

A Reply to a Book, Entitled, a Defense of the Divine Right of Infant-Baptism.

by John Gill

This sermon argues against infant baptism and in favor of believer's baptism, emphasizing the sovereignty of God in bringing men into covenant.

Scripture: Matthew 28:19

Topics: "Baptism", "Faith and Understanding"

Description

John Gill addresses the controversy surrounding infant baptism, responding to Peter Clark's defense of its divine right. He argues that infant baptism is an unscriptural practice rooted in tradition rather than biblical mandate, asserting that true baptism should be reserved for believers who can profess their faith. Gill emphasizes the need for a return to the practices of the early church, where baptism was administered to those who could understand and accept the gospel. He critiques the arguments for infant baptism, highlighting the lack of scriptural support and the historical context of the practice. Ultimately, Gill calls for a reformation in the understanding and administration of baptism, aligning it with the teachings of the New Testament.

Transcript

A REPLY TO

A DEFENSE OF THE DIVINE RIGHT

OF INFANT BAPTISM,

By

Peter Clark, A.M. Minister at Salem

In A Letter To A Friend At Boston In New-England. To Which Are Added, Some Strictures On A Late Treatise, Called, A Fair And Rational Vindication Of The Right Of Infants To The Ordinance Of Baptism.

Written by David Bostwick, A.M.

Late Minister of the Presbyterian Church in the City of New-York

The Preface

It is necessary that the reader should be acquainted with the reason of the republication of the following treatise. In the year 1746, a pamphlet was printed at Boston in New England, called, "A brief Illustration and Confirmation of the Divine Right of Infant-baptism," written by Mr. Dickinson; which being industriously spread about in great numbers, to hinder the growth of the Baptist-Interest in those parts, it was sent over to me by some of our friends there, requesting an answer to it; which I undertook, and published in the year 1749, entitled, "The Divine Right of Infant-baptism examined and disproved." Upon which Peter Clark, A.M. Minister at Salem in New England, was employed to write against it, and which he did; and what he wrote was printed and published at Boston in 1752, called, "A Defense of the Divine Right of Infant-baptism." This being sent over to me, I wrote a Reply, in a letter to a friend at Boston, in the year 1753, as the date of my letter shews, giving leave to make use of it, as might be thought fit; and which was printed and published at Boston in 1754, together with a Sermon of mine on Baptism preached at Barbican, 1750. The controversy lying beyond the seas, I chose it should continue there, and therefore never reprinted and republished my Reply here, though it has been solicited; but of late Mr. Clark's Defense has been sent over here, and published, and advertised to be sold; which is the only reason of my reprinting and republishing the following Reply; to which I have added some scriptures on a treatise of Mr. Bostwick's on the same subject, imported from America, with the above Defense, and here reprinted. The Paedobaptists are ever restless and uneasy, endeavoring to maintain and support, if possible, their unscriptural practice of Infant-baptism; though it is no other than a pillar of Popery; that by which antichrist has spread his baneful influence over many nations; is the basis of national churches, and worldly establishments; that which unites the church and the world, and keeps them together; nor can there be a full separation of the one from the other, nor a thorough reformation in religion, until it is wholly removed: and though it has so long and largely obtained, and still does obtain; I believe with a firm and unshaken faith, that the time is hastening on, when Infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the world; when churches will be formed on the same plan they were in the times of the apostles; when gospel-doctrine and discipline will be restored to their primitive luster and purity; when the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper will be administered as they were first delivered, clear of all present corruption and superstition; all which will be accomplished, when the Lord shall be king over all the earth, and there shall be one Lord, and his name one.

A REPLY, ETC.

IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

SIR,

I Acknowledge the receipt of your Letter on the 22d of last March, and with it Mr. Clark's Defense of the Divine Right of Infant-baptism, etc. which I have since cursorily read over; for I thought it a too great waste of time to give it a second reading. Nor will my engagement in a work of greater importance permit me to write a set and labored answer to it; nor am I willing to bestow so much time and pains as are necessary to cleanse that Augean stable, and remove all the dirt and rubbish this writer has collected together.

The remarks I made in reading, I here send you. At first setting out, I soon found I must expect to be dealt rudely and roughly with, and accordingly prepared myself for it; and I assure you, Sir, I was not disappointed. The first chapter of my book, which the above Gentleman has undertaken to answer, is short, and only an introduction, observing the author's title, method, and occasion of writing the pamphlet before

me. In Mr. Clark's Reply to which I observe; 1. That he is displeas'd at calling the ordinance of baptism as truly and properly administered, Believer's-baptism, and the pretended administration of it, to infants, Infant-sprinkling; whereas this is calling things by their proper names: it is with great propriety, we call baptism as administered to believers, the proper subjects of it, Believer's-baptism; and with the same propriety we call that which is administered to infants, Infant-sprinkling; from the nature of the action performed, and the persons on whom it is performed.

Does this Gentleman think, we shall be so complaisant to suit our language and way of speaking to his mistaken notion and practice? though indeed we too often do, through the common use of phrases which obtain. 2. He is unwilling to allow of any increase of the Baptist interest in New England, either at Boston or in the country; whereas I am credibly inform'd, and you, Sir, I believe, can attest the truth of it, that there have been considerable additions to the Baptist interest at Boston; and that many hundreds in the country have been baptized within a few years 3.

He says, it is an egregious mistake, that the ministers of New England apply'd to Mr. Dickinson (the author of the pamphlet I wrote against) to write in favor of Infant-sprinkling; and he is certain that not one of the ministers in Boston made application to him, (which was never affirm'd,) and is persuas'd it was not at the motion of any ministers in New England, that he wrote his Dialogue, but of his own mere motion; and yet he is oblig'd to correct himself by a marginal note, and acknowledge that it was wrote through ministerial influence. 4.

This writer very early gives a specimen of his talent at reasoning; from the rejection of Infant-baptism, as an human invention, he argues to the rejection of baptism itself, as such; that if Infant-baptism is entirely an human invention, and a rite not to be observ'd, then baptism itself is an human invention, and not to be observ'd: this is an argument drawn up secundum artem, like a master of arts; and to pretend to answer so strong an argument, and set aside such a masterly way of reasoning, would be weakness indeed! 5.

It being observ'd of the Dialogue-writer, "that he took care, not to put such arguments and objections into the mouth of his antagonist as he was not able to answer;" this Gentleman rises up, and blusters at a great rate, and defies the most zealous, learned, and subtle of the Antipaedobaptists to produce any other arguments and objections against Infant-baptism, for matter or substance, different from, or of greater weight, than those produc'd in the Dialogue; but afterwards lowers his topsail, and says, that the design of the author of that pamphlet was to represent in a few plain words, the most material objections against Infant-baptism, with the proper answers to them; and at last owns, that a great deal more has been said by the Antipaedobaptists.

