part of all nations, as well as the children of Christians, or believers.

3. We are very willing, the words should be rendered *disciple all nations*, or *make all nations disciples*; that is, disciples of Christ, which is the same, as believers in him; for they are the true disciples of Christ, that have learned the way of life, and salvation by him; that deny themselves, sinful, righteous, and civil self, for his sake; who forsake all, take up the cross, and follow him; who bear, and bring forth much fruit, love one another, and continue in the doctrine of Christ (Luke 14:27, 33; John 15:8; 13:35; 8:31). And such, and such only, are the proper subjects of baptism: so, agreeable to this commission and the sense of it, Christ first made disciples, and then baptized them, or ordered them to be baptized.

4. These two acts, *discipling* and *baptizing*, are not to be confounded together; they are two distinct acts, and the one is previous to the other, and absolutely (John 4:1, 2) necessary thereunto. Men are not made disciples by baptizing them, as this writer suggests, but they must be first disciples, and then baptized. So Jerom<sup>[64]</sup> long ago understood the commission, who has there words upon it;

"first, they teach all nations, then dip those that are taught in water:  
For, it cannot be, that the body should receive the sacrament of baptism, unless the soul has before received the truth of faith."

To the same purpose, *Athanasius* says,<sup>[65]</sup> wherefore the Savior does not simply command to *baptize*, but first says, *teach*; and then baptize thus, *in*

*the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; that faith might come of teaching, and baptism be perfected."*

**5.** Such a disciple, as this writer supposes to be constituted by baptism, namely, a *learner* of Christ, cannot agree with an infant. What can a new-born babe learn of Christ? What can it be taught of him, or receive by way of teaching, at the time of its baptism, or by being baptized? If learners and disciples are synonymous terms, as this author says, they cannot be disciples before they are learners; and they cannot be learners of Christ, unless they have learned something of him: And, according to this notion, they ought to learn something of him, before they are baptized in his name. But what can an infant learn of Christ?

**6.** The text in Acts 15:10 is not to be understood of infants, but of adult persons; even converted Gentiles, who believed in Christ, and were his disciples; and upon whom, the false teachers would have imposed the yoke of the ceremonial law; and, particularly, circumcision: Which, because it bound over to the whole law, the apostle represents as an insupportable one; and calls this imposition of it on the believing Gentiles, a tempting of God: And as for any other passages that enjoin the education of children, or speak of it, they are never from thence called the disciples of Christ, nor any where else.

**6thly**, This writer asserts, that "it is plain that the apostles thus understood our Savior's meaning, and accordingly baptized *Lydia* and her household, and the Jailer and all his (Acts 16:15, 35); and the household of *Stephanas*" (1 Cor. 1:16); p. 21. But,

**1.** Seeing the understanding of our Savior's meaning in the commission, depends upon those instances of baptism, and so the warrant for the baptizing of infants, the Paedobaptists ought to be sure that there were infants in these families, and that they were baptized, or otherwise they must baptize them, at most, upon a very precarious foundation; for if the commission of itself is not clear for it, and those instances in which the apostles acted according to the commission, are not sufficient to vouch it, it must stand upon a very bad bottom, having neither precept nor precedent for it; and they must know, that there are families that have no infants in them, and how can they be sure there were any in these? And,

**2.** It lies upon them to prove there were infants in these families, and that these infants were baptized, or the allegation of those instances is to no

purpose; how they can satisfy themselves without it, they best know; they ought not to put it upon us to prove a negative, to prove that there were none, this is unfair; and one would think, should not sit very easy upon their minds, to rest their practice on so poor a shift, and so unreasonable a demand. But,

**3.** We are able to make it appear, that there are many things in the account of the baptism of there families, which are inconsistent with infants, and which make it at least probable, that there were none in them; and certain, that those that were baptized were adult persons, and believers in Christ. As for *Lydia*, it is not certain in what state of life she was, whether single or married, whether maid, widow, or wife; whether she had any children, or ever had any; or if she had, and them living, whether they were infants or adult; and if infants, it does not seem probable that she should bring them along with her from her native place *Thyatira* to *Philippi*, where she seems to have been upon business, and so had hired a house during her stay there; wherefore, her household seems to have consisted of menial servants she brought along with her, to assist her in her business; and certain it is, that those that the apostles found there, when they entered into it, after they came out of prison, were such as are called *brethren*, and were capable of being *comforted* by them (Acts 16:15, 40). And as for the Jailer's household, they were such as were capable of having the word of God spoken to them, and of rejoicing at it, and in the conversation of the apostles, at what was laid and done by them; and are even expressly said to believe in God, as the Jailer did, and together with him; and as for the household of *Stephanas*, that is, by some, thought to be the same with the Jailer's; but, if not, it is certain it consisted of adult persons, believers in Christ, and very useful in the public service of religion; for they were the first-fruits of *Achaia*, and addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints (1 Cor. 16:15). All which, in each of the instances, can never be said of infants. But,

**7<sup>th</sup>**, This writer adds one text more, which, he says, must be allowed to be decisive in the present case, and that is Romans 11:17-25 from whence he thinks it is most evident, that since the believing Gentiles are grafted into all the privileges and spiritual blessings of the Jewish church, they cannot be cut off from that great blessing and privilege of having the covenant sealed to their infant seed [p. 21]. To which I reply,

**1.** It will readily be allowed, that believing Gentiles shared in all the spiritual

blessings and privileges of the Jewish church, or of believers under the former dispensation; the same blessings of imputed righteousness and pardon of sin came upon the uncircumcision, as well as upon the circumcision, who walk in the steps of the faith of *Abraham* (Rom.4:6-12), for such that *are Christ's*, true believers in him, they *are Abraham's seed*, his spiritual seed, and *heirs, according to the promise*, of all spiritual blessings and privileges (Gal. 3:29). But,

2. The covenant of grace was never sealed to *Abraham's* natural seed; the covenant of grace itself did not belong to them, as such; nor was circumcision a seal of it to them; nor is baptism a seal of the covenant of grace to any; and therefore it is a great impropriety and impertinence to talk of cutting off from, that which was never had, and never was.

