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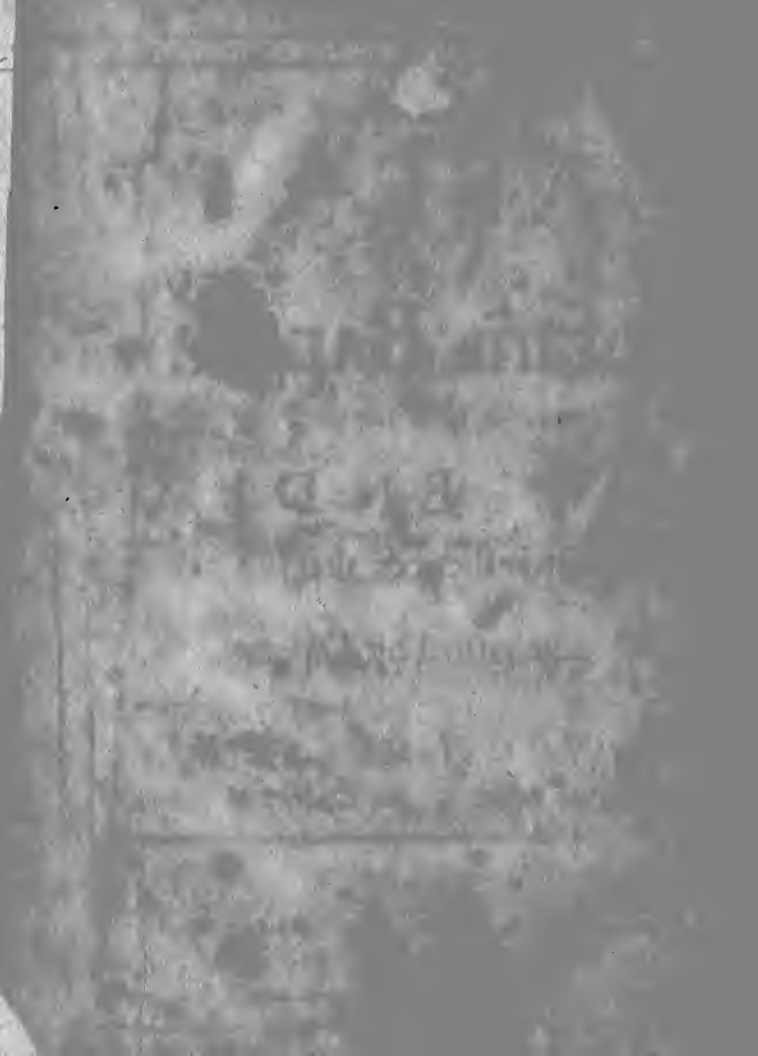
PRINCETON, N. J.

Presented by Mr. Samuel Agnew of Philadelphia, Pa.

Agnew Coll. on Baptism, No.

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A B R I E F
D E F E N C E
O F
Infant-Baptism.

W I T H A N
A P P E N D I X,
Wherein is shewed, that it is not necessary that Baptism should be administered by Dipping.

By *J O H N O L L Y F F E*,
Rector of *Almer* in the County of *Dorset*.

L O N D O N,
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T O T H E
R E A D E R.

THE following Treatise is the Substance of some Discourses which I delivered in my Parish-Church, for the Establishment of my Hearers in the present Truth: which I now publish, partly for their sakes, to put them in remembrance thereof, and that they may have something still by them to oppose to the restless and importunate Insinuations of those that are of the other Perswasion: And partly, in hopes that it may be of some Use to others, that either need or desire Settlement or Information herein. If it shall fall into the Hands of any of those of the other way, I only desire this of them, that they will endeavour to read it with as little Prejudice as they can: For I can as-

sure them, that I have no mind either to deceive, or to be deceived. But as I have learned, and am persuaded of the Truth, as it is in Jesus; so do I desire to speak, and preach, and live. If any shall think that this had been a Province fitter for others to have undertaken, I shall readily join with them in the same Opinion. But yet I shall add this, that I have some Reasons to incline me to do as I have done: And I doubt not but to find Excuse at least, among all those that are truly candid, and sincere Lovers of Truth. If thou receivest, Reader, any Benefit thereby, give God the Praise, and pray for me.

JOHN OLLYFFE.

A Brief Defence of Infant-Baptism.

THAT I may proceed with all imaginable Plainness in this Matter, I shall first set down what I have to say by way of Argument for it, which I shall endeavour to clear up and confirm; and then I shall afterwards endeavour to remove the Objections that are most commonly made, and most usually rais'd against it.

To begin with the first: That which I have to say by way of Argument in the Defence of Infant-Baptism, is this, *viz.*

They that are to be owned and received by us, as the Children of God, and his Peculiar and Covenant-People, and Members of the Church of Christ, to whom the promised Blessings of the Covenant do belong, ought to be baptized:

But there are some young Children or Infants, who are to be received and owned by us, as the Children of God, and his Peculiar and Covenant-People, and Members of the Church of Christ, to whom the promised Blessings of the Covenant do belong:

Therefore there are some young Children or Infants who ought to be baptized.

For the clearing and confirming of this Argument, two things are to be made out and confirmed.

I. That there are some young Children or Infants, who are to be owned and received by us, as the Children of God, and his Peculiar and Covenant-People, and Members of the Church of Christ, to whom the promised Blessings of the Covenant do belong.

II. That being to be so owned and received by us, they are therefore to be baptized.

I. That there are some young Children or Infants, who are to be owned and received by us, as the Children of God, and his Peculiar and Covenant-People, and Members of the Church of Christ, to whom the promised Blessings of the Covenant do belong.

For there are some young Children or Infants that have been so received, and reckoned, and declared by God himself, for his peculiar

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cular and Covenant-People, and Children, and Members of his Church; and this their Church-Membership and Relation to him, as his peculiar Covenant-People and Children, hath never been abolish'd or taken away by him, but is still continued, and rather confirmed to some young Children or Infants still: therefore there are some young Children or Infants that are likewise still to be owned and received by us for such.

1. I say, that some young Children or Infants have been owned and received, and declared by God, for his Children, and Members of his Church, and have been reckoned and taken by him into the Number of his peculiar Covenant-People.

By the Church of God I mean that Body and Number of Persons which God hath chosen, and called, and set apart in a separate manner from the rest of the World, to be brought nearer to himself in Relation, and learning the true Religion, in order to the partaking of those spiritual and eternal Blessings by Christ, which he hath promised in the Covenant of Grace.

And they that are of the Number of, or do belong to this Body or Society of Persons, I call the Members of the Church, as being Parts or Members of this Body.

And these being such as God is pleased to take into a nearer and more appropriate Relation to himself, than he doth others, are therefore also called his Children or Covenant-People; and he is their Father and Head. So that to be a Child of God, and Member of his Church, and of the Number of his peculiar Covenant-People, is all one; that is, doth denote one and the same Person.

Now, I say, that some young Children or Infants have been of the Number of those that have been thus chosen and taken by God into this near Relation to himself, as his Covenant-People and Children, so that he hath had a peculiar and separate Respect to them, as well as to their Parents and other adult Persons, in another and distinguishing manner from what he hath had to the other People of the World; and this his Respect to them he hath openly declared and testified, that others in like manner might accordingly own and receive them. Such hath been the Grace and Goodness of God, to choose and take the Infants of such as he hath called into a near Covenant-Relation to himself, that they might partake also of the Blessings of the same Covenant.