The second chapter, you know, Sir, treats of "the consequences of embracing Believer's-baptism; such as, renouncing Infant-baptism, vacating the covenant, and renouncing all other ordinances of the gospel;" that Christ must have forsaken his church for many ages, and not made good the promise of his presence, and that there now can be no baptism in the world. In Mr. Clark's Reply to what I have said on those heads, I observe the following things. The first consequence is the renunciation of Infant-baptism; which consequence, to put him out of all doubt and pain, about my owning or not owning it, I readily allow, follows upon a person's being sprinkled in infancy, embracing adult-baptism by immersion; in which he is to be justify'd, the one being an invention of man's, the other according to the word of God; nor is there any thing this Gentleman has said, that proves such a renunciation to be an evil. 1.

He is very wrong in supposing it must be my intention, that the age of a person, or the time of receiving baptism, are essential to the ordinance. The Antipaedobaptists do not confine this ordinance to any age, but admit old or young to it, if proper subjects; let a man be as old as Methuselah, if he has not faith in Christ, or cannot give a satisfactory account of it, he will not be admitted to this ordinance by reason of his age; on the other hand, if a little child is called by grace, and converted, and gives a reason of the hope that is in it, of which there have been instances; such will not be refused this ordinance of baptism.

The essentials to the right administration of baptism, amongst other things, are, that it be performed by immersion, without which it cannot be baptism; and that it be administered upon a profession of faith; neither of which are to be found in Infant sprinkling. 2. It is in vain and to no purport in this writer to urge, that infants are capable of baptism; so are bells, and have been baptized by the Papists. But it is said, infants are capable of being cleansed by the blood of Christ; of being regenerated; of being entered into covenant, and of having the seal of it administered to them.

And what of all this? are they capable of understanding the nature, design, and use of the ordinance, when administered to them? are they capable of professing faith in Christ, which is a pre-requisite to this ordinance? are they capable of answering a good conscience towards God in it? are they capable of submitting to it in obedience to the will of Christ, from a love to him, and with a view to his glory? they are not. But, 3. It seems, in baptism, infants are dedicated unto God; wherefore to renounce Infant baptism, is for a man to renounce his solemn dedication to God; and much is said to prove that parents have a Right to dedicate their children to him.

It will be allowed, that parents have a right to devote or dedicate their children to the Lord; that is, to give them up to him in prayer; or to pray for them, as Abraham did for Ishmael, that they may live in his light; and it is their duty to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; but they have no direction to baptize them, nor warrant to dedicate them by baptism; nor is baptism an ordinance of dedication, either of a man's self, or of others; a dedication ought to be previous to baptism; and Believers first give up themselves to the Lord, and then are baptized in his name. 4.

After all, a renunciation of baptism in infancy must be a matter of great impiety, because witches are solicited by the Devil to renounce it, in order to their entering into confederacy with them. I thought, Sir, your country of New-England had been cured of these fooleries about witchcraft, and diabolical confederacies long ago, but I find the distemper continues. This argument, I own, is unanswerable by me; I must confess myself quite a stranger to this dark business. 5. What the story of Mr.

Whiston is told for, is not easy to say; since it seems, he did not renounce his Infant-baptism: it looks, by the reference, as if it was intended to suggest, that an Antitrinitarian could not so well shelter himself among a people of any denomination, as the Baptists; whereas the ordinance as administered by them, as strongly militates against such a principle, as it does by being administered by Paedobaptists: but it may be, it is to recommend a spirit of moderation among us, to receive unbaptized persons into our communion by this example; but then unhappy for this writer, so it is, that the congregation Dr.

Foster was pastor of, and Mr. Whiston joined himself to, is, and always was of the Paedobaptist denomination, and have for their present minister one of the Presbyterian persuasion. The second consequence of receiving the principle of adult-baptism, and acting up to it, is, vacating the covenant between God and the person baptized in infancy, into which he was brought by his baptism. Now you will observe, Sir, 1. That Mr. Clark has offered nothing in proof of infants being brought into covenant with

God, by baptism; and indeed I cannot see how he can consistently with himself undertake it; since he makes covenant relation to God, the main ground of infants right to baptism; and therefore they must be in it before their baptism, and consequently are not brought into it by it; wherefore since they are not brought into covenant by it, that cannot be vacated by their renouncing of it. 2.

It being observed, that no man can be brought into the covenant of grace by baptism, since it is from everlasting, and all interested in it were so early in covenant, and consequently previous to their baptism; this writer lets himself with all his might and main to oppose this sentiment, that the covenant of grace was from everlasting; this, he says, is unscriptural, irrational, and contrary to scripture. But if Christ was set up from everlasting as mediator; for only as such could he be set up (Prov. 8:12); if there was a promise of eternal life made before the world began, and this promise was in Christ, who then existed as the federal head and representative of his people, in whom they were chosen so early, to receive all promises and grace for them (Titus 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:1); and if grace was given to them in him before the world was, and they were blessed with all spiritual blessings in him so early (2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 1:3, 4); then, surely, there must be a covenant transaction between the Father and the Son on their account so early; for could there be all this and no covenant subsisting?

The distinction between a covenant of redemption and a covenant of grace, is without any foundation in the word of God. Nor is this notion irrational; two parties were so early existing, when the covenant was made; Jehovah the Father was one, and the Son of God the other, in the name of his people; who, though they had not then a personal, yet had a representative being in Christ their head; and this was sufficient for them to have grace given them in him before the world was.

His metaphysical arguments from eternal acts being imminent, will equally militate against eternal election, as against an eternal covenant; and perhaps this writer has as little regard to the one, as he has to the other: nor is this notion contrary to scripture; for though the covenant is called a new and second covenant, yet only with respect to the former administration of it, under the legal dispensation; and both administrations of it, under the law and under the gospel, are only so many exhibitions and manifestations of the covenant under different forms, which was made in eternity.

The scriptures which promise the making of a covenant, only intend a clearer manifestation and application of the covenant of grace to persons to whom it belongs; things are said in scripture to be made, when they are made manifest or declared (Acts 2:36): it is a previous interest in the covenant of grace that gives persons a right to the blessings of it; and the application of these blessings, such as pardon of sin, etc. flows from this previous interest: nor does this notion render the ministry of the word and the operation of the Spirit for that end useless, and superfluous; but on the contrary so early an interest in the covenant of grace is the ground and reason of the Spirit being sent down in time to make the word effectual to salvation.