3. Though believing Gentiles share in the spiritual blessings and privileges which the Jewish church, or Jewish believers enjoyed, they never were grafted into that church; that church-state, with all the peculiar ordinances of it, was utterly abolished by Christ, signified by the shaking of the heavens and the earth, and removing of those things that are shaken, that those which cannot be shaken may remain (Heb. 12:26, 27). The Jewish church is not the olive-tree, of whole root and fatness the Gentiles partake; they are not grafted into the old Jewish stock; the ax has been laid to the root of that tree; and it is entirely cut down, and no engraftment is made upon it. But,

4. The olive-tree, of whose root and fatness believing Gentiles partake, is the gospel church-state, out of which the Jews that rejected Christ were left, and are the broken branches; and those that believed in Christ were taken in, and laid the first foundation of it; there are the first-fruits, and the root, which being holy, are a pledge of the future convection and holiness of that people; they of them that received the first-fruits of the Spirit, were first incorporated into a gospel church-state; and then the Gentiles which believed were received among them, and were engrafted into them; and this engrafture or coalition was first *at Antioch*, where and when, and hereafter, the Gentiles partook of the root and fatness of the olive-tree; enjoyed the same privileges, communicated in the same ordinances, and were satisfied with the goodness and fathers of the house of God; and of this engrafture, and of this only, does this text speak; so that it is so far from being decisive in the present case, that there is not one word, one syllable about baptism in it, and still less can any



thing, in favor of infant-baptism, be inferred from it.

I shall conclude this chapter, and with it the affair of the divine right of infant-baptism, which, whether illustrated and confirmed in the *Dialogue*, must be left to the judicious reader, by observing, that the minister in it being required to give express New Testament proof for infant-baptism, which he was conscious to himself he could not do, in answer to it, requires express New Testament proof that *women* should partake of the *Lord's Supper*, and offers to prove infant-baptism by the same arguments that this should be proved. But,

1. We do not go about to prove women's right to partake of the Lord's Supper, by such arguments as this writer forms for us; as, by their covenant-interest, by their claim to have the covenant sealed to them, and by their being a part of all nations; and though we look upon their being believers and disciples of Christ, proper qualifications for their admission to the Lord's supper, when there can be made to appear to belong to infants, we shall readily admit them to baptism. But,

2. We prove their right to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, by their right to the ordinance of baptism; for they that have a right to one ordinance, have to the other; that women believing in Christ: have a right to baptism, is clear, from Acts 8:12. *They were baptized, both men and women*, and therefore should partake of the Lord's Supper. Let it be proved, that infants ought to be baptized, and it will be allowed and insisted upon, that they partake of the Lord's Supper.

3. We prove it by their being church members; *Mary* the mother of Jesus, with other women, were of the number of the disciples that formed the first gospel church at *Jerusalem*; *Sapphira*, the wife of *Ananias*, was, with her husband, of the multitude that *believed, and were together, and had all things common*; after whole awful death, *believers were the more added to the Lord*, that is, to the church, *both men and women* (Acts 1:14, 15; 4:32; 5:9, 14). There were women in the church at *Corinth*; concerning whom the apostle gives rules respecting their conduct (1 Cor. 11:5, 6, 13; 14:34, 35). Now all those that are members of gospel churches, ought to eat the bread and drink the cup, in remembrance of Christ (1 Cor. 11:26). Women are members of gospel churches; and therefore ought to eat and drink in like manner.

4. We prove this by example: *Mary*, the mother of our Lord, and other



women, being of the number of the disciples, which constituted the gospel church state at *Jerusalem*, as they continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, so likewise in breaking of bread (Acts 1:14, 15; Acts 2:1, 44, 46).

**5.** We prove this by a divine direction, exhortation, and command, *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat* (1 Cor. 11:29). The word used is *ανθρωπος*, a word of the common gender, and signifies both men and women; in which sense it must be often understood, as in 1 Timothy 2:5 for is Christ a mediator only between God and men, and not women? Under the gospel dispensation, in a gospel church state, *there is neither male nor female*; they are *all one in Christ*, and enjoy the same privileges and ordinances (Gal. 3:28). Let the same proof, or as good, be given for infant-baptism, and we have done; let it be proved that infants have a right to any other gospel ordinance as such; that they are or ought to be members of gospel churches; that there is either precept or precedent for the baptizing of them, and we shall readily admit them.

## CHAPTER 6

### *Concerning the Mode of administering the Ordinance of Baptism, whether by immersion or by sprinkling.*

---

The author of the *dialogue* under consideration affirms, that there is not one single Lexicographer, or critic upon the Greek Language, he has ever seen, but what agrees, that though the word *baptizo* sometimes signifies to *dip*, yet: it also naturally signifies to *wash*; and that washing, in any mode whatsoever, is the native signification of the word *baptismas* p. 31, that the words *baptize* and *baptism*, as used in the New Testament, do not, from their signification, make *dipping* or *plunging* the necessary mode of administering the ordinance p. 33, and that one single instance of that mode of administering the ordinance, is not to be found in all the New Testament p. 34, nor is it probable it should be the mode p. 38, and that the mode of administering it by sprinkling is a more lively emblem of what is signified and represented by it, than dipping or plunging can be supposed, and therefore the most proper one p. 39.

**First**, As to the lexicographers, and critics on the Greek language, they agree that the word βαπτίζω, signifies, in its first and primary sense, "to *dip* or *plunge*," and only in a secondary and consequential sense, to wash, but never to *pour* or *sprinkle*; there being no proper washing, but what is by dipping; and for this we appeal to all the writers of this kind, and even to those this author mentions.