It is to be observed from the Beginning, that the Seed of those who have been God's Covenant-People, have been likewise owned and taken by God into Covenant with him; and so have continued

in that State, till by their own Wickedness and Apostacy they have fallen from it, and so have been discovenanted or rejected by God. And the whole Current and Harmony of Scripture sheweth, that ever since there was a visible Church on Earth, the Children thereof have by the Lord's Appointment been a Part thereof. *Eve*, the Mother of all Living, hath a Promise made, *Gen. 3. 15.* not only of Christ the Head-feed, but through him also of a Church-feed, to proceed from her in a continued lineal Succession, which should continually be at visible Enmity with, and stand at a Distance, and be separated from the Seed of the Serpent. Under that Promise made to *Eve* and her Seed, the Children of *Adam* are born, and are a part of the Church in *Adam's* Family. Even *Cain* was so, *Gen. 4. 1, 3.* till cast out from the Presence of God therein, for the Murder of his Brother, *ver. 14.* being now manifestly one of the Seed of the Serpent, *1 John 3. 12.* and so becoming the Father of a wicked unchurch'd Race. But then God appointed unto *Eve* another, *viz. Seth*, in whom to continue the Line of her Church-feed, *Gen. 4. 25.* And how it did continue in his Seed in their Generations, is shewed in *Gen. 5.* And hence the Children of the Church are called *the Sons of God*, (which is as much as Members of the visible Church) in contradistinction to the *Daughters of Men*, the Progeny of unchurched *Cain*, *Gen. 6. 2.* Again; if righteous *Noah* be taken into the Ark, (then the only preserving Place of the Church, to which the Apostle applieth Baptism, as having a mystical Relation to it) his Children also are taken in with him, *Gen. 7. 1.* though one of them, *viz. Ham*, after proved degenerate and wicked; but till he so appears, he is continued in the Church with his Brethren. And as the Race of *Ham*, or his Son *Canaan* (Parent and Children) are cursed, *Gen. 9. 25, 26, 27.* So likewise *Shem* (Parent and Children) is blessed, and continued in the Place of Blessing, the Church. As *Japhet* also, or *Japhet's* Posterity (still Parent and Children) shall in time be brought in. And the holy Line, mentioned in *Gen. 11. 10—26.* shews how the Church continued in the Seed of *Shem*, from him unto *Abraham*:

And when that Race grew degenerate, (as it is plain they did, *Josh. 24. 2.*) then God called *Abraham* out of his Country, and from his Kindred, and established his Covenant with him, which still took in Parents and Children, *Gen. 17. 7.* And here was a Token or Sign ordered for the Confirmation of this Covenant, which was to be applied to Children in their Infant-state, even at eight Days old, *ver. 10, 11, 12.* Here indeed we have the first mention

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of Infants as owned by God, and taken into Covenant by him, together with their Parents; as here we read of the first Token of the Covenant that was to be applied to them: But the same is also to be held of those that are spoken of before, though it be not particularly mentioned, because there was no Sign then appointed for the confirming of this Covenant to them as there now was. Yet forasmuch as they are reckoned still to be, and continue in their Church-state, till by their Wickedness or Apostacy they were cut off, and are reckoned to be in this Church-state, as coming and proceeding from such Parents as God had chosen and called into so near a Relation to himself, they are therefore to be reckoned even from their Infancy to have been in this State:

And as for the Covenant made with *Abraham* and his Infant-Seed, I shall briefly observe, for the preventing of Objections, that it was the same which in the Gospel is called the *new Covenant*. And Circumcision, which was ordered to be the Token or Seal of it, and to be applied to the same Infant-Seed, was a Token and Seal of it, as such; as appears by the Terms which in the main Article of it are the same with those which are reckoned by the Apostle to belong to the New Covenant: For *I will establish, saith God, my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations, for an everlasting Covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee.* This is the main Point. And thus that which the Apostle calls the *New Covenant*, runs in the same Terms in that main Article likewise, Heb. 8. 10. *I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a People.* And the Psalmist hath taught us, that this imports and signifieth much more than any kind of outward Prosperity whatsoever, or all together. For howsoever a People may be look'd upon happy, *that is in such a Case*; yet this is the chief Point, the all in all, the Sum of that Blessedness that can belong to a People; *Psal. 144. 15. Happy is that People whose God is the Lord.* And our Saviour hath deduced the Promise of the Resurrection it self, from God's being *the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, Matth. 22.* So that consequently the Resurrection of all others, to whom God is a God, may be concluded from the same Covenant-relation likewise. So that the Covenant made with *Abraham* and his Seed, in their Generations, was the Gospel-Covenant for the main Articles of it, and contained in it the greatest Gospel-Blessings. The Promise and Giving of *Canaan* was but an Appendix or Appurtenance to it, and not the principal thing respected; but under *that* a better Country was intended: And so *Abraham* understood it, for *he looked for a City which had a*

Foundation, whose Builder and Maker is God, Heb. 11. 10. But he sojourned in that earthly Land of Promise, as in a strange Country, dwelling in Tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the Heirs with him of the same Promise, ver. 9. So that neither he himself, nor many others to whom the Promise was made, did enjoy the earthly Canaan for an Inheritance. But they confess'd themselves, that they were Strangers and Pilgrims upon Earth; and they desired a better Country, that is, an heavenly, ver. 13, 16. which they did no doubt, by virtue of the Promise, as they understood it. And this the Apostle looks upon a verifying and making good that Relation that God engaged himself in to them; for therefore, saith he, he was not ashamed to be called their God, because he had prepared for them a City, ver. 16. So that Abraham had that which the Apostle calls the Promise of eternal Inheritance, Heb. 9. 15. For if the Inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of Promise; but now, the Apostle saith, God gave it to Abraham by Promise, Gal. 3. 18. So that the Promise of eternal Life and Happiness in Heaven, is contained in the Covenant that God made with Abraham and his Seed; together with those that were born in his House, who yet had never any share with his Seed in the Land of Canaan, as an Inheritance, at all; nor was the Messiah to descend from their Loins. And what was this then less than the Gospel-Covenant?

Gen. 17.
12, 13.

And if the Promise of eternal Life was contained in this Covenant, then we may be sure it contained also the Promise of Justification or Remission of Sin. And if so, then what was it less than the Gospel-Covenant? And thus the Apostle assures us likewise it was, and that the Gospel was preached unto Abraham, Gal. 3. 8. *For the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen through Faith, preach'd the Gospel before unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all Nations be blessed.* It is true, this Clause which the Apostle quotes, is not in Gen. 17. wherein the Covenant is made with Abraham and his Seed, which we have insisted upon; but in Gen. 12. 3. and elsewhere. But yet this Promise which the Apostle deduceth from these Words, must likewise be contained in this Covenant; and so those Words must be also a Part of it, though spoken at another time: Because Circumcision, that was the Token of this Covenant, was a Seal to Abraham of this Promise; Rom. 4. 11. *And he received the Sign of Circumcision, a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith, which he had being yet uncircumcised:* Which must be founded on the Promise; so that that Promise likewise belongs to this Covenant, and therefore is sealed by it. And this Covenant, as delivered to Abraham, the Apostle tells us also, was confirmed in Christ, Gal. 3. 17.

and therefore can be no other than the Gospel or New Covenant. Yea, and the Promise of divine Assistance for fulfilling the Conditions of the Covenant, was contained also in the same Covenant with *Abraham*: For so we find it was understood by the Church formerly; *Mic. 7. 19, 20. He will subdue our Iniquities; and thou wilt cast their Sins into the Depth of the Sea. Thou wilt perform the Truth unto Jacob, and the Mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn to our Fathers from the Days of old.* Which must needs have Respect to God's Oath and Covenant with *Abraham*. And so also the Apostle reckons, that God's sending his Son Christ to bless them, and to turn them from their Iniquities, was a great Instance of the Accomplishment of the Covenant that God made with *Abraham*, *Acts 3. 25, 26.* For the great Design of God in this Covenant at first, (as appears by the first Call that was given him, *Gen. 12. 1.*) was to separate him and his Family and Seed, from the rest of the Nations, which were fallen into the vilest Idolatry, and to preserve Religion and the Worship of the true God in his Family. And the Promise of the *Messiah*, in whom the Covenant is founded, had this Design in it; *Luke 1. 72, 73, 74, 75. The Oath that he sware to our Father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the Hands of our Enemies, might serve him without Fear, in Holiness and Righteousness before him all the Days of our Life.* So that the Covenant with *Abraham* was a Church-Covenant, and contained in it all the Terms and Design that belonged to such a Covenant, and was made with all the Family of *Abraham*, in which his Infant-Seed was also comprehended, and were to partake of the Promises and Privileges that appertained to it: It belonged to all his Family in the external Dispensation of it; and none were excluded from the Benefits of it, that did not exclude themselves by their own actual Unbelief and Disobedience to the Terms of it. And Circumcision was a Seal of it to all with whom it was made, as the visible Church of God, and to the Infant-Seed of *Abraham*, as Parts or Members thereof. For Sacraments or Signs are not appointed to the Church Invisible, (for who shall judge then to whom they are to be administered?) but to the Church as Visible. Thus having cleared up the Nature of the *Abrahamical Covenant* which God made with him and his Seed, even in their Infant-State, I shall now go forward, and shall observe how God hath shewn the same gracious Respects to Infants, in the Progress of his Dispensations towards the Jewish People.