Nor is the state of unregeneracy, the elect of God are in by nature, inconsistent with this eternal covenant; since that covenant supposes it, and provides for, promises, and secures the regeneration and sanctification of all interested in it; assuring them that the heart of stone shall be taken away, and an heart of flesh given them; a new heart and a new Spirit, yea the Spirit of God shall be put into them, and the laws of God written in their minds. The text in Ephesians 2:12. describes the Gentiles only, who were strangers from the covenants of promise; the covenant of circumcision, and the covenant at Sinai; covenants peculiar to the Jews; as well as strangers to the scriptures, which contain the promise of the Messiah; all which might be, and was, and yet be interested in the covenant of grace.

If this is to be an Antinomian, I am quite content to be called one; such bug-bear names do not frighten me. It is not worth while to take notice of this man's Neonomian rant; of the terms and conditions of the covenant; of its being a rule of moral government over man in a flare of unregeneracy, brought hereby into a state of probation; which turns the covenant into a law, and is what the Neonomians call a remedial law, (as this writer calls the covenant a remedial one) a law of milder terms; nor of his Arminian strokes in making the endeavors and acts of men to be the turning point of their salvation, and conversion, as being foreign to the controversy, in hand. 3.

This writer makes a distinction between a man's being in covenant in respect of the spiritual dispensation of the grace of it, and in respect of the external administration of it: by the spiritual dispensation of it, I apprehend, he means the application of spiritual blessings in the covenant to persons regenerated and converted, by which they must appear to be in it; and in this sense, all the persons, I have instanced in, must be manifestly in the covenant of grace, previous to baptism: and consequently not brought into it by it.

By the external administration of it, I suppose, he means the administration of the ordinances of the gospel, particularly baptism; and then it is only saying a man is not baptized before he is baptized; which no body will contest with him. 4. No man, I observe, is entered into the covenant of grace by himself, or others; this is an act of the sovereign grace of God, who says, I will be their God, and they shall be my people; which this writer owns, though not exclusive of human endeavors; as if God could not take any into his covenant without their own endeavors; such wretched divinity deserves the utmost contempt.

Since the above phrase, I will be their God, etc. is a proof of the sovereign grace of God in bringing men into covenant; he hopes it will be allowed that a like phrase, I will be the God of thy seed, will be admitted as strongly to conclude the reception of the Infant-children of believers into covenant. I answer, whenever it appears that there is such an article in the covenant of grace, that so runs, that God will be the God of the natural Seed of believers as such, it will be admitted; and whereas I have observed, that the phrase of bringing into the bond of the covenant, which the Paedobaptists often make use of, is but once mentioned in scripture, and then ascribed to God; this, as it no ways contradicts a being in covenant from everlasting, so it fails not of being a proof of the sovereign grace of God in that act.

By the bond of the covenant, is not meant faith and repentance on man's part; which some stupidly call the terms and conditions of the covenant, when they are parts and blessings of it; but the everlasting love of God, which is the force and security of it, and which says men under obligation to serve their covenant-God; and to be brought into it, is to be brought into a comfortable view of interest in it, and to an open participation of the blessings of it; which is all according to, and consistent with the eternal constitution of it. 5.

The covenant of grace can never be vacated, since it is everlasting, ordered in all things and sure: this is owned by our author in respect of its divine constitution, and of the immutability of the divine promise, to all under the spiritual dispensation of it; but there are others who are only in it by a visible and baptismal dedication; and these may make void the covenant between God and them; and this it seems is the case of the greatest part of infants in covenant. Now let me retort this Gentleman's argument upon himself, which he makes use of against the covenant being from everlasting.

"Those, whom God admits into the covenant of grace, have an interest in the benefits of that covenant, pardon of sin, the gift of the Spirit, reconciliation, adoption, etc. for it is a sort of contradiction to say, that

any man is admitted into the covenant, and yet debarred from an interest in all the privileges of it." Now, either infants are admitted into the covenant of grace, or they are not; if they are, then they have an interest in the benefits of it, pardon of sin, and the other blessings, and so shall all certainly be saved with an everlasting salvation, and not apostatize, as it seems the greatest part of them do; for to say they are in the external, but not in the spiritual part of the covenant, is to make a poor business of their covenant-interest indeed.

The instance of Simon Magus, which he thinks I have forgot, will not make for him, nor against me; it is a clear proof, that a man is not brought into covenant by baptism; since though baptism was administered to this person in the pure, primitive way, by an apostolic man, yet he was in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity. 3dly, The other three consequences following upon the renouncing of Infant-baptism, as renouncing all other ordinances, the promise of Christ's presence not made good, and no baptism now in the world, are in some fort given up, and are allowed not to be clear, at least not alike clear; and are only adverted to in a general way, and some expressions of mine caught at, and remarked upon, and these mistaken or perverted. 1.

I observe, this author repeats his former mistake, that we make age essential to baptism, which is but circumstantial; and then uses an argument from the lesser to the greater, as he thinks, that if a defect in such a circumstance nullifies the ordinance, then much more the want of proper administrators: but it is not age that we object to, but a want of understanding, and faith, and an incapacity to make a profession of it, as well as the mode of administration; things of greater importance in this ordinance; at least they are so with us.

However, it is kind in this Gentleman to direct us how we may avoid this inconvenience his argument has thrown us into, by exercising a little more moderation and charity for Infant-baptism; and upon this foot he seems to be willing to compound the matter with us. 2. As to the presence of Christ with his church and ministers, it is sufficient to make that good, that he grants it where his Church is, and wheresoever he has a people, be they more, or fewer, and wheresoever his ordinances are administered according to his direction; but he has no where promised, that he will have a continued succession of visible congregated churches.

Certain indeed it is, that he will have a number of chosen ones in all ages; that his invisible church, built on Christ the rock, shall not fail; and he will have a seed to serve him, or some particular persons, whom he will reserve to himself from a general corruption; but that there shall be gathered always into a visible gospel church-state, is no where promised; and for many hundreds of years it will be hard to find any one such church, unless the people in the valleys of Piedmont are allowed to be such. 3.

This writer is not willing to admit such a supposition, that any of the laws and institutions of Christ have failed, ceased, or been annulled in any one age, and much more for several ages together; but, besides the ordinance of baptism, which through the change of mode and subjects, together with the impure mixtures of salt, oil, and spittle, and other superstitious rites, which became quite another thing than what was instituted by Christ, and practiced by his apostles; the ordinance of the Lord's-supper was so sadly perverted and corrupted, as to be a mere mass indeed of blasphemy and idolatry; in the communion of which the gracious presence of Christ cannot be thought to be enjoyed: and yet this continued some hundreds of years; only now and then some single persons rose up, and bore a testimony against it, who for a while had their followers. 4.