*Scapula*, the first of them, renders βαπτίζω, by *merga, seu immergo, ut quae tingendi, aut, abluendi gratia aquae immersimus*, "to dip or plunge into, as what for the sake of dying or washing we dip into water;" item *mergo, submergo, abruo aqua*, "also to plunge, plunge under, overwhelm in water;" item *abluo, lavo*, "also to wash off, wash;" and βαπτίζωμας, he renders, by *mergor, submergor*, "to be plunged, plunged under;" and observes, that it is used metaphorically for *obruer*, to be overwhelmed; and βαπτισμος, and βαπτισμα, he says, is, *mersio, lotio, ablutio, ipse immergendi, item lavandi, seu abluendi actus*, "plunging, washing, ablution, the act itself of plunging, also of washing or ablution." In all which he makes dipping, or plunging, to be the first and preferable sense of the words.

*Stephens* gives the same sense of the words, and so *Schrevelius*, who renders

βαπτίζω, by *baptizo, mergo, lavo*, "baptize, plunge, wash." *Pasor* only renders it *baptizo*, baptize, without determining its sense. And *Leigh*, in his *Critica Sacra*, observes, that "the nature and proper signification of it, is *to dip into water*, or *to plunge under water*;" and refers to John 3:22, 23; Matthew 3:16 and Acts 8:38. And cites *Casaubon, Bucanus, Bullinger*, and *Zanchy*, as agreeing and testifying to this sense of it; and *baptisma*, he says, is "dipping into water, or washing with water." And there are the Lexicographers and Critics our author refers us to: To which I may add the Lexicon compiled by *Budaeus, Constantine*, and others, who render the word βαπτίζω, by *immergo, mergo, intingo, lavacro tingo, abluo, madesacio, law, mundo*; "plunge, plunge into, dip into, dip in a laver, wash off, make wet, wash, cleanse:" And βαπτισμος, they say, is *tingendi, hoc est mergendi actio, in quo significatu sinctura dicitur*; "the action of tingeing, that is, of plunging; in which signification it is called a *tincture*, or *dying*;" and another by *Hadrian Junius*, who renders βαπτίζω, by *immergo*, "to plunge into;" and βαπτισμος, by *immersio, lotio, baptismus*, "immersion, washing, baptism."

As for other critics on the Greek language, who assert, that the proper signification of the word *baptizo*, is to *dip*, or *plunge*; they are so numerous, that it would be tedious to reckon them up: I shall only mention a few of them, and their words. *Calvin*<sup>[66]</sup> says,

*"Ipsum baptizandi verbum mergere significat, & mergendi ritum veteri ecclesiae observatum fuisse constat;"*

the word *baptize*, signifies to *plunge*; and, it is plain, that the rite of plunging was observed in the ancient church." *Beza*, who must be allowed to be a learned critic in the Greek language, lays, on Mark 7:4,

*"Neque vero το βαπτίζειν, significat lavare nisi a consequenti, nam proprie dedarat tingendi causa immergere;"*

neither does the word *baptizo*, signify to *walk*, unless consequentially; for it properly signifies, to *plunge into*, for the sake of tinging, or *dying*;" and on Matthew 3:11 he says,

*"significat autem το βαπτίζειν, tingere quum παρα το βαπτειν, dicatur; & quum tingenda mergantur;"* "the word *baptizo*, signifies to *dip* (as *Dyers* in the vat) seeing it comes from *bapto*, to *dip*, and seeing things, that are to be dyed, are dipped."

Casaubon, another great critic on the Greek language, has these words on Matthew 3:6,

*"Hic enim fuit baptizandi ritus ut in aquas immergerentur, quod vel ipso vox βαπτίζειν, declarat fati — unde intelligimus non esse ab re, quod jam pridem non nulli disputarant de taro corpore immergendo in ceremonia baptismi; vocem enim βαπτίζειν, urge-bant;"*

for this was the rite of baptizing, that persons should be plunged into water, which the word *baptizo*, sufficiently declares. — Hence, we understand, that it was not foreign from the matter, which some time ago disputed, concerning plunging the whole body in the ceremony of baptism; for they urged the signification of the word *baptizo*. And, that this is the proper signification of the word, he observes, in his notes on Acts 1:5 and Acts 2:4. To which, I shall only add one more critic, and that is *Grotius*; who, on Matthew 3:6. thus writes;

*"Mersatione autem nan persuasione agi solitum hunc ritum indicat & vocis proprietates, & loca ad eum ritum delecta (John 3:13; Acts 8:38), & allusiones multae apostolorum quae ad aspersionem referri non possunt" (Rom. 6:3; Col. 2:12),*

that this rite used to be performed by *plunging*, and not by *pouring*, both the propriety of the word, and the places chosen for this rite, shew (John 3:23; Acts 8:38), and the many allusions of the apostles, which cannot be referred to *sprinkling*" (Rom. 6:3, 4; Col. 2:12). I might have here subjoined, some instances of the use of the word in Greek authors, by which it appears to have the sense of dipping and plunging, and not of pouring, or sprinkling; but this has been largely done by Dr. *Gale*, and others. I shall, therefore, proceed,

**Secondly**, To consider the use of the words, *baptize* and *baptism*, in the New Testament; which our author says, do not, from their signification, make dipping or plunging, the necessary mode of administering the ordinance of baptism: And the places enumerated by him, in which they are used, are as follow.

**1.** The descent of the holy Ghost on the apostles, and on *Cornelius*, and his company, is called *baptizing* (Acts 1:5; 11:16), where he observes, it cannot be pretended that there was the least allusion to, or resemblance of dipping, or plunging, in this use of the word. But the learned *Casaubon*, a very great critic in the Greek tongue, before-mentioned and referred to, does pretend,

that there is such an allusion and resemblance, his words on Acts 1:5 are there,

"*et si non improbo*, etc. although I do not disapprove of the word *baptized*, being retained here, that the antithesis may be full; yet, I am of opinion, that regard is had, in this place, to its proper signification; for βαπτίζειν, is to immerse, so as to *tinge* or *dip*: And, in this sense, the apostles are truly said to be baptized; for the house, in which this was done, was filled with the holy Ghost: So that the apostles seemed to be plunged into it, as into some pool."