[And thus we find afterwards, that the whole Body of the Jewish

People in *Jacob's Line*, amongst whom Children also were contained, are collectively stiled by God himself *his Son*; *Exod. 4. 22, 23. Say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my Son, even my First-born: And I say unto thee, Let my Son go, that he may serve me.* Thus God speaks of them before they were formed into a Political Commonwealth, only because he had chosen and called them out of the Nations, to be a peculiar People to himself. And in this Appellation their little ones were comprehended, as appears, because they were of the Number of those that were to go also: For *Pharaoh* would have let the Men of *Israel* go, but not their little ones, *Exod. 10. 10. But we will go, saith Moses, with our Young and with our Old, ver. 9.* So that the whole Body of *Israel*, including little ones also, was *God's Son*; for God had chosen and called all the Seed of *Israel* to be his *Covenant-People*.

And therefore thus also *Moses* afterwards enters and engages all into *Covenant* with God, one as well as another, taking in the little ones likewise: *Deut. 29. 10, 11, 12, 13. Ye stand this Day all of you before the Lord your God; your Captains of your Tribes, your Elders, and your Officers, with all the Men of Israel; your little ones, your Wives, and the Stranger that is in thy Camp, from the Hewer of thy Wood to the Drawer of thy Water; that thou shouldst enter into Covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his Oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this Day; that he may establish thee to Day for a People unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy Fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.* So that this was but the renewing of the *Abrahamic* *Covenant* with the People, as appears by the latter Clause of it running in the same Terms, for the Accomplishment of the Promise and Oath made to *Abraham* and his Seed. And in the next Chapter the Grace *Deut. 30. 6* signified by *Circumcision*, is there promised to Parents and Children; to enable them to perform the Terms of it: And it being promised to both, it imports that the *Covenant*, which *Circumcision* sealed, belongs to both: *For the Lord thy God will circumcise thine Heart, and the Heart of thy Seed.*

And after this again, even when the People were fallen off also to the *Worship* of other Gods, yet retaining still the *Acknowledgment* of the God of *Israel*, (though they joined others with him) God challengeth and owns their Children for his; *Ezek. 16. 20, 21. Thou hast taken thy Sons and thy Daughters, whom thou hast born unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed: thou hast slain my Children, and delivered them, to cause them to pass through the Fire.*

Now it was upon *this* Account, *viz.* by virtue of God's choosing and calling the Seed of *Abraham*, and separating them from the rest of the World to the Knowledge and Worship of the true God, that they were stiled his *peculiar People and Children*, and not upon a mere Political Account, or upon the Account of other carnal and temporal Respects: For in this manner we find *Moses* speaking to them; Deut. 14. 1, 2. *Ye are the Children of the Lord your God*, and therefore are not to follow or comport with the Customs and Practices of the Heathen: *For thou art an holy People unto the Lord thy God; and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar People to himself, above all the Nations that are upon the Earth.* And so chap. 7. 6. *For thou art an holy People unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special People unto himself, above all the People that are upon the Face of the Earth.* Which are the Appellations that are likewise given to the Members of the Christian Church in the New-Testament-Times by the Apostle, 1 Pet. 2. 9. *Ye are a chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People, that ye should shew forth the Praises of him who hath called you out of Darkness into his marvellous Light; which in time past were not a People, but are now the People of God.* So that these Titles being given to the Jews, import their like Covenant-relation to God in a Church-sense, as they here belong to Christians in the same Sense.

Now the whole Body of the People of the Jews being called by God into this holy Covenant-relation to himself, are stiled by the Prophet, *Israel his called*, Isa. 48. 12. And as thus he chose and called them, so he chose their Seed after them, Deut. 4. 37. The great Design of this Election and Call of God, being to preserve pure Religion among them, which was extinguish'd in the rest of the World; and therefore he took and adopted their Seed likewise to be as a Nursery to the Vineyard of the Church. And therefore, as the Psalmist saith; *He established a Testimony in Jacob, and appointed a Law in Israel, which he commanded our Fathers that they should make known unto their Children: that the Generation to come might know them, even the Children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their Children.* According to Deut. 4. 9. and chap. 6. 7. the great Care and Design of God being to raise up an holy People to himself among the Nations, to preserve the true Religion in the World; and it being of great Import to this, to have Children and little ones well educated and brought up in the Belief, and Owing, and Worship of the true God, he therefore ordered them a visible Admission, or Partnership, and Membership in his Church,

that they might be also owned and received as his People and Children, that their Parents and Guardians might be obliged to take the more Care of their Education for the promoting the great End of the Covenant. Thus the Adoption, and the Promises, as the Apostle tells us, pertained Rom. 9. 4 to all *Israel*, amongst whom the young Children also were included, they being *all* God's Chosen and Called, and so continued till they were rejected and cut off, through their own actual Apostacy and Rebellion against God; and then they were discovenanted, both they and the Children of those that were guilty of this Apostacy. But for others that continue still in a profess'd Adhesion to God, and persist in the Profession of the true Religion, this their Church-state, and Covenant-relation to God, as his peculiar People, is continued still, both to them and their Seed, and was never taken off from either unto this Day: Which is the second thing I am now to come to shew.

2. I say, that this Adoption of the Infants or young Children of his Covenant-People, into this near Relation to himself, as the Children of God, and so their Partnership or Membership in the visible Church of God, was never abolish'd or taken away by God, but is still continued, and rather confirmed.

For how indeed can it be imagined or supposed, that now in the Gospel-Administration, which is an Administration wherein there is a greater Extensiveness and Enlargement of God's gracious Respect to the World, in respect of spiritual Privileges and Mercies, than there was before, that his Goodness and gracious Respect should be more restrained, in reference to Infants and young Children, than it was formerly? For the Infants of Jews and Proselytes formerly were taken into the Number of God's Covenant-People and Children, and had the Seal of the Covenant applied to them for the Confirmation thereof. And if this Privilege and Benefit should be now taken away, their Condition after Christ would be worse than before, and they should be Losers by the World's becoming Christian. This one would think none should ever imagine. Neither, when we speak thus, do we complain against God, but against them, who would exclude whom the Lord hath not excluded.

For we do not find that ever God hath repented of any Grace or Favour, that he hath shewed to the little ones of his Covenant-People, in respect of their being to be reckoned of his Church. But in those Prophecies which we find in the Old Testament concerning the future Discoveries and Declarations of his Favour, we find that there was the same Grace and Kindness foretold and intended to be shewn to the Children as to the Parents. So that in this manner the Church should be propagated from Parents to Children, and so the true Religion preserved in this

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way, as the most proper means for it. Thus in that Prophecy which hath relation to the Calling of the Jews in Gospel-times, as appears by the Apostle's quoting some part of it to that purpose, *Rom. 11. 26. viz. Isa. 59. 20. As for me, this is my Covenant, saith the Lord; My Spirit that is upon thee, and my Words which I have put in thy Mouth, shall not depart out of thy Mouth, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seed, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seeds Seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.* And so in like manner it is a Prophecy of Gospel-times; *Isa. 44. 3. I will pour Water upon him that is thirsty, and Floods upon the dry Ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my Blessing upon thy Offspring: And they shall spring up as among the Grass, as Willows by the Water-Courses.* And *Ezek. 47. 22.* The Tenour and Intendment of God's Favour to little ones is always the same as it ever was, in reference to their being of his Church and People; nor is there the least Indication of any Design of the Dissolution or Alteration thereof.