He seems to triumph from Dr. Wall's account of things, that there never was, nor is, to this day, any national church in the world but Paedobaptists, either among the Greeks, or Roman Catholics, or the Reformed; and that Antipaedobaptism never obtained to be the established religion of any country in the world. We do not envy his boast; we know that national churches are good for nothing, as not being agreeable to the rule of the divine word; one small church or congregation, gathered out of the world by the grace of God, according to gospel-order, and whole principles and practices are agreeable to the word of God, is to be preferred before all the national churches in the world. 5.

According to this Gentleman's own account of the English Antipaedobaptists, there could be none to administer the ordinance to them in their way; since those that came from Holland, it seems, gained no proselytes, but were soon extinct, being cruelly persecuted and destroyed; so that it was necessary they should send abroad for an administrator, or make use of an unbaptized one: but which way soever they took, they are able to justify their baptism on as good a foundation as the Reformers are able to justify theirs received from the Papists, with all the fooleries, corruptions, and superstitious rites attending it.

My third chapter, you will remember, Sir, is concerning The Antiquity of Infant-baptism, and the practice of the Waldenses. I. The enquiry is, whether Infant-baptism constantly and universally obtained in the truly primitive church, which truly pure and primitive church must be the church in the times of Christ and his apostles; since towards the close of those times, and in the two following Ages, there arose such a see of impure men, both for principle and practice, under the Christian name, as never were known in the world: now by an induction of particular instances of churches in this period of time, it does not appear, that Infant-baptism at all obtained.

In Mr. Clark's reply to which, I observe, 1. That he says, the evidence of Infant-baptism is not pretended to lie in the history of fact, or in any express mention of it in the New Testament. That the penman of the Acts of the Apostles did not descend to so minute a particular, as the baptizing of infants,--and that the baptism of the adult was of the greatest account to be recorded. 2. Yet he thinks there are pretty plain intimations of it in most of the characters instanced in, and particularly in the church at Jerusalem; which he endeavors to make good by a criticism on Acts 2:41.

And it is pleasant to observe, how he toils and labors to find out an antecedent to a relative not expressed in the text; for the words, to them, are not in the original; it is only and the same day there were added about three thousand souls; or, the same day there was an addition of about three thousand souls; and all this pains is taken to support a whimsical notion, that this addition was made, not to the church, but to the new converts; and by a wild fancy he imagines, that infants are included among the three thousand souls that were added: his argument from verse 39. and the other instances mentioned, as well as some other passages alleged, such as Luke 18:16; Acts 15:10 and 1 Corinthians 7:14 as they come over in the debate again, are referred to their proper places.

But, 3. It must not be forgotten, what is said, that this may be a reason why Infant-baptism is so sparingly mentioned, (not mentioned at all) because the custom of the Jews to baptize the children of proselytes to their religion with their parents, was well known; and there can be little doubt, that the apostles proceeded by the same rule in admitting the infants of Christian proselytes into the Christian covenant by baptism. This is building Infant-baptism on a bog indeed; since this Jewish custom is not pretended to be of divine institution; and so a poor argument in the Defense of the Divine Right of Infant-baptism; and at most and best, is only a tradition of the elders, which body of traditions was inveighed against by Christ and his apostles; and besides, this particular tradition does not appear to have obtained so early among the Jews

themselves, as the times of the apostles, and therefore could be no rule for them to proceed by; and about which the first reporters of it disagree, the one affirming there was such a custom, and the other denying it; and had it then obtained, it is incredible the apostles should make this the rule of their procedure in administering an ordinance of Christ and after all, was this the case, this would be a reason for, and not against the express mention of Infant-baptism by the divine historian; since it is necessary that in agreement with this Jewish custom, some instance or instances of Christian proselytes being baptized with their children should be recorded, as an example for Christians in succeeding ages to go by.

But, 4. A supposition is made of some Paedobaptists sent into an heathen country to preach, and giving an account of their success, declaring that some families were baptized, such a man and all his, such another and his household; upon which a question is asked, who could raise a doubt whether any infants were baptized in those several families? To which I answer, there is no doubt to be made of it, that Paedobaptists would baptize infants; and if the apostles were Paedobaptists, which is the thing to be proved, they no doubt baptized infants too; but if no other account was given of the baptizing of households, than what the apostles give of them, Infant-baptism would still remain a doubt.

For who can believe, that the brethren in Lydia's house whom the apostles comforted, and of whom her household consisted, or that the Jailor's household, that believed and rejoiced with him, or the household of Stephanas, who addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints, were infants? however it seems, as there is no evidence of fact for Infant-baptism in the New Testament, it is referred to the testimony of the ancient fathers; and to them then we must go. II. The testimony of the fathers of the three first centuries is chiefly to be attended to; and whereas none in the first century are produced in favor of Infant-baptism, we must proceed to the second.

In it, I observe, there is but one writer, that it is pretended speaks of Infant-baptism, and that is Irenaeus, and but one passage in him; and this is at best of doubtful meaning, and by some learned men judged spurious; as when he says, Christ "came to save all, all, I say, who are regenerated (or born again) unto God; Infants, and little ones, and children, and young men, and old men." Now, admitting the chapter in which this passage stands, is genuine and not spurious, which yet is not a clear case; it is objectionable to, as being a translation, as the most of this author's works are, and a very foolish, uncouth and barbarous one it is, as learned men observe; wherefore there is reason to believe that justice is not done him; and it lies not upon us, but upon our antagonists that urge this passage against us, to produce the original in support of it: but allowing it to be a just translation, yet what is there of Infant-baptism in it?

Not a word. Yes, to be regenerated, or born again, is to be baptized; this is the sense of the ancients, and particularly of Irenaeus, it is said; but how does this appear? Dr. Wall has given an instance of it out of Lib. 3 chap. 19 where this ancient writer says, "when he gave the disciples the commission of regenerating (or rather of regeneration) unto God, he said unto them, Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," where the commission of regenerating, adds Dr.