And the extraordinary descent of the spirit in those instances, is much more strongly expressed by a word, which signifies *plunging*, than if it had been expressed by a word, that signifies bare perfusion, and still left by sprinkling.

2. "Christ's crucifixion is called a baptism (Mark 10:38), but, being buffeted, spit upon, and lifted up upon the cross, says our author, bear no resemblance, nor can have any allusion to dipping, or plunging. But, it is easy to observe, that the sufferings of our Lord, which are compared to a baptism, in the place referred to, and in Luke 12:50, because of the greatness and abundance of them, are, sometimes, expressed by deep waters, and floods of waters; and he is represented as plunged into them, and covered and overwhelmed with them;"

For so he says himself; The waters are come into my soul; I sink in deep mire, where is no standing; I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me (Ps. 119:1, 2). And, therefore, a word signifying *immersion*, and a covering of the whole body in water, is a very apt one to express the multitude of Christ's sufferings, and the overwhelming nature of them; and must, more fitly, express the same, than a word, which only signifies *pouring*, or sprinkling a few drops of water.

3. The text in Mark 7:4 is next mentioned; which speaks of the Jews, when come from the market, not eating, *except they wash (baptizoontai)*; and of *the washing (baptismous) of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables, or beds*, as the word signifies. And this, our author thinks, is an unexceptionable instance of these words signifying *washing*, without dipping, or plunging; since it can hardly be supposed, that they dipped themselves under water, every time they came from market, or, that they dipped their beds, every time they sat, or lay upon them. But, in answer to this, it should be observed, that



our Lord is here speaking of the superstition of the Pharisees, who, when they came from market, or any court of judicature, if they touched any common persons, or their clothes, reckoned themselves unclean; and, according to the traditions of the elders, were to immerse themselves in water, and did: So that a most proper word is here made use of, to express their superstition. And, as for cups, pots and brazen vessels, what other way of washing them is there, than by dipping, or putting them into water? And, in this way, unclean vessels were to be washed, according to the law (Lev. 11:32), as well as all that were reckoned so by the traditions of the elders; and even beds, pillows and bolsters, when they were unclean in a ceremonial sense, and not, as this author puts it, every time they lay, or sat upon them, were to be washed by immersion, or dipping them in water; as I have proved from the Jews' oral law, which our Lord has respect to, in my Exposition of this place; to which, I refer the reader. Wherefore, the words are here used in their primary sense, as signifying dipping; and, if they did not so signify, they would not truly represent the superstition, they are designed to do.

4. The next passage produced, is 1 Corinthians 10:1, 2 which speaks of the Jewish fathers, being *baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea*. Upon which, this writer observes, that he thinks, he need not seriously undertake to convince his friend, he is debating with; "that the fathers were not dipped in the cloud, but that the rain from the cloud bore a much greater resemblance to sprinkling, or affusion, than to dipping." But let us a little examine this matter, and see wherein the agreement lay, between baptism and the Israelites passage under the cloud, and through the sea. Which may be considered, either together, or separately: If together, the agreement between it and baptism, lay in this; the Israelites, when they passed through the Red Sea, had the waters on each side of them, which stood up, as a wall, higher than they, and the cloud over them; so that they were, as persons immersed in, and covered with water; and, in this view, it is easy to see, that the resemblance is much greater to immersion, than to sprinkling, or affusion: or this may be considered separately, as baptized in the cloud, and as baptized in the sea; in the cloud, when, as *Gataker*,<sup>[67]</sup> a Paedobaptist writer, thinks, it passed from before the face of the Israelites, and stood behind them, and was between the two camps, to keep off the Egyptians; and which, when it palled over them, let down a plentiful rain upon them, whereby they were in such a condition, as if they had been dipped all over in water; or, when under the cloud they



were all over covered with it, as a person, when baptized by immersion, is all over covered with water; and they might be said to be *baptized* in the sea, when, as they passed through it, the waters standing up above their heads, they seemed as if they were immersed. The resemblance to plunging, therefore, considered in either way, must be nearer than to pouring, or sprinkling a small quantity of water. To which may be added, that the descent of the Israelites into the sea, when they seemed as though they were buried in the waters of it; and their ascent out of it again on the shore, have a very great agreement with baptism, as administered by immersion; in which, the person baptized goes down into the water, is buried with Christ therein; and comes up out of it, as out of a grave, or as the children of *Israel* out of the Red sea.

5. The last text mentioned, where the word baptism is used, is Hebrews 9:10 where our author observes,

"the apostle, speaking of the ceremonial dispensation, tells us, that *it stood only in meats, and drinks, and divers washings (baptismous) and carnal ordinances*; and the principal of these washings, he exemplifies to us, verse 13 to be *the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean*: Here, therefore, the word cannot, with any appearance of modesty, be explained in favor of immersion."

To which, I reply, that the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, were so far from being the principal part of the Jewish washings or baptisms, that it was no part at all; nor is this mentioned by the apostle, as any exemplification of them, who understood these things better. Sprinkling the ashes of the heifer, and the waffling, or bathing of the person in water, which was by immersion, are spoken of, as distinct and separate things, in the ceremony referred to, Numbers 19:19 and indeed, washing by sprinkling, is not reconcilable to good sense, to the propriety of language, and to the universal custom of nations. However, certain it is, that the priests, Levites, Israelites, vessels, garments, etc. which were enjoined washing by the ceremonial law, and which washings, or baptisms, are here referred to, were done, by putting them into water, and not by pouring, or sprinkling water upon them. It is a rule with the Jews,<sup>[68]</sup> that,

"wheresoever, in the law, washing of the flesh, or of the clothes is mentioned, it means nothing else, than *הגק כלטבילת* *Tebileth Col*

*hagoph, the dipping of the whole body* in a laver—for if any man dips himself all over, except the tip of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness."

From the whole, it appears, that the words, *baptize* and *baptism*, in all the places mentioned, do, from their signification, make dipping, or plunging, the necessary mode of administering the ordinance of baptism. I now go on,

**Thirdly**, To vindicate those texts of scripture, which afford instances of the mode of administering baptism by immersion, from the exceptions of this writer, who confidently affirms,

"that none of those texts will necessarily prove that any one person was baptized by dipping, by *John Baptist*, our blessed Savior, or his apostles." p. 34.