For first, for clearing of this Matter, let us consider, that when God first shewed this Respect to *Abraham* and his Infant-seed, to take them near to himself as his peculiar People, God's Election and Call of them to this peculiar Covenant-relation to himself, as his Children and People, and so his giving them a Partnership or Membership in the *Abrahamical Church*, was not with Respect merely to their Proceeding by natural Generation from *Abraham*, but from *Abraham* as a Believer and Worshipper of the true God; there being a fair Prospect upon this Account, that *Abraham* would take care to train them up and educate them in the true Religion. Whereas the Children of Heathens, where there was no such Prospect, had no such regard shewn them by God. This seems to be much upon God's Heart, as we may express it, in his treating with *Abraham*, and giving of him those great Promises; *Gen. 18. 19. For I know him, that he will command his Children and his Household after him; and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.* It was with *Abraham*, as a Believer and true Worshipper of God, that God treated and made this Covenant, and so took his Children also into that near Relation to himself, when the Children of the Heathen were neglected, as their Fathers were. And so this Blessing, in like manner, was to be continued to his Children and Posterity, to successive Generations, as *Believers*, or Children of *Abraham's* Faith, still continuing to believe in, and worship the God of *Abraham*. In this Respect God promised to be their God, and the God of their Seed, upon condition that they keep his Covenant and his Statutes. But if they refused to do so, they were to be cut off, and to have no Part or Inheritance in God or the

Blessings of his Covenant, neither they nor their Seed. But on the other side, they that were not of the natural Seed of *Abraham*, but were bought with his Money, or were born of Gentile Parents, in his House, they being brought into this near Capacity to be instructed and brought up in the true Religion, were likewise to share in this Covenant, and to partake of the same spiritual Privileges with the natural Seed of *Abraham*, and were to be reckoned and numbred with them as the People and Children of God; and God promised to be their God likewise, as well as of *Abraham's* natural Seed. And so also afterwards, all those Gentiles that were at any time profelyted and brought over to the Faith and Religion of *Abraham*, were with their Children admitted to the same Privileges. So that it appears, that it was with *Abraham* only as the Father of the Faithful, and consequently with all those that are the Children of the Faith of *Abraham* was this Covenant made, that God would be their God, and the God of their Seed, though they are not *Abraham's* Children or Seed according to the Flesh by natural Generation. The Covenant was made with *Abraham* and all his spiritual Seed, and not with his Seed meerly according to the Flesh.

The Apostle hath cleared this to us, *Rom. 9. 6, 7; 8.* *Not as though the Word or Promise of God hath taken none effect*, because he will reject and cast off those that were descended of *Abraham* for their Unbelief and rejecting the Gospel, to whom you think that the Promises were made: *For they are not all the true Israel of God, to whom the Promise belongs, which are descended of Israel; neither because they are the Seed of Abraham by natural Generation only, are they all Children of God's Covenant: but in Israel shall thy Seed be called and chosen, to whom the Covenant and Promises shall belong.* That is; All they which are the Children of the Flesh, as proceeding from *Abraham* only by natural Generation, these, meerly as such, are not the Children of God that he reckons amongst his Covenant-People, but the Children of the Promise only, as *Isaac* was, (that is, that are *Abraham's* spiritual Seed) are accounted for the Seed that God took into that near Covenant-relation to himself; and these he will own still in the same Capacity as ever, both they and their Seed. And therefore the Covenant of God to *Abraham* and his Seed, stands firm against all the vain Objections of the unbelieving Jews. From this Discourse of the Apostle then it followeth, that it was not with the Nation of the Jews only, as being that natural Seed of *Abraham*, that the Covenant was made, and that the Adoption did belong to them and to their Seed; but it was, and is a Benefit belonging to all Believers, as the Children of *Abraham's* Faith, that did or ever should join themselves to the People of the God of *Abraham*. All such

are still an holy and peculiar People to God, both they and their Seed, till they cut themselves off by their own actual Rebellion and Apostacy, as the Jews did in our Saviour's and the Apostles times, by their not receiving him that was sent of God. The same spiritual Privileges do belong to all believing Parents, and to their Seed and Family, or those they become Guardians or Tutors to, to bring them up in the true Religion, now in the Gospel-Ministration, as did belong to the Children and Family of Jewish Believers formerly.

This appears yet further by the Apostle's Discourse, *Acts 2. 39.* For *the Promise*, or Covenant (for these are Terms that do mutually infer each other) *is unto you and to your Children*, upon *your Faith*; and also to all the Gentiles *that are afar off: Yet even as many as the Lord our God shall call*, to the receiving and owning of the same Faith, and so consequently to their Children and Seed also, as well as unto your selves. Here the old Grant to them and to their Seed is declared to be continued, and so by Consequence to the Offspring of all those that should hereafter believe.

But this Matter may be rendred yet more clear from several Passages in the Apostle's Discourse in *Rom. 11.* for it appears there by the Apostle, that the Jewish and Christian Church are radically and fundamentally the same Church, the same Stock and Root; and the same Terms and Conditions of Church-membership or Dischurcing do belong to both. Nor is the Christian Church any new Constitution distinct from the Jewish, nor is the way of Church-membership in it any other now than what was before. The Laws are indeed altered in many things, but in this Matter there is no Alteration, there is the same Covenant, and the same Church, and the Church is still constituted of *Abraham's* spiritual Seed, as it was before; so that the same Church-members also keep their Place in it as there did then. And consequently as Infants, or little Children of Believers, were Members of it before their Parents became Christian; so they continue to be still after they became so: And so the Children of all Gentile Believers for the future. For consider, *ver. 17.* the believing Gentiles are but *grafted in amongst them, and with them partake of the same* spiritual Privileges: and *ver. 20.* it is *because of Unbelief*, that any of *the Branches are broken off*: and they that believe are always in it. So that the Church is the same, and still remains without any Discontinuance or Dissolution of it, only Unbelievers are broken off from it, and others that believe are grafted in their room. It is the same *Olive-tree*, or the same Church still, but some of the Branches are broken off, *sc.* the unbelieving Jews; and others, that is, believing Gentiles, are grafted in: And none are shut out but only through Unbelief. They that believe

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continue still of it; and so also their Children, in the same manner as before, they having no Unbelief of their own, by which they should be broken off, nor yet any imputed to them from their Parents, they being Believers. And ver. 29. *For the Gifts and Calling of God are without Repentance.* He will never repent of any Favour that he hath ever by Promise conferred upon any of *Abraham's* spiritual Seed, or their Children. So that when those Jews that are now Unbelievers, and so cast out and broken off from the Church, shall at length be brought to believe, they shall then partake of the same Privileges and Benefits as they have ever done that continued in it, and as they should have done if they had so continued, and so also their Children: For ver. 16. *If the first Fruits be holy, the Lump is also holy; and if the Root be holy, so are the Branches.* Where the Parents are in Covenant, or Church-Members, so are the Children, till they fall off through their own Unbelief. So that here is no Alteration, diminishing or repealing of any Church-privilege or Promise that ever did belong to the rightful Subjects of it.

And this is further clear from the Apostle, *Rom. 15. 8, 9. Now I say, that Jesus Christ was a Minister of the Circumcision for the Truth of God, to confirm the Promises made unto the Fathers, and not to lessen or abolish them:* And so also a Saviour, through his Mercy to the Gentiles, *that the Gentiles might glorify God also for his Mercy,* because partaking of the same Benefits and Privileges that were confirmed unto the Jews. So that, as the Apostle saith, *Eph. 2. 12, 13. they that were Aliens from the spiritual Commonwealth of Israel, and Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, and were sometime afar off, are now in Christ Jesus made nigh.* And *Eph. 3. 6. the Gentiles are now Fellow-heirs, and of the same Body with the believing Jews, and Partakers with them of God's Promise in Christ by the Gospel.* So that belonging to the same Church, and partaking of the same spiritual Promises and Privileges, those that did belong to the Jews, and the Jewish Church and their Seed formerly, do likewise belong to Christian Believers now, and so in the same Extent and Latitude to their Children also, there being no Alteration made in that respect more than in any other. As the spiritual Seed of *Abraham* were ever holy, and God's Covenant-People, so were their Children; and so it is now still with Gentile Believers and their Seed.