Wall, plainly means the commission of baptizing; whereas, it more plainly means the commission of teaching the doctrine of regeneration by the spirit, and the necessity of that unto salvation, and in order to baptism; and which was the first and principal part of the apostles' commission, as the very order of the words shews; and certain it is, that Irenaeus uses the word Regeneration in a different sense from baptism,[1] as an inward work, agreeable to the scriptures; and besides, such a sense of his words contended for, is to make him at least to suggest a doctrine which is absolutely false, as if Christ came to save all, and only such, who are baptized unto God; whereas he came to save baptized and unbaptized

ones, Old and New Testament saints; and many no doubt are saved by him who never were baptized at all, and some baptized not saved; but on the other hand nothing is more true than that he came to save all, and only those, who are regenerated by the spirit and grace of God, of whatsoever age; and which is clearly this ancient writer's sense, and so no proof of Infant-baptism.

To support this notion of regeneration signifying baptism so early, our author urges a passage cited by me from Justin; who, speaking of converted persons, says, "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, etc." Now, it is evident, that those persons are not represented as regenerated by baptism; because they are spoken of before as believers and converted ones; and it is as clear, that their baptism is distinguished from their regeneration, and not the same thing; for Justin uses the former, as an argument of the latter; which, if the same, his sense must be, they were baptized, because they were baptized; which is making him guilty of what Logicians call proving *Idem per Idem*: whereas, Justin's sense, consistent with himself, and the practice of the primitive churches, is, that those persons when brought to the water, having made a profession of their regeneration, were owned and declared regenerated persons, as is manifest from their being admitted to the ordinance of water-baptism: and that Justin speaks of the baptism of the adult, is owned by this writer; though he thinks it is unquestionable, that he speaks only of such who were converted from Heathenism; and is sure of it, that there were none among them born of Christian parents; this he will find a hard talk, with all his confidence, to prove.

And he has ventured to produce a passage out of Justin, as giving suffrage to Infant-baptism in the second century; and it is this from Dr. Wall; "We also, who by him have had access to God, have not received this carnal circumcision, but the spiritual circumcision, which Enoch and those like him observed; and we have received it by baptism, by the mercy of God, because we were sinners, and it is enjoined to all persons to receive it the same way." Now let it be observed, that this spiritual circumcision, whatever Justin means by it, can never design baptism; since the patriarch Enoch, and others like him, observed it; and since with Christians it is received by baptism, he says; and therefore must be different from it: and, after all, not a word of infants in the passage; nor is baptism called a spiritual circumcision; nor, as our author elsewhere stiles it, Christian circumcision, in Colossians 2:11 since the circumcision there spoken of, is called a circumcision made without hands, which surely cannot be said of baptism.

In short, I must once more triumph, if it may be so called, and say, this is all the evidence, the undoubted evidence of Infant-baptism from the fathers of the two first centuries. Proceed we to The third century; and the fathers of this, brought into the controversy about baptism are Tertullian, Origen, and Cyprian. The first of these, is the first writer we know of that ever made mention of Infant-baptism; and he dissuades from it, and advises to defer baptism to riper years; and is therefore claimed on our side of the question: nor can he be made to unsay what he has said; and therefore is traduced as a man of heterodox notions, and of odd and strange opinions; and, it seems, afterwards turned Montanist; and all this is said, to weaken the credit of his testimony, when not a word is said of Origen's gross errors and monstrous absurdities: the reason is, because it seems he was a Paedobaptist, and Tertullian an Antipaedobaptist; though it is some comfort to this writer, that he was not quite so bad as the present Antipaedobaptists are.

As to Origen, there are three passages quoted out of him; to which we object, not only, that they are translations, the fidelity of which cannot be depended upon, when there is much of this writer still extant in the language in which he wrote, and yet nothing from thence produced; but that there are interpolated, and confessedly so. His homilies on Leviticus and exposition of the epistle to the Romans, from whence two of

the passages are taken, were translated by Ruffinus, who owns he took liberty to add of his own to them; so that, as Erasmus[2] observes, it is uncertain whether one reads Origen or Ruffinus; and Scultetus[3] says the same thing; and Huetius, who has given us a good edition of the Greek commentaries of this father, and well understood him, says,[4] that "his writings are so corrupted by him, that you are at a loss to find Origen in Origen, and so deformed and unlike the original, they can scarce be known;" and one of these particular passages Vossius[5] takes to be an interpolation, and so of the greater force against the Pelagians, because Ruffinus the translator and interpolator was inclined to them: the homilies on Luke, out of which is the other passage, are said to be translated by Jerom, of whom Du Pin says,[6] that his versions are not more exact than the other's; so no credit is to be given to them, nor are they to be depended on.

Cyprian is the next that is produced, and it will be allowed that Infant-baptism began to be practiced in his time in some churches, though it seems to be an upstart notion; since it was not till then determined at what time it should be administered; and also at the same time, and in the same churches, Infant-communion was practiced; of which Cyprian gives an instance; and that is more than is, or can be given of the practice of Infant-baptism so early; and if his testimony is of any weight for the one, it ought to be of the same for the other; and if infants are admitted to baptism, it is but reasonable they should partake of the Lord's-supper, and especially as there is as early antiquity for the one as for the other.

The quotations out of Gregory Nazianzen, Optatus, Ambrose, Chrysostom, and Austin, fathers of the fourth century, which Mr. Clark has collected from Dr. Wall, might have been spared; seeing this does not come into his own account of the truly primitive church; and since it is not denied, Infant-baptism obtained in it; and yet it is certain, there were persons in this age against it, as will be observed hereafter; nor was Pelagius, in this age, so pressed and puzzled with the argument taken from it in favor of original sin; since it was not contrary to his doctrine, who allowed baptism to be administered to them "on account of the kingdom of God, but not for forgiveness of sin;" and the controversy did not lead to dispute about the subject, but the end of baptism.

The next thing, you will remember, Sir, brought into the controversy, is, whether the practice of Infant-baptism was called in question before the mad-men of Munster let themselves against it. As to the troubles in Germany, and in Munster itself, it is certain beyond all contradiction, that they were begun by Paedobaptists, and whilst they were such; and as for the German Anabaptists, as they are called, who joined with them, they were Sprinklers, and not Baptists, and so belong rather to this writer's party, than to us; but be this as it will, nothing in the controversy, depends upon that; the state of the case is, whether Infant-baptism was called in question, or made matter of doubt of before there men opposed it; and here I observe, 1.

That it is allowed there were debates about Infant-baptism before the affair of Munster, and between that and the reformation; by which it appears that it was quickly opposed after the reformation begun. 2. The letter to Erasmus out of Bohemia shews, that there were a people there near one hundred years before the reformation, who baptized anew, in mere water, such as came over to their sect: this those people did, as our author would have it, not because they judged baptism in infancy invalid, but what was received in the corrupt way of the church of Rome.