And,

1. The first text brought into the debate, and excepted to, is Matthew 3:6. *And were baptized by him in Jordan, confessing the sins*. But we do not argue on this place, from those persons being *baptized*, to their being *dipped*, as this writer makes his neighbor to do, but from their being *baptized in the river Jordan*; for why should *John* choose the river *Jordan* to baptize in, and baptize in that river, if he did not administer the ordinance by immersion? Dr. *Hammond*, a Paedobaptist, thought that these words afford an argument for dipping in baptism, though our author will not allow it: His paraphrase of them is;

"And he received them by baptism, or *immersion* in the water of *Jordan*, promising them pardon upon the sincerity of their conversion and amendment, or reformation of their lives."

And in his note on Matthew 3:1 having respect to this place, says,

"*John* preaching repentance to the Jews in the desert, received all that came unto him as new proselytes, forsaking their old relations, that is, their sins, and in token of their resolved change, *put them into the water, dipped them all over, and so took them out again*; and upon the sincerity of their change, promised them the remission of their sins, and told them of the Messiah which was suddenly to appear among them, and warned them to believe on him."

The instances of washing in the pool of *Siloam*, in *Solomon's* ten lavers, or

the hands in a bason, mentioned by our author, are very impertinent; and besides, such washing is not performed without dipping. Who ever washes his hands without dipping them in the water he washes in?

2. Another text mentioned, is John 3:23. John was baptizing in Enon near to Salim, because there was much water there. Upon which this writer observes, that

"the words in the original are *many waters*; which implies many springs or brooks of water; waters suited to the necessity and convenience of the vast multitudes that resorted to *John*, as a supply of drink for themselves, and for the horses and camels which they rode upon, as well as for their baptism. Here is no appearance of dipping in the case.—Had *John* baptized all these multitudes by dipping, he must have stood almost continually in water, up to his waist, and could not have survived the employment but by miracle."

To which I reply,

(1.) Admitting that the words in the original, *many waters*, imply many springs or brooks, this shews there was a confluence of water there; and every body knows, that many springs and brooks being together, could easily fill large pools, sufficient for immersion; and even form and feed great rivers, which is often the case; and besides, the use this author finds for there springs and brooks, requires a considerable quantity of water, namely, for the vast multitudes of men, and for their horses and camels; and surely, therefore, there must be a sufficient quantity to cover a man's body in.

(2.) The words *πολλα υδατα*, *many waters*, signify a large quantity, great abundance, both in the literal and metaphorical sense of the phrase, as it is used by the evangelist *John* elsewhere, see Revelation 1:15 and 17:1, 15 and by the *Septuagint* interpreters, it is used even for the waters of the sea (Ps. 127:19; 107:23) and answers to *רבים מים*, *Mayim Rabbim*, in Song of Solomon 8:7 *many waters cannot quench love*; which surely must refer not to a small, but a large quantity of water; and which phrase there, the *Septuagint* render by *much water*, as we do the phrase here.

(3.) There words are given as a reason, not for the convenience of drink for men and their cattle, but for the baptizing of men, and the convenience of that; that the men that came to *John's* baptism came on horses and camels, we know not; however, the text assigns no reason for the choice of the place

upon the account of convenience for them, but for baptism only; and therefore, we should not overlook the reason in the text, that is certain, and receive one, which, at most, is very precarious and uncertain; besides, *John* had not, at this time, such vast multitudes that followed him; those followed Christ, and not him: he was decreasing: Christ made and baptized more disciples than he. See verses 26, 30 and chapter 4:1.

(4.) Supposing that vast multitudes still followed him, and were baptized by him, this affords no argument against dipping in baptism; and especially since this was performed in a place where there was much water. Nor was the baptizing of such great multitudes by immersion so great an undertaking, as that he could not survive it without a miracle; admit the work to be hard and laborious, yet *as his day was, his strength was*; according to the divine promise. We have had instances in our own nation, in our climate, of persons that have baptized great multitudes in rivers, and even in the winter time, and that for many days successively, if credit is to be given to our own writers. Mr. *Fox* the martyrologist, relates,<sup>[69]</sup> from *Fabian*, that *Austin*, archbishop of *Canterbury*, baptized ten thousand in one day, in the river *Swale*; and observes upon it, that whereas he then baptized in rivers, it followeth, there were then no use of fonts. And the same, *Ranulph*, the monk of *Chester* affirms, in his history,<sup>[70]</sup> and says, it was on a day in the middle of winter; and, according to *Fox*, it was on a *Christmas-day*. And our historian *Bede* says,<sup>[71]</sup> that *Paulinus*, for six and thirty days successively, did nothing else, than instruct the people, which from all parts flocked unto him, and baptized them that were instructed in the river *Glen*; and who also baptized in one day vast numbers in the river *Trent*, King *Edwin* being present.

(5.) Though, this writer says, here is no appearance of dipping, in the case referred to in the text, yet there are several Paedobaptists, who are of another opinion, and think there was. *Calvin*, on the text, thus writes;

"from these words, we may gather, that baptism was performed by *John* and Christ, by a plunging of the whole body under water."

*Piscator*, on the place, has these words; "this is mentioned, to signify the rite of baptism which *John* used; namely, plunging the whole body of the man, standing in the river; hence, Christ, being baptized of *John* in *Jordan*, is said to come up out of the water (Matthew 3:16). The same mode *Philip* observed" (Acts 8:38). *Aretius*, on the passage, writes in the following

manner;

"but, why did *John* stay here? He gives a reason, *because there was much water here*; wherefore penitent persons might be commodiously baptized; and, it seems to intimate, that a large quantity of water was necessary in baptizing, that they might, perhaps, immerse the whole body."

To which, I shall only add the words of *Grotius*, on the clause, *much water*:

"Understand, says he, not many rivulets, but, simply, a plenty of water; such, namely, in which a man's body could easily be immersed: In which manner baptism was then performed."