To this purpose speaks the Apostle concerning the Seed of Gentile Believers, even where but one of the Parents are such; *1 Cor. 7. 14. For the unbelieving Husband is sanctified by, or to the Wife; and the unbelieving Wife is sanctified by, or to the Husband that believes, to the holy Use of such an one in the Sight of God, (for to the Pure all things are pure) else were your Children common or unclean, as the rest of the World are now in their Heathenism, to whom therefore God hath no Regard as to his Children; but now are they holy relatively, and of a Religious Consideration before God, as separated and dedi-*

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dicated to God, and so are part of his Covenant-People. It is not a Matrimonial Holiness that the Apostle intends, or that the Children of Believers are therefore holy, because they are no Bastards; for the Children of Pagans are as well holy in that Respect, (that were born in Wedlock) though the Parents neither of them were Believers. So that this Interpretation would make the Apostle speak impertinently and untruly. It is a relative or federal Holiness therefore that the Apostle must intend; and by this he shews, that such Children are of an holy Consideration in the Sight of God, and are of the Number of his Holy and Covenant-People.

So that we can nowhere find any Dissolution or Discontinuance of the Church-membership of Infants under the Gospel, which they once had; but it still remains the same as ever, and is rather more confirmed: It being the same Church, Covenant, spiritual Privileges, and Members as ever; and these still keeping by the same Grant, the same Place and standing in the Church as ever they did. And as this therefore was once the Privilege of Infants of *Abraham's* spiritual Seed, to stand in an holy Relation to God, as his peculiar Covenant-People and Children; so it is still. But for a further Confirmation and clearing of this Matter, we may observe also from our Saviour some such Indications of the same Respect had to them, in choosing, calling, and esteeming of them as ever.

To this purpose we find, *Mark 10. 14. They brought young Children to him, that he should touch them, (or as St. Matthew hath it, Matth. 19. 13. that he should put his Hands on them and pray) and his Disciples rebuked those that brought them: but when Jesus saw it, he was much displeas'd, and said unto them, Suffer the little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God: And he took them up in his Arms, put his Hands upon them, and blessed them.* All which sheweth Christ's good Will and Respect, and dear Affection to them, as Members of his Church, and part of his Kingdom. And which way soever the *Kingdom of God*, or the *Kingdom of Heaven* (as *St. Matthew* expresseth it) be here taken, which they are said to be of, either for Heaven it self, or the Church on Earth, their Church-membership in the visible Church will hence be concludable. For if it be meant of the Church on Earth, (as that Phrase is often taken for that) then it is the next and immediate Sense of the Words of our Saviour. Or if it be to be understood of Heaven properly, yet then it will follow from it: For if the Kingdom of Heaven receive them, and they have a Portion in that, the visible Church on Earth then may not exclude them: For none are of the Kingdom of Heaven above, that are not first of the Church on Earth: *Acts 2. 47. There were daily added to the Church such as should be saved.* And our Saviour's Reason here, *for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven*, sheweth, that he meant this of such Infants, properly taken, and not only of Men like them

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in Humility: For that could be no Reason why *they* should be brought unto him, because *others* that are like them in Humility are of the Kingdom of Heaven, unless *they* are also of the same. And his pronouncing this as a Reason why they should be brought unto him, and his embracing them also in his Arms, and his laying his Hands upon them and blessing them, sheweth a great deal more Respect to them than what was required for the healing them of any bodily Distemper; for neither was this Reason, nor all that Demonstration of Affection to them needful for *that*: when if they had not been of the Kingdom of Heaven, they should no doubt have been healed by him, if they had been brought unto him; and when they had been brought, a Word or a Touch would have effected that, without so much embracing, praying, and blessing them. So that what can we conclude from all this, but a more than ordinary Respect of our Saviour to little Children, as to his Members and Profelytes of his Kingdom; and that for this Cause he kindly treated them thus, as if on purpose, because he foresaw how little Regard would be had to them in this latter Age of the Church?

And thus again, *Luke 9. 48. He took a Child and set him by him, and said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this (this individual Child) in my Name, receiveth me.* But how can little Children be received in Christ's Name, if they belong not visibly to him and to his Church? If they must be received in Christ's Name, so that whosoever receiveth them may be said to receive Christ, they must be spiritually related to Christ, as those are that are of his Body, the Church. And this receiving them into the Church must needs be the most proper way of receiving them in Christ's Name, as those that are spiritually related to him.

By all this that hath been said we may plainly see the like Continuance of God's gracious Respect to little ones, as ever, without the least Abatement or Alteration thereof; so that being once chosen and called, and esteemed by God as his Children and peculiar People, as well as any of the Adult are, and so being reckoned therefore as Members of his Church, and as having a share in the Covenant, as others, we must conclude from these continued Indications of his Favour and Kindness to them, that they stand in the same Relation to him still, and accordingly we are so to own and receive them.

II. I now proceed to that which was in the second Place proposed for the strengthening of our Argument, *viz.* that Infants or little Children being to be owned and reckoned by us as the Children of God, and Members of the Church of Christ, to whom the promised Blessings of the Covenant belong, they are therefore to be baptized. The Rightfulness and Reasonableness of which Consequence I shall now endeavour to make out.

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1. From the Nature and Ends of Baptism, which is appointed by Christ to be the Ordinance of Initiation into the visible Church, to be the Badg and Character of the Children of God, and of the Members of the Church of Christ, and for a solemn Dedication and Engagement of them to the Service of God, and for the sealing of the promised Blessings to them. Now God having shewn such Respect to little Children, as to choose and call them out from the rest of the World, and to take them into his own Family, and to reckon them amongst his People, together with others that are adult, may we not reasonably infer, that when there is a visible Badg or Ceremony appointed by God, by which others that are called by him should be known and distinguish'd from the other People of the World, and have the Promises of the Covenant confirmed to them, that little Children partaking of the same Favour and Respect with them, should have the same visible Badg or Character likewise put upon them, that is put upon the rest of his People, that they may be visibly owned and received as his, in like manner with them; and so there may be Care taken about their Education in the true Religion, and in the Knowledg and Service of that God, to whom they are so solemnly dedicated? Baptism being a Mark or Rite appointed by God to this purpose, surely it is highly reasonable that Infants should be baptized as well as others, seeing they are chosen and called to this Dignity and Privilege of being the Sons of God, and Members of his Church, and Partakers of the Blessings of the Covenant as well as others are.

Our Saviour appointed, that all his Disciples should be baptized in his Name, and thereby solemnly dedicated and engaged to his Service; *Mat. 28. Go, disciple all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, &c.* Now to be Disciples or Children of God, or of the Church of Christ, are all Terms that are equivalent in Signification, or do mutually infer one another. And therefore by the foregoing Discourse Children will come into the Number.

And when our Saviour hath appointed little Children to be brought unto him, and to be received in his Name, *Matth. 19. 13, 14.* How can we otherwise conclude but they ought to be baptized, when Baptism is a sacred Rite appointed by him for such a solemn receiving of those that do belong to him?

And how can we better express our selves than in the Words of the Office of Baptism, that seeing our Saviour hath shewn such Affection to them, as to embrace them in his Arms, and to lay his Hands upon them and bless them, *doubt ye not therefore, but earnestly believe, that he favourably allows this charitable Work of ours in bringing Infants to his holy Baptism?* And if when they are brought to us to this End, we should refuse to receive them, we might well look for his Displeasure and Censure, as those were rebuked and blamed by him then that would have kept them from him.