This he says after Dr. Wall, (though with the Doctor it is uncertain which was the case) inclining to the latter. But it should be observed, that there is no proof from any ancient history, that these people, or any Protestants and reformers that retained Infant-baptism, did, upon leaving the church of Rome, reject the

baptism of that church, and receive a new one; and besides, Thomas Waldensis,[7] who lived and wrote at this very time, affirms, that there were a people in Bohemia then, that maintained that "believers children were not to be baptized, and that baptism was to no purpose administered to them;" to which I would add the testimony of Luther,[8] who says, "the Waldenses in Bohemia, ground the sacrament of baptism upon the person's faith; and for that reason, they annihilate the baptizing of children; for they say, children must be taught before they be baptized." 2.

This Gentleman is not well pleased with Dr. Wall in making this concession, that the Petrobrusians were Antipaedobaptists; though it is some comfort to him, that he tells him, that their opinion seems to have been in a short time extinguished and forgotten. But this opinion of theirs not only continued among Henry and his followers, who succeeded the Petrobrusians, but among the people afterwards called Waldenses; who to this day own Peter Bruis for one of their Barbs or Parrots, as will be seen hereafter.

However, that we may have no credit from these people, they are branded as denying the other ordinance of the Lord's Supper; and as saying, it is not to be administered since Christ's time. But what Dr. Wall[9] afterwards cites from the abbot of Clugny, will serve to explain this, and shew, that their meaning is only, that the real presence of Christ in the supper, was only at the time when it was administered by him to the disciples; who makes them to say, "the body of Christ was only once made by himself the supper, before his passion, and was only, namely at this time, given to his disciples; since that time it was never made by any one, nor given to any one;" or as it is expressed from the same popish writer by Dr.

Allix,[10] "The fourth (article ascribed by the abbot to the Petrobrusians) consisted not only in denying the truth of the body and blood of our Lord, which is offered up every day, and continually by the sacrament of the church; but also in maintaining, that it was nothing, and ought not to be offered." Upon which the Doctor makes this remark: "The fourth heresy is expressed in very odious terms, and after the popish manner, who own nothing to be real in the sacrament, if the flesh of Jesus Christ and his blood be not there in substance; and who do not believe he is present at the sacrament upon any other account, but as he is offered up to God before he is eaten."

It was the real presence in the supper, and not that itself, these people denied; so that they were brave champions for the purity of both ordinances, equally rejecting Infant-baptism and the doctrine of transubstantiation. 3. As for the other instances of persons denying Infant-baptism after Peter Bruis, produced by me; this writer, from Dr. Wall, would fain fasten the charge of Manicheism upon them, and so as denying all water-baptism; I say, from Dr. Wall, for what he here says, and indeed there is scarce any thing in this whole chapter about the antiquity of Infant-baptism, but what is borrowed from him, this Gentleman having no stock of his own; that, in fact, instead of answering Mr.

Clark, I am answering Dr. Wall. As for those Evervinus writes of to Bernard, about the year 1140, there he observes, from Dr. Wall, held a tenet which shews them to be Manichees; though Evervinus[11] distinguishes them from the Manichees, namely, "all marriage they call fornication, except that which was between two virgins;" but this was not one of the principles of the Manichees, who condemned all marriage; whereas these allowed of the marriage of persons who had never been married before; they only condemned second marriage; a notion which had prevailed with some of the Christian fathers before the Manichees were in being; and this was the notion of some of the apostolics, and very probably of them all, the same Bernard makes mention of; and who, very likely, as I have observed, were the followers of Henry; and against these, this author has nothing of Manicheism: Here Dr.

Wall fails him; and here it may be remarked what Mezeray says, "in the year 1163, there were two sorts of heretics; the one ignorant and loose, who were a sort of Manichees; the other more learned, and remote from such filthiness, who held much the same opinions as the Calvinists, and were called Henricians;" so that the followers of Henry were a distinct people from the Manichees; but as for those the Bishop of Arles takes notice of, our author's remark upon them is, "it may be said, these heretics might be some of "the Manichean sect;" fine proof indeed! what he farther adds is more probable, "as perhaps they were some remains of the Petrobrusians;" so that it appears, that their opinion, which seems to have been in a short time extinguished and forgotten, continued however to the year 1215.

As for the Gascoiners, that came over into England in the year 1158, and asserted, that infants ought not to be baptized till they come to the age of understanding; this, our author says, is no more than what a Manichee might say then, and a Quaker now; though they both disown all water-baptism. What! to say, that infants ought not to be baptized till they come to the age of understanding? is this talking like a Manichee or a Quaker? Does not this suppose that they may be baptized, when they come to the age of understanding, and know what they do?

But this writer adds, it appears that these rejected both the sacraments of the New Testament, detecting holy baptism, and the Eucharist: so they did, they detested Infant-baptism as an human invention, and transubstantiation as an idol of the Pope of Rome. 4. To what I have said concerning Bruno and Berengarius, and their opposition to Infant-baptism 100 years before the Petrobrusians, I would only add; that Peter Bruis was not the author of a new sect, though his followers were so called by the Papists, to suggest that they were so; whereas, they were the same with the Berengarians, and held the same principles as the Berengarians did, both with respect to baptism and the Lord's-Supper; and what were their sentiments concerning these are well known. 5.

Gundulphus and his followers, another instance of persons denying Infant-baptism as early as the year 1025, are represented as Manichees and Quakers, in the point of baptism; and both Mr. Stennett and myself are charged with great unfairness, partiality and disingenuity, in leaving out what Dr. Allix has said concerning these men, namely, "that in the same examination, being further interrogated, these men confessed, that they thought water-baptism of no use or necessity to any one, infants or adult." [12] This is cited from Dr.

Wall, an author not always to be depended upon, and particularly here; for Dr. Allix gives no account of any further interrogation of these men, by Gerard bishop of Cambray, as is suggested; nor are these words to be found in him; for though the men at their first, and only interrogation, speak of the non-necessity and unavailableness of baptism to salvation; and, as Dr. Allix observes, said some things slightly of baptism, in opposition to the prevailing notions of those times, about the absolute necessity and efficacy of baptism to salvation; yet he is quite clear, that they were for the thing itself: "It is easy to judge, says he, [13] that they looked upon baptism only as a mystical ceremony, the end of which was to express the engagement of him who is baptized, and the vow he makes to live holy."