3. Another text, produced in favor of dipping in baptism, is Matthew 3:16. *And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water.* To which is objected, that "there is no more in the original, than that our Savior *went up straightway* απο, from the water; which Greek preposition always naturally signifies *from*, but never *out of*, and therefore, this instance can stand in no stead." But if the preposition never signifies *out of*, it is strange that our learned translators should so render it here, as also the *Vulgate Latin*, *Syriac*, *Persic*, and *Ethiopic* versions; and so it is rendered in the New Testament in several places, as in Mark 16:9; Luke 4:35, 41; Acts 2:9; 17:2 and 28:23, and in others. And, moreover, it should be observed, that this preposition answers to the Hebrew מִן *Min*, which signifies *out of*, as well as *from*; and which the *Syriac* version uses here: And, as a proof of both, let Psalm 40:2 be consulted, and the *Septuagint* version of it, where *David* says, the Lord brought him up out of an horrible pit, αρ απο πηλου ιλυσ, and out of the miry clay. And, if our Lord came up *out of the water*, it is a clear case, that he must have been in it; that he went down into it, in order to be baptized; and that he was baptized in it: And, is it reasonable to think, he should be baptized in the river *Jordan*, in any other way, than by immersion? See the note of *Piscator*, upon the preceding text.

4. Acts 8:38, 39 goes in company with the former; and *they went down both into the water*—and *when they were come up out of the water*. And the following remark is made;

"there can be no more proved from this text, than that *Philip* and the *Eunuch* went down to the water, and came up from it. The preposition εις, rendered *into*, naturally signifies *unto*, and is com-



monly so used in the New Testament and the preposition **ἐκ**, rendered *out of*, properly signifies *from*—so that there is no evidence from this text, that the Eunuch was baptized by dipping."

Here our author seems to have in view, a very false piece of criticism, frequently used upon this text; as if the going down into the water signified no more, than going down to the bank of the water, to the water-side: And, to support which, his sense of the preposition **εἰς**, which he would have rendered *unto*, is calculated. But, it should be observed, that the historian relates in verse 36 that, before this, *they were come to a certain water*, to the water-side; and, therefore, this, their going down, must be into it. Wherefore, as it cannot be denied, but that this preposition frequently signifies *into*, it must have this signification here; and this determines, and settles the sense of the other preposition, and shews, that that must be rendered, as it is, *out of*; seeing, whereas they went down into the water, when they came up, it must be out of it: All which gives evidence, that the *Eunuch* was baptized by dipping. *Calvin* thought so, who, on the text, has these words; "*hic perspicimus*", etc. Here we see, what was the manner of baptizing with the ancients, for they plunged the whole body into water."

**5.** The last text, mentioned in the debate, is Romans 6:4. *We are buried with him by baptism into death*. Where baptism is called a burial; a burial with Christ, a representation and resemblance of his; which it cannot be, unless it is administered by dipping. But this writer observes, it is also said, *we are baptized into Christ's death*; and asks,

"What resemblance is there in baptism to Christ's dying upon the cross, if we are baptized by dipping? Was there any thing like dipping in our Savior's crucifixion? —would you have such a manner of death resembled in baptism, by drowning men when you baptize them? And affirms, that this text has no reference at all to the imitation either of Christ's death or burial, or to any particular mode of administering that ordinance; but the scope is to shew us our obligation, by baptism, unto a conformity to the death and resurrection of Christ:, by dying unto sin, and rising again unto newness of life."

But, we have seen already, that there is a resemblance between the crucifixion and death of Christ and baptism, as administered by dipping. The



overwhelming sufferings of Christ are fitly signified, by a person's being plunged into water; and a great likeness there is between the burial of Christ and baptism, as performed by immersion: And, indeed, there is no other mode of administering that ordinance, that can represent a burial, but immersion. And be it so, that the scope of the place is to shew us our obligation, by baptism, unto a conformity to the death and resurrection of Christ, by dying unto sin, and rising again to newness of life; then that ordinance ought to be so administered, that it may represent unto us, the death and resurrection of Christ, and our dying unto sin, and rising unto newness of life; which are done, in a most lively manner, by an immersion into water, and an emersion out of it. And, that there is an allusion, in this passage, to the primitive mode of baptizing by dipping, is acknowledged by many divines and annotators; too many to recite: I will just mention two or three. *The Assembly of divines*, on this place, say,

"in this phrase, the apostle seemeth to allude to the ancient manner of baptism; which was to *dip* the parties baptized, and, as it were, to *bury* them under the water, for a while; and then to *draw* them out of it, and *lift* them up, to represent the burial of our old man, and our resurrection to newness of life."

Dr. *Hammond's* paraphrase of the words, is this;

"it is a thing, that every Christian knows, that the immersion in baptism, refers to the death of Christ; the putting the person baptized into the water, denotes and proclaims the death and burial of Christ; and signifies our undertaking in baptism, that we will give over all the sins of our former lives (which is our being *buried* together with Christ, or baptized into his death) that so we may *live* that regenerate new life (answerable to Christ's resurrection) which consists in a course of all sanctity, a constant Christian walk all our days."

So *Piscator*, on the text,

"*videtur respicere ad veterem ritum*, etc. It seems to respect the ancient rite, when, in the whole body, they were plunged into water, and so were, as if they had been *buried*; and immediately were drawn out again, as out of a grave."

But,

**Fourthly**, This writer thinks, it is not probable, from the instances of administering this ordinance in scripture, that it was performed by dipping. And,

1. He observes,

"that in Acts 2:41. there were three thousand baptized in Jerusalem, in one day; most certainly, adds he, towards the close of the day; and asks, was there any probability (I had almost said possibility) that they should all be baptized by dipping, in so short a time? Or, is it probable that they could so suddenly find water sufficient in that city, for the dipping of such a multitude; especially while they were so firmly attached to the ceremonial institution, which made it unlawful for two persons to be dipped in the same vessel of water."