The Apostle argues with the Jews, to bring them to be baptized, *that the Promise or Covenant did belong to them, and to their Children*, and so also to the Gentiles *that were then afar off*, when they should be called, and so consequently to their Children: *Acts 2. 38, 39. Repent, saith he, of your crucifying the Lord of Life, which must needs include or suppose a precedent Faith in him; repent for Remission of this and other Sins, which shall then be forgiven to you, and be baptized for the sealing of this Remission; and ye shall partake of the Gift of the Holy Ghost likewise for the farther sanctifying of you, and the enabling you to perform what ye are called unto: For you are God's Covenant-People, to whom the Promise is made, and to your Children likewise; and believing Gentiles, when they shall be called into the Church, and their Children also: And then they shall partake of your Privileges; so that as you are baptized for the Sealing and Confirmation of them, so shall your Children too. This Argument to them, both with respect to themselves and little ones, must needs be of great Force. Repentance must go before in them that had thus grievously sinned before they could partake of the Benefits of the Covenant, or have them sealed to them in Baptism; but upon their Repentance and Faith the Covenant is confirmed to them, and to their Children likewise, and so by Baptism might be sealed to them and to their Children also.*

2. The Justice and Reasonableness of the Baptism of Infants upon the Grounds aforesaid, may appear from the Analogy of the Administration of Circumcision to little Infants among the Jews (which was the first Token of the Covenant that God appointed), upon the very same Ground and Consideration, as may be seen, *Gen. 17. 7. I will establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee in their Generations, for an everlasting Covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee. And ver. 9. Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations.* And then follows the Institution of Circumcision; *ver. 10, 11. And ye shall circumcise the Flesh of your Foreskin, and it shall be a Token of the Covenant between me and you: And he that is eight Days old shall be circumcised among you.* Because God had chosen them, and taken them into Covenant, and into a near Relation to himself, as his peculiar People, so that they were thereby separated and distinguish'd from all the rest of the World, therefore he appointed that they should have Circumcision, as a Badg and Mark of this Call and Distinction, and for a Seal and Token of the Covenant between God and them. And when God hath continued the same Respect and Privilege to some Children now under the Gospel, and hath appointed the Ordinance of Baptism to the same Ends and Purpose which all those that are his People and called Ones should partake of, is it not reasonable to infer, that Children who are called to the same Privileges, and have the same Respect

from God, should partake of Baptism, as the common visible Badg of his chosen and peculiar People, and as a Mark and Seal of God's Covenant now, as they did formerly partake of Circumcision, which was the Token of the Covenant for the time being? If Baptism be of the same Use, and to the same purpose now as Circumcision was then, is it not a reasonable Conclusion, that Infants should now partake of Baptism to the same end to which formerly they did partake of Circumcision, there being the same Ground for this as there was for that, *viz.* God's Election of them into the Number of his peculiar People, and his Covenant with them?

For the Covenant, as we have heard, is the same for Substance, both then and now; and there are the same Parties in the Covenant now as there were then, as hath been proved likewise; and Baptism is the Seal of that Covenant now which Circumcision was a Seal of then; and the Church is radically and fundamentally the same both then and now; and Circumcision then, and Baptism now, the Sacraments of Initiation into it. And what though the Token be changed, as long as the Covenant, Church, Church-members and Parties in it are the same, and little Children are of the Number, it is reasonable sure that they should partake of that Mark and Token now, which is for Initiation into the visible Church, and for Confirmation of the Covenant, as they did of that which was then so for the time being; and so, that now Children should be baptized, as then they were circumcised, there being the same Ground and Reason for the Administration of either of the Signs, *viz.* their being alike Church-members, and Parties in the same Covenant.

The Apostle tells us, that Circumcision was a Seal on God's Part of spiritual Benefits to *Abraham*, and so consequently to all Believers then; *Rom. 4. 11.* *And he received the Sign of Circumcision, a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith, which he had being yet uncircumcised; that he might be the Father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that Righteousness might be imputed to them also.* Just as Baptism is now of the Remission of Sin, and the taking off the Guilt of Death which cleaved to it, and so of Justification, which is the same in other Terms with that Righteousness of Faith then imputed to *Abraham*.

And so Circumcision was a Sign, on the Part of *Abraham* and his Seed, of their Covenanting and Obligation to be the Lord's, and to labour after the Circumcision of the Heart, as Baptism is now a Mark or Seal of Obligation to the Service of Christ. Hence *Moses* exhorts the People, *Deut. 10. 16.* *Circumcise the Foreskin of your Hearts, and be no more stiffnecked;* as being that which was signified by the outward Circumcision. And so the Prophet *Jeremy*, in like manner, *chap. 4. 4.* *Circumcise your selves to the Lord, and take away the Foreskins of your Hearts.* This being that, it seems, which the Circumcision in the Flesh obliged them to. And for this God's Assistance is

promised them in the same Form of Words; *Deut. 30. 6. The Lord thy God will circumcise thy Heart, and the Heart of thy Seed, to love the Lord thy God, &c.* So that Circumcision then was for circumcising them to the Lord, that is, for the Dedication of them to his Service, as their God: Just as Baptism is now, for the like solemn Dedication and Consecration of them to the Service of Christ, and to depart from all the Filthiness of Sin, and a Sign of Obligation and Engagement of Christians to the same. Yea the Apostle shews, that as the chief thing in Baptism now is not the putting away the Filth of the Flesh, but the washing of Regeneration, which is signified thereby; so the Circumcision of the Heart was the principal thing intended in Circumcision, without which that in the outward Ceremony was of no Value; *Rom. 2. 28. For he is not a Jew, that God will accept as the Seed of believing Abraham, which is one outwardly only in the Ceremony; neither is that the acceptable Circumcision which is outward in the Flesh; but he is a Jew, accepted by God as his Peculiar, which is one inwardly: and Circumcision is that of the Heart in the Spirit, and not in the Letter, whose Praise is not of Men, but of God, who searcheth the Heart.*

In a word, the Apostle intimates to us elsewhere, that Baptism is now in all these Respects of the same Use and Significancy with Circumcision then; so that what Circumcision was then, Baptism is now; and there is no need of Circumcision now to these Ends, because Baptism doth fully serve to the same Ends, and therefore is enough without Circumcision. This is the Apostle's Argument; *Col. 2. 10, 11, 12. Ye are compleat in him, that is, Christ: In whom also ye are circumcised with the Circumcision made without Hands, in putting off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh, by the Circumcision of Christ; and have the outward Seal thereof too in Baptism, being buried with him in Baptism.* So that you have no need now of the literal Circumcision, having both the inward Grace of it by Christ, and the outward Seal of it likewise in Baptism, as ye had before in the literal Circumcision. And therefore hereupon the believing Jews might well be satisfied with the Abolishment of Circumcision, when Baptism served to the same Ends and Purposes. And it is no wonder therefore that the Jewish Believers that had a right Understanding of things, acquiesced in having the Ordinance of Baptism to the same Use as Circumcision was; and so that they made no Debate nor Quarrel about the want of an outward Sign to their Seed, because they took Baptism to be of that Use that Circumcision was before, which their Children likewise might to the same purpose partake of. Whereas when Circumcision was abolish'd, which they were so fond of, because it was the Token of the Covenant between God and them, if Baptism had not come in its stead to the same purpose, it would have been a wonder if we should not have heard of many Heats about the Loss of it. And these things being thus stated, sure Infants can be

no more incapable of Baptism now than they were of Circumcision formerly, but will have a just and reasonable Right to it.

I acknowledg yet that there were some Ends in the Appointment and Administration of Circumcision then, which are not common to Baptism now; *viz.* in respect of the Messiah, who was promised and foreshewn thereby to come into the World by Generation: And so that was a Mark made upon that Part of the Body which is inservient to Generation; and to that end was put upon *that* People, of whom the Messiah was to be born, to keep them as a separate People from all other Nations, that the Pedigree of the Messiah might be the more distinctly and securely preserved. And this end of Circumcision ceasing when the Messiah appeared, therefore in that Respect it expired of it self. But yet neither of these, nor both together, were the chief or only Ends of Circumcision, as is clear from what hath been discours'd; but we see likewise, it had a spiritual Significancy and Design to other Purposes; and in these Respects was of the same Use then, as Baptism is now; and so they both have the same Subjects, *viz.* Infants as well as grown Persons. And we are informed, that *that* was abolish'd because of the Burdensomeness of it, *Acts 15. 10.* And Baptism now succeeds in the room, as a new Institution to the same spiritual Ends, and as a more gentle Administration, which would be less offensive and troublesome to the Gentile World than *that* was or would have been.