Gundulphus, adds he, "seeing them, (the popish priests) assert, that whosoever was baptized could never be damned, falls to an indifference for baptism; thinking it sufficient to keep to the essentials of that sacrament." From whence it is plain, he did not deny it, nor disuse it; and upon the whole it is evident, Dr. Wall has abused Mr. Stennett, and this Gentleman both him and myself. 6. It is observed, that a large stride is taken by me from the Eleventh to the Fourth century, not being able in the space of more than 600 years to find one instance of an opposer of Infant-baptism: this will not seem so strange to those who

know what a time of ignorance this was; partly through the prevalence of popery, and partly through the inundation of the barbarous nations, which brought a flood of darkness upon the empire; and very few witnesses arose against the superstitions of the church of some; yet there were some in the valleys of Piedmont, even from the times of the apostles, and during this interval, as learned men have observed, that bore their testimony against corruptions in doctrine and practice; among which, this of Infant-baptism must be reckoned one; and whole successors, as we have seen already in the Berengarians, and the Petrobrusians, and will be seen again in the Waldenses, bore witness against this innovation. 7.

Though I did not insist upon the Pelagians and others being against Infant-baptism, which some have allowed; this writer is pleased to reproach me with a good-will to admit such heretics, as our predecessors; and this is not the only instance of this sort of reflection; whereas truth is truth, let it be espoused by whom it will; and it might be retorted, that Infant-baptism has been practiced by the worst of heretics, and retained by the man of sin and his followers in all the Antichristian states; and this writer thinks it worth his pains to rescue the above heretics and schismatics out of our hands; and yet, after all, some of the followers of Pelagius at least argued, that the infants of believers ought not to be baptized; and that for this reason, because they were holy, as[14] Austin affirms; and who also observes,[15] that some other patrons argued against it, and the unprofitableness of it to infants, who for the most part died before they knew any thing of it; and Jerom,[16] his contemporary, supposes it, and reasons upon it, that some Christians refused to give baptism to their children.

So that even in the fourth century, though Infant-baptism greatly prevailed, yet it was not so general, as that not one man contemporary with Austin can be produced, as setting himself against it, as our author avers; nay Stephen Marshall, a great stickler for Infant-baptism, in his famous sermon on this subject,[17] owns, that some in the times of Austin questioned it, and refers to a discourse of his in proof of it; and the canon of the council at Carthage, produced by me, notwithstanding all that this writer says, is a full proof of the same.

For surely, no man in his senses can ever think, that a council consisting of all the bishops in Africa, should agree to anathematize their own brethren, who were in the same opinion with them about Infant-baptism; only thought it should not be administered to them as soon as born, but be deferred till they were eight days old; they that can believe this, can believe any thing; and besides, is not a child of eight days old a child newly born? Lastly, after all, Tertullian, in the beginning of the third century, as he was the first we know of that made mention of Infant-baptism, did oppose it, and dissuade from it; so that it must be once more said, it was called in question, debated and opposed twelve or thirteen hundred years before the madmen of Munster, as well as in some of the intervening centuries.

It remains now, Sir, to defend what I have said concerning the Waldenses; and it should be observed, 1. That these people had not their name from Waldus, as the first founder of their sect: this Dr. Allix has undertook to make out beyond all possible contradiction, and he has done it. These people were before his time called Vaudois, Vallenses or Wallenses, from their inhabiting the valleys; which name was afterwards changed to Waldenses, when the design was said to make men believe that Valda or Waldus was their first founder, that they might be taken for a new and upstart people; whereas they were in being long before Waldus, who received his light and doctrine from them, and whose followers joined them; and this observation sets aside the exceptions of our author to the testimonies of Peter Bruis, their confession of faith in 1120, and their noble lesson 1100, as being before the times of the Waldenses; that is, before the times of Waldo, more properly speaking; and by how much the more ancient these testimonies are, by so much the greater is their evidence in point of antiquity, as to these peoples denial of Infant-baptism;

and more strongly prove that the ancient Vallenses, afterwards corruptly called Waldenses, were against it, and for adult baptism.

These people were not divided into various sects, but were a body of people of one and the same faith and practice, which they retained from father to son, as their usual phrase is, time out of mind. 2. It is true, they were called by different names, by their adversaries; some given them by way of reproach, others from their leaders and teachers, as Petrobrusians, Henricians, Arnoldists, Waldensians, Etc. from Peter Bruis, Henry, Arnold, Waldus; but still they were the same people; just as the Papists, at the Reformation, made as many heads of distinct parties, as these were men of note in that work.

Thus for instance, the Petrobrusians were not a distinct sect of this people, but the very people called Vallenses, afterwards Waldenses; and the same may be said of the rest: nor were there any sect among them of the Manichean principle, or any of them tinctured with that heresy, as Dr. Allix has abundantly proved. The care, as he makes it appear, was this; that there were Manichees in the places where the Valdenses and Albigenes lived, but not that joined them; their enemies took the advantage of this, and called them by the same name, and ascribed the same opinions to them, especially if they could find any thing in them familiar to them: thus for instance, because they denied Infant-baptism, therefore they were against all Water-baptism, and so Manichees; for as Dr.

Allix[18] observes, "in those barbarous and cruel ages, a small conformity of opinions with the Manichees, was a sufficient ground to accuse them of Manicheism, who opposed any doctrine received by the church of some: Thus would they have taken the Anabaptists for downright Manichees, says he, because they condemned the baptism of infants:" and Mr. Clark cannot object to this observation, since he himself argues from the denial of Infant-baptism, to the denial of baptism itself; and has represented me as a Manichee, or a Quaker, for no other reason, but for the denial of Infant-baptism; and if his book lives to the next age, and is of any authority, and can find people foolish enough to believe it, I must be set down for a Manichee or a Quaker.

Indeed I must confess, I once thought, giving too much credit to Dr. Wall, that there were different sects among the Waldenses, and some of them Manichees, and of other erroneous principles, which I now retract. 3. It is not true what this writer from Dr. Wall affirms; "This is certain, that no one author, that calls the people he writes of Waldenses, does impute to them the denial of Infant-baptism;" for Claudius Couffard, writing against them, under this name, gives an extract of their errors out of Raynerius, and this is one of them; "They say, then first a man is baptized, when he is received into their sect; some of them hold that baptism is of no advantage to infants, because they cannot yet actually believe;" and concludes this extract thus, "from whence you may see, courteous reader, that this sect of the Waldenses, and the chief, yea almost all heretics now in vogue, are not of late invention, etc." and were this true, yet it is a mere evasion, and a foolish one; since the names of Henricians, Arnoldists, Cathari, Apostolici, etc. under which they are represented, as opposers of Infant-baptism, are the names of the Waldensians, as Perrin[19] observes, a writer whom our author says he has read. 4.