To which I reply,

(1.) That though three thousand were added to the church on one and the same day, it does not necessarily follow from the text, that they were all baptized in one day, the words do not oblige to such a sense; I am indeed willing to allow it, and am of opinion they were baptized in one day; though it does not appear that it was most certainly at the close of the day, as this writer affirms; for it was but the third hour, or nine o'clock in the morning, when *Peter* began his sermon, which does not seem to be a long one; and when that was ended, after some discourse with the converted persons, and exhortations to them, this ordinance was administered. And if *Austin*, as we have seen from our historians, could baptize ten thousand in a short winter's day, it need not seem improbable, and much less impossible, that three thousand should be baptized, even at the close of a day; when it is considered that there were twelve apostles to administer baptism to them, and it was but two hundred and fifty persons apiece; and besides, there were the seventy disciples, who were administrators of this ordinance; and supposing them all employed, they would have no more than six or seven and thirty persons apiece to baptize; and as for the difference between administering the ordinance by dipping, and by sprinkling, it is very inconsiderable; for the same form of words must be pronounced in administering it one way as another; and a person being ready, is very near as soon dipped into water, as water can be taken and sprinkled or poured on his face. And,

(2.) Whereas a difficulty is made of finding suddenly water sufficient in the city of *Jerusalem*, for the dipping of such a multitude; it should be observed,

that besides baths in private houses, for purification by immersion, in case of menstrua's, gonorrhoea's, etc. there was in the temple an apartment called the dipping-room, for the high-priest to dip himself in, on the day of atonement; and there were ten layers of brass, each of which held forty baths of water, sufficient for the immersion of the whole body of a man; and there was the molten sea, for the priests to wash in, which was done by immersion; and there were also several pools in the city, as the pools of *Bethesda*, *Siloam*, etc. where persons bathed or dipped themselves, on certain occasions: So that there were conveniences enough for baptism by immersion in this place. And,

(3.) As for what this author says, that according to the ceremonial institution, it was unlawful for two persons to be dipped in the same vessel of water: I must own my ignorance of it, till some proof is given; the laver in the temple was in common for the priests.

2. The narrative of *Paul's* baptism, he says, makes it appear to be administered in his bed-room (Acts 9:9, 18), but that he was in his bed-room when *Ananias* came to him, is not so clear; however, certain it is, that *he arose, and was baptized*. Whether he arose off of his bed, or off of his chair, cannot be said; but be that as it will, had the ordinance been to have been performed by sprinkling or pouring a little water on him, he need not have rose up from either; but he arose, and went either to a bath that might be in *Judas's* house, fit for such a purpose, or to some certain place without doors, convenient for the administration of the ordinance.

3. The words of the text, Acts 10:47, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized? he says, seem plainly to contradict the dipping of *Cornelius* and his household, But why so? there is nothing in the text contradicts it; for the sense is, "Can any man forbid the use of his river or bath, or what convenience he might have, for the baptizing of those persons?" Which shews, that it required a place of some quantity of water, sufficient for baptizing by immersion; otherwise it would not have been in the power of any man to hinder them having a little water, to be sprinkled or poured on the face. And what follows confirms it; *And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord*; besides, the words of the text may be rendered, *Can any man forbid that these should be baptized with water?* See *Erasmus* on the place. Wherefore, what this writer says, that the apostle did not speak of forbidding the water to run in the river, or to remain in any other receptacle

or reservoir of water, and therefore must speak of bringing water for their baptism, is very impertinent and ridiculous.

4. He observes, that

"the Jailer and his household were baptized in the dead of the night, in the same hour of his conversion by the earthquake; and therefore, there was no probability (nor indeed possibility) of their going to any depth of water for that purpose" (Acts 16:33).

But where is the impossibility, or improbability of it? *Grotius* thinks it probable, that there was a pool in the prison, where he washed the stripes of the apostle and here the ordinance might be administered; but, if not, it is not unreasonable to suppose, that they went out of the prison, to the river near the city, where the oratory, or place of prayer was, verse 13 and there administered the ordinance, and then returned to the prison again, before morning, unobserved by any: compare verses 30 and 34 together. And now let it be considered, whether there instances, as our author says, are sufficient to convince an unprejudiced person, that the ordinance was not administered by dipping, in the apostolic times.

5. He concludes, that seeing sprinkling was the greatest purification among the Jews, and the blood of Christ, and the influences of the holy Spirit, are frequently represented by sprinkling, but never by dipping; therefore, it must be the most proper mode of administration. But,

(1.) It must be denied, that sprinkling was the greatest purification among the Jews; their principal purifications, and which were most frequently used in cases of ceremonial uncleanness, were performed by immersion, and therefore they are called *washings*, or *baptisms*, in Hebrews 9:10 and even the purification by the ashes of the red heifer, which this writer instances in, was not performed without bathing the person all over in water (Num. 19:19), and which was the closing and finishing part of it.

(2.) It is not fact, that the blood of Christ, and the influences of the Spirit, are never represented by dipping. The bloody sufferings of Christ:, and the large abundance of his blood-shed, are called a baptism, or dipping (Luke 12:50). And his blood is represented, as a fountain opened to wash in, for sin, and for uncleanness (Zech.13:1). And the donation of the Spirit, on the day of *Pentecost*, is also called a baptism, or dipping (Acts 1:5). But, it is not on those allusive expressions, that we lay the stress of the mode of the

administering this ordinance, though they are only such, this author attempts to mention, in favor of sprinkling.

***Wherefore, upon the whole, let the reader judge, which is the most proper and significant rite, used in the administration of the ordinance of baptism;*** whether immersion, which is the proper and primary sense of the word *baptism*, and is confirmed to be the rite used, by the places in which baptism was administered; and by several scriptural instances and examples of it, as well as by allusive expressions; and which fitly represents the death, burial and resurrection of Christ; or, sprinkling, which the word baptism never signifies; and is not confirmed by any of the said ways; nor does it represent any thing for which baptism is administered. Let it be, therefore, seriously considered, what a daring thing it is to introduce into this ordinance subjects which Christ never appointed, and a mode of administering it never used by him or his apostles. In matters of worship, God is a jealous God. The case of *Nadab* and *Abihu* ought to be remembered by us, who offered strange fire, the Lord commanded not. In things relating to religious worship, as this ordinance of baptism is a part of a precedent: And we ought to keep to the rule, both as to matter and manner, and not dare to innovate in either, lest it should be said to us, hath required this at your hands? worship, and with teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men.