And as for the Apostle's Disputes against Circumcision, it was in the Sense that the Jews took it, as Circumcision in the Letter only, and as a Part of the Political Law of *Moses*, into which it was afterward incorporated, and from the keeping of which they expected to be justified before God, and that with respect chiefly to its outward Performances. Against this Sense and Abuse of it the Apostle discourseth, not as it was a Sign or Token of the Abrahamicall Covenant, and as it was in its true End a Seal of the Gospel-Promises contained in it. So that the Apostle's Dispute against it in the corrupt Jewish Sense, doth no way enervate or invalidate that which we have said concerning the true End and principal Design of it. And therefore it no way destroyeth the Parallel or Analogy between Baptism and *that*, in Respects of the Ends mentioned.

As for that Objection which some have made against the Usefulness of Baptism, in comparison of Circumcision, to Children, because Baptism is but a transient Sign, and leaves no significant Impression behind it, to instruct Persons what was done to them in their Infancy; whereas Circumcision is an abiding Character in their Flesh, which they themselves may take notice of. *Answer,* that in Respect of the Significancy of either it is all one; for Children did no more understand at that Age what was done to them, or why, than Infants do now: And when they come of Age, they could not know how *that*

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that Mark came, or what that was intended for, but by the Instruction of others, whom they must be beholden to to know the meaning of it. And so Children may know now as well by the Information of others, and by the Practice thereof that they see in the Church, both that they were baptized, though they perceive no Mark of it remaining; and also the End that they were baptized for. And therefore where is the Difference?

As for the Objection, that Males only were ordered by God to bear the Token of the Covenant then; it doth not therefore follow by this Analogy, that they only should bear it now, because now there was no such Restraint laid upon the Administration, but it was to belong to both Males and Females; and yet the Analogy in other Respects holds good.

3. That Infants being now, as well as formerly, owned and called by God into a near Relation to himself, as his Children, and Members of his Church, should therefore be baptized, may be argued from this, that we read of those that were baptized upon this very Ground or Consideration, *viz.* of their being chosen and called by God to be his People and Children, and of the Church of Christ, and partaking of his spiritual Gifts and Blessings. So that if little Children do appear to be as much respected and called by him to the same Privileges as those grown Persons that were so, and thereupon were baptized: then little Children, for the same Reason, ought to be baptized also, there being the very same Reason and Ground for Baptism in them as there was in grown Persons.

Now, I say, we shall find, that the Reason and Ground upon which the Apostles did administer Baptism to grown Persons, was the Evidence they had of their being taken and brought by God into the Number of his own peculiar Covenant-People and Children, and so partaking of his Blessings: For whensoever they perceived any the least Token or Evidence of this, they presently administered Baptism to them, as it were for a visible Enrollment and Admittance of them, being so owned by God, into the Number of his People, and to have a Partnership in his visible Church.

Thus when the Holy Ghost was poured in an extraordinary manner upon *Cornelius* and his Company, this being a Token of God's having alike Respect to them, as to the believing Jews; *Acts 10. 46.* Then answered Peter, *Can any one forbid Water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost, as well as we?* By this he perceived, that he was not to look upon them any longer common or unclean, as others were that God had not shewn such a distinguishing Respect unto; and therefore he thought Baptism could not be denied unto them, whom he saw that God had by this Mark separated and set apart for himself. And in his Apology which he makes for himself about that Matter, he expresseth it in more general Terms, *chap. 11. 17.* *Forasmuch as God hath given them the like Gift, as he did unto us, wha*

believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I that I could withstand God? Intimating to us, that they partaking of the same distinguishing Gift of God as others did, whereby God's singular Respect to them did appear, that they should partake of the same Ordinance of Baptism likewise with them; without requiring of them any further Confession of their Faith in Christ, that being it self a sufficient Evidence, that God had chosen them into the Number of his People; and therefore it was reasonably concluded, without any more ado, that they also should partake of the same Badg and Seal with them. And yet the Gift of the Holy Ghost, which was then poured on them, visibly consisted but in some extraordinary Endowments of speaking with Tongues, and thereby magnifying God, which the Apostle acquiesced in as an Evidence of God's distinguishing Respect to them. Now forasmuch as it also appears, though by other Evidence, as hath been shewn, that little Children in like manner owned and respected by God, as it appears that these were by *this* that was extraordinary; How can any Man then forbid Water, that they should not be baptized? For seeing God hath given them the like Gift, as he did unto them who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, what are we that we should withstand God? If the Evidence of their Sonship and Relation to God be as certain and firm, though not in the same way, why should they not then likewise be baptized for the like Reason?

For the Gift of the Spirit it self was for their Admission or Entrance into the Body or Church of Christ, as the Apostle sheweth; *1 Cor. 12. 13. For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one Body.* And this being a Means and Evidence of their Admission into this Body, to this therefore the Baptism with Water was annex'd, as the visible Token or Ceremony thereof on the Churches Part. Now forasmuch as it appears, that Children are likewise of the Body of Christ, there is the same Reason that they should be baptized as well as those that were so, who were by the Spirit baptized into this Body.

For it appears likewise by the Apostle elsewhere, that Baptism doth belong in common to all those that are of Christ's Body, and upon that very Account of their being so: so that as it doth belong to others that are of this Body, so likewise it doth to Infants, as being of the same Body; *Eph. 4. 4. For there is one Body,* the one holy Catholick Church of Christ; *one Spirit;* that by his Gifts and Graces moves, quickens and rules it; *one heavenly Inheritance,* to the *Hope* of which they are called that are of this Body; *one Lord* that governs it; *one Doctrine of Faith* for the Rule of it; *one Baptism* for a sacramental Admission into it; *one God and Father of all,* who owns and receives the Members thereof as his Children. So that all that are of the Body of Christ (as Children are) are to be baptized, that they may be owned to be of the Number, and may be distinguish'd from all others that are not. So that as in the Old Testament, those within the Church are expressed by

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Circumcised, and those without by the *Uncircumcised*: so by Proportion those within the Church, as some Infants are, are to be *baptized*, and so to be reckoned of the Church; and they who are *not* baptized, to be accounted as out of the Church.

Even Faith it self is to bring us into the Relation of the Children of God, as the Apostle intimates, *Gal. 3. 26. For ye are all the Children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus.* So that we may reasonably conclude, that it was upon their Faith, as the Means and Evidence of their Adoption, that Believers themselves were baptized: And forasmuch as it appears, that little Children do partake of the Divine Adoption without Faith, as well as if they had Faith, there is the same Reason for their being baptized, as there was for the baptizing of those that did partake of the Adoption through Faith: the Reason why they were baptized being their partaking of the Adoption, of which Faith was the Means and Evidence; and Baptism it self was but for the sealing of this Adoption to them, and of the Covenant that God makes with them, and for the visible intitling them to the Blessings thereof.

4. There may at least a probable Argument be taken for the Baptism of Infants, from the Account that we have of the baptizing of whole *Houholds*, of all those that are spoken of by Name, that are said to have had *Houholds*, when once the Master or Mistress of the Family were baptized: When the Master or Mistress of the Family were called and owned by God, and brought into the Church, it seems that all *theirs* were received likewise, who did not reject the Counsel of God against themselves, as Infants could not do.