It is a most clear case, that the ancient barbs or pastors of the Waldensian churches, so called, were opposers of Infant-baptism. Sir Samuel Moreland, as I have observed, reckons Peter Bruis and Henry among their ancient pallors; so does Perrin likewise, though he is mistaken in making them to follow Waldo; and these are allowed to be Antipaedobaptists by several Paedobaptists themselves. Arnoldus, another of their parrots, according to the above writer, from whence they were called Arnoldists, was out of all doubt a denier of Infant-baptism, for which he was condemned by a council, as Dr.

Wall owns. Lollardo was another of their pastors, according to the same authors, and from whole name, Perrin says, the Waldenses were called Lollards; and so Kilianus says,[20] a Lollard is also called a Waldensian heretic. These were not the followers of Wickliff, as our author wrongly asserts; for they were, as Dr. Allix[21] observes, more ancient than the Wicklifites; and though this name was afterwards given to the latter, Lollardo was here in England, and had his followers before Wickliff's time; and so he had in Flanders and Germany; and of the Lollards there, Trithemius[22] says, they derided the sacrament of baptism; which cannot be understood of their deriding baptism in general, but of their deriding Infant-baptism; which was common among the Papists to say; and the same is the sense of the Lollards in England, who are charged with making light of the sacrament of baptism.

Now since these were the sentiments of the ancient pastors of the Waldenses, it is reasonable to believe the people themselves were of the same mind with them; nor are there any confessions of their faith, which make any mention of Infant-baptism; nor any proofs of its being practiced by them until the sixteenth century, produced by our author, or any other. 5. The Albigenses, as Perrin[23] says, differ nothing at all from the Waldenses, in their belief; but are only so called of the country of Albi; where they dwelt, and had their first beginning; and who received the belief of the Waldenses by means of Peter Bruis, Henry and Arnold; who, as it clearly appears, were all Antipaedobaptists; and Dr.

Allix[24] observes, that the Albigenses have been called Petrobrusians; owned to be a sect of the Waldenses, that denied Infant-baptism: and that the Albigenses denied it, at least some of them, yea the greatest part of them, is acknowledged by some Paedobaptists themselves. Chassanion in his history of these people says;[25] "some writers have affirmed, that the Albigeois approved not of the baptism of infants. --I cannot deny that the Albigeois for the greatest part were of that opinion. --The truth is, they did not reject this sacrament, or say it was useless, (as some, he before observes, asserted they did) but only counted it unnecessary to infants, because they are not of age to believe, or capable of giving evidence of their faith."

Which is another proof of the ancient Waldenses being against Infant-baptism, these being the same with them. Upon the whole, if I have been too modest, in saying that the ancient Waldenses practiced Infant-baptism, wants proof, I shall now use a little more boldness and confidence, and alarm, that the ancient Vallenses, or as corruptly called Waldenses, were opposers of Infant-baptism; and that no proof can be given of the practice of it among them till the sixteenth century; and that the author of the dialogue had no reason to say, that their being in the practice of adult baptism, and denying Infant-baptism, was a mere chimaera and a groundless figment.

My fourth chapter, you know, Sir, respects the argument for Infant-baptism, taken from the covenant made with Abraham, and from circumcision. Here our author runs out into a large discussion of the covenant of grace, in his way; in which he spends about fourscore pages, which I take to be the heads of some old sermons, he is fond of, and has taken this opportunity of publishing them to the world, without any propriety or pertinence. For, 1. not to dispute the point with him, whether there are two distinct covenants of redemption and grace, or whether they are one and the same, which is foreign to the argument; be it that they are two distinct ones, the spiritual seed promised to Christ, or the people given him in the one, are the same that are taken into the other; they are of equal extent; there are no more in the one, than there are concerned in the other; and this writer himself allows, "that the salvation of the spiritual seed of Christ is promised in both covenants."

Now let it be proved, if it can, that there are any in the covenant of grace but the spiritual seed of Christ; and that the natural seed of believers, and their infants as such, are the spiritual seed: and if they are, then they were given to Christ, who undertook to save them, and whose salvation was promised to him, and to whom in time the communications of grace according to the covenant are made; then they must be all of them regenerated, renewed, and sanctified, justified, pardoned, adopted, persevere in grace, and be eternally saved; all which will not, cannot be said of all the infants of believers; and consequently cannot be thought to be in the covenant of grace. 2.

As to what he says concerning the conditionality of the covenant, it is all answered in one word; let him name what he will, as the condition of this covenant, which God has not absolutely promised, or thrift: has not engaged to perform, or to see performed in his people, or by them. Are the conditions, faith and repentance? These are both included in the new heart, and spirit, and heart of flesh, God has absolutely promised in the covenant, Ezekiel 36:26. Is new, spiritual, and evangelical obedience, the condition?

This is absolutely promised as the former, verse 27. Or is it actual consent? Thy people shall be willing (Ps. 110:3). And after all, if it is a conditional covenant, how do infants get into it? Or is it a conditional covenant to the adult, and unconditional to them? If faith and repentance are the conditions of it, and these must be, as this author says, "the sinner's own voluntary chosen acts, before he can have any actual saving interest in the privileges of the covenant;" it follows, that they cannot be in it, or have interest in the privileges of it, till they repent and believe, and do these as their own voluntary chosen acts; and if "man's consent and agreement bring him into covenant with God," as this writer says; it should be considered, whether infants are capable of this consent, or no; and if they are not, according to this man, they stand a poor chance for being in the covenant. 3.

Whereas the covenant of grace, as to the essence of it, has been always the same, as is allowed, under the various forms and administrations of it, both under the Old and New Testament; so the subjects of it have been, and are the same, the spiritual seed of Christ, and none else; and not the carnal seed of men as such: and if the conditions of it are the same, faith and obedience, as our author observes, then infants must stand excluded from it, since they can neither believe nor obey. 4.

That the covenant of grace was made with Abraham, or a revelation and application of it to him; that the gospel was revealed to him, and he was justified in the same way believers are now; and that he had spiritual promises made to him, and spiritual blessings bestowed upon him; and that gospel-believers, be they Jews or Gentiles, who are the spiritual seed of Abraham, are heirs of the same covenant-blessings and promises, are never denied; --this man is fighting with his own shadow.

What is denied and should be proved, is, that the covenant of grace is made with Abraham's carnal seed, the Jews, and with the carnal seed of gospel-believers among the Gentiles; and that spiritual promises are made to them; and that they are heirs of spiritual bl

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