## FOOTNOTES:

- [1] Quinta quaestio proponitur ab Auguistino, etc. Explicat. Epist. ad Ephes. c. 5. p. 225.
- [2] Answer to Rusen, p. 142, 143.
- [3] Answer to Walker, p. 157, etc.
- [4] Barnabae Epist. c. 9. p. 235, 236. Ed. Voss.
- [5] Hermae Pastor. I. 1. 7:3, f. 7. & li 3. f. 16.
- [6] Ignatii Epist. ad Polycarp. p. 14. Ed. Voss.
- [7] Part I. c. 23.
- [8] Irenaeus adv. Haeres. 1. 2. c. 39. p. 191.
- [9] History of Infant-Baptism. part I. c. 2.
- [10] [Ὁν τροπον δε ανεθηκαμεν εαυτους](#). etc. Justin. Apolog. II. p. 93, 94. Ed. Paris.
- [11] Cloppenburg. Gangraena, p. 366. Spanhem. Diatribe Hilt. Sect. 27.
- [12] Budneus apud Meshov. Hist. Anabapt. 1.4. P. 96.
- [13] Sleidan. Comment. 1. to. p. 267, 269. Spanhem. Diatribe Histor. De Origin Anabaptist Sec. 18.
- [14] Spanhem. ibid Sect. 11. Meshovius Anabaptist. Histor. 1. 3. c. 16, 18.
- [15] Spanhem. Sect. 13. Meshovius, ibid. c. 2.
- [16] Spanhem. Sect. i 1. Meshovius 1. 2. c. 4.
- [17] Ibid. c. 15.
- [18] Summa Controvers. I. 5. p. 356.
- [19] Meshovius 1. 2. e. 1.
- [20] Meshovius, 1. I. c. 2, 3.
- [21] Inter Colomes. Collect. apud Wall's History of Infant-Baptism, part II. p. 200.
- [22] Opera Innocent. tertii, tom. II. p. 776. apud Wall, ibid. p. 178.
- [23] Acts and Monuments, vol. 1. p. 262.
- [24] History of England, vol. 1. p. 233.



- [25] Neubrigensu de Rebus Anglicanis, I. 2. c, 13. p. 155.
- [26] Not. in ibid. p. 720-723.
- [27] Wall, ibid. P. 175, 176.
- [28] Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. Cent. XII. c. 5. p. 338, 339.
- [29] Ibid. p. 332.
- [30] Answer to Russen. p. 83, 84.
- [31] History of Infant-baptism, part II. p. 184.
- [32] Ibid. p. 179.
- [33] This is an extraneous footnote. (ED.)
- [34] Wall, ibid. p. 172.
- [35] Apud Wall, ibid. p. 159.
- [36] Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg, Cent. XI. c. 5. P. 116.
- [37] Answer to Ruffen, p. 84, 85.
- [38] Summa Concil. p. 122, 123.
- [39] Cent. V. c. 9. p. 468.
- [40] History, etc. Part II. p. 275, 276.
- [41] De Baptismo, c. 18.
- [42] Dr. Allix's Remarks on the ancient churches of Piedmont, p. 188, 207, 210, 286. Motland's History of the evangelical Churches of the valleys of Piedmont, book I. c.3. p. 8, etc. Et Bezae Icones spud ibid. In reduction to the history, p. 7.
- [43] History, book I. ch. 8. p. 184.
- [44] Remarks. etc. p. 171, 172.
- [45] Hist. of Infant-baptism, part II, p. 179.
- [46] Fox's Acts, and Monuments, vol. I. p. 868.
- [47] Morland's History, etc. book I. ch. 4. p. 34.
- [48] Ibid. p. 38.
- [49] Morland's History, etc. ch. 6. p. 99, 122.
- [50] Ibid. ch. 7. p. 142, 148.

- [51] Morland's History, ch. 4. p. 43.
- [52] Apud Hoornbeck. Summa Controvers. I. 5. P. 387.
- [53] Morland, ibid. ch. 4. p. 39.
- [54] Ibid. ch. 8. p. 185.
- [55] Acts & Monuments, vol. II. p. 186.
- [56] Morland, ibid. c. 4, p. 41.
- [57] Ibid. c. 4. p. 61, 67,
- [58] Morland, ibid. c. 7. P. 173.
- [59] **Audio in quibusdam Italiae Urbibus morem veterem magna ex parte adhuc conservari.** Comment. in Aug. de Civ. Dei, Lib I. c. 27.
- [60] History of Infant-baptism, Part II. c. 2. p. 12.
- [61] Hebrews 13:20 compared with Daniel 9:17, Ephesians 1:13, 14 and Ephesians 4:30.
- [62] See Exodus 1:8, 12, and Exodus 3:23 and Exodus 12:26, 27, 28, 35, 40, 50, and Exodus 14:8, 10, 22, 29; Jeremiah 1:4. and a multitude of other places.
- [63] Misn. Kiddashin, c. 2. §. 1.
- [64] Primum docent omnes Genres. deinde doctas intingunt Aqua, etc. Hieran. In Matthew 28:19.
- [65] Athanas. contr. Arianos. Orat. III. p. 209.
- [66] Institut. L. IV. c. 15 § 19.
- [67] Adversar. Miscellan. p. 30.
- [68] Maimon, Hilchot. Mikvaot. c. 1. § 2.
- [69] Acts and Monuments, vol. 1 p. 154.
- [70] Polychronicon, lib. V.c. 10.
- [71] Ecclesiastes Hist. 1. II. c. 14. p. 77. & c. 16. p. 79.