It hath been observed, that there are but nine in Scripture mentioned by Name to have been baptized besides our Saviour, *viz. Simon Magus*, the Eunuch, *St. Paul*, *Cornelius*, *Lydia*, the Jailor, *Crispus*, *Gaius*, and *Stephanus*. Among these, whether *Simon Magus* had any *Houhold* is not mentioned: But the Eunuch was baptized on the Road, and so had none there: *St. Paul* was not married, and it is certain had no *Houhold* where he was baptized: And whether *Gaius* had any when he was baptized is uncertain: But for all the other five, whose *Houholds* are mentioned, it is likewise express'd, or may be clearly inferred, that their *Houholds* were baptized with them: As *Cornelius* and his *Houhold*, *Acts 10.* *Lydia* and her *Houhold*, *Acts 16. 15.* The Jailor and his, *ver. 33.* *Crispus* and his, *Acts 18. 8.* And the *Houhold* of *Stephanus*, *1 Cor. 1. 16.* For God is pleas'd to have Respect to the Houses of those that are his, and do believe in him; as our Saviour said of *Zaccheus*, *Luke 19. 9. This Day is Salvation come to this House. For the Seed of the Righteous is blessed,* *Psal. 37. 26.*

Now the baptizing of whole *Houholds* must needs import the baptizing of all within the House: And it is strange, if in all these *Houholds* there should be no Person under Years of Consent to testify or profess their own Faith.

And if when *Abraham* and his Household were circumcised, his Infants were likewise comprehended; so when the Households of all those Persons are mentioned to be baptized, that are said to have had Households, why should we not as well conclude that their Infants likewise were baptized with them, as being comprehended in the same Appellation?

And this need not seem strange, when we find how quickly and readily the Apostles baptized many Persons upon the smallest Expression of Consent to the Faith of Christ, being willing to give all kind of Encouragement to their coming into the Church of Christ, when they had the least probable Hope of their future persisting therein; as we see in their baptizing *Simon Magus*, and the Jailor and his Household the same Night, and many thousands the same Day that they first express'd their Consent. And therefore, I say, it need not seem strange that they should baptize the Infants likewise, or those that were under the Age of Consent in these Households, seeing they might conceive as fair a Probability of their embracing and professing the Christian Religion afterwards, by Means of their Parents Care in their Education, because they use to bring up their Children in the same Religion they profess themselves.

But for a further Confirmation of this, and of the Use and Practice of Infant-Baptism in the time of our Saviour and the Apostles, there are two considerable Points of History taken notice of by the Learned, which will give a great Light to this Matter.

1st. The first is that which is taken out of the most authentick Records of the Jewish Writings, and those Authors that are of greatest Note among them: And it is this, that even before our Saviour's time it was the manner among the Jews to admit Profelytes into the Jewish Church by three things, *Circumcision, Sacrifice, and Baptism*, whatever were the Ground or Original of this Custom, which is differently accounted for by learned Men: And Baptism was thought so necessary, that though one was circumcised, yet if he were not baptized, he was not a true Profelyte; which is delivered as a known Axiom by the *Gemara Babylonica*. But if it were a Woman, she must only be baptized, and bring a Sacrifice: And there being a Statute among the Jews, *Numb. 15. 15. That one Ordinance should be both for themselves, and for the Stranger, or Profelyte, that sojourned among them*; therefore what they did to their Profelytes, they did also to themselves. So that as the Jewish *Talmud* and *Gemara* say, *the Israelites themselves do not enter into Covenant but by these three things, Circumcision, Baptism and Peace-offering*. And as this was the Manner and Custom of admitting grown Profelytes, so also their Infant-Children, if they had any, were baptized likewise, as the *Gemara* saith. And so also *Maimonides*, an Author of great Account among the Jews, upon condition that there was Security given for the Education of the Chil-

Children in the Jewish Religion, that when they came to Age they might not renounce it. And this their Reception of Profelytes in this way, was esteemed among them to be a kind of *Regeneration* or new Birth, they being brought and engaged thereby to a new Religion and a new Life.

Now if this be true, as the Jewish Records do inform us, and we have no Reason to doubt of, it may seem less strange that the Baptism of *John Baptist* was so readily complied with, and that there was no more Noise and Stir about it; it being in it self, for the Matter of it, no new Institution, but what had been usual and customary among them: and *John's* Design in it being only to administer it to a different End than before, that is, as a Ceremony demonstrative of, and engaging to Repentance, against the appearance of the Kingdom of *Messiah*; whereas it was before observed only as an initiating Rite into the Jewish Religion and Covenant.

And when our Saviour came and baptized, or ordered his Disciples so to do, it was only a Translation of an old Custom to a new End, *viz.* to admit and receive Persons into the Religion of *Messiah*, who was now come: And it being no more for the Matter of it than what was done before, it seems probable that our Saviour grounded his Reproof of *Nicodemus* upon his Ignorance of the Custom of his own Nation, and the Sense that they put upon it; *John 3. 10. Art thou a Master of Israel, and knowest not these things?* For that might well seem very strange, that a Person of his Condition should not understand the Phrase of his own Nation, in which our Saviour spake to him, though including also more in it when he said, *Except a Man be born of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.*

But to conclude this, it having been, as we see, the manner before among the Jews, to receive the Infants of Profelytes, as well as grown Persons, into the Jewish Church, by this Ceremony of Baptism, unless our Saviour had prohibited the same to them; how could the Apostles otherwise understand, but when our Saviour ordered them by this Ceremony to admit Christian Profelytes, they should likewise receive their Infants, as the manner had been before in the Reception of Jewish Profelytes among themselves? Which makes it therefore highly credible, that it was accordingly done: For there is no manner of Appearance of any Alteration made by our Saviour, as to the Subjects, but only as to the End and Intent of this Practice or Custom, which only gave it the Form of a new Institution.

Nor need it seem at all strange that our Saviour should adopt this Custom and Practice into the Christian Religion and Church, that was before in use in the Jewish, it being not in the least our Saviour's Design to depart as far as he could from the Jewish Church, but rather to build as much as might be with their Materials in the Erection of the Christian, and to conform it after their old Platform; as hath been shewn by learned Men in several Instances,

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and particularly in the other Sacrament of the Lord's Supper it self. And as for those Rites and Customs of the Jews which were abolish'd, the Reason thereof was not merely because they were Jewish, but either because they were such as were fulfilled in Christ and Christianity, as the Antitype and Substance of them; or because they were such as were inconsistent with the Nature of a manly, free and universal Church, such as Christ intended his should be, in opposition to the Legal Pedagogy and servile Nature of the Jewish, and for the breaking down the Partition-Wall betwixt Jew and Gentile, and the abolishing the Enmity of Ordinances, that the Religion of Christ might become more passable among the Gentile World, to whom if it had been clogged with so many Ordinances as in the Jewish Church, it would have become odious and ridiculous. Nor yet can it be said e're the more, that the Baptism of *John*, or of our Saviour, was of Man, and not from Heaven, because it was a Jewish Custom; forasmuch as the Design of it is now changed, and the Form of a new Institution is stamp'd upon the old Matter.

2dly. Another considerable Point of History relating to this Matter, is with respect to the times after our Saviour and the Apostles, and that is this; It appears by the antient Writings of the Fathers of the Christian Church in the next Ages, that Infant-Baptism was then the general Practice of the Christian Church, and was so observed, as being derived from the Apostles themselves: And there is no one Writer in any of the first Ages of the Christian Church, that does at all oppose it as unlawful, or speak of it as a novel Practice; but even those that argue against it as less convenient, yet do allow by their Discourse, that it was then the general Practice of the Church, and do not in the least contradict *that*, or bring any Argument against it, as being a new Invention, which if it had been, had above all other Arguments been most proper for their Purpose.

Irenæus Bishop of *Lions*, who lived in the next Age after the Apostles, saith, that Christ came to save all by himself; *Omnes inquam*, saith he, *qui per eum renascuntur in Deum, Infantes, & parvulos & pueros, & juvenes & seniores*: All, I say, that are born again to God, Infants, and little ones, and Boys, and young Men and old. Which Phrase of being *born again to God*, in the Sacred and Ecclesiastical Dialect, is but another Expression for Baptism, or doth certainly imply or infer it.

Tertullian, who lived but a very little after the said *Irenæus*, from a certain Notion that he had of the Use and Ends of Baptism, thought indeed that it was more convenient to defer it: And so he was likewise for the deferring of the Baptism of Virgins till they were married; and gives the same Reason for both, *For fear lest they should be tempted to renounce Christ after Baptism*: But then by other Passages it appears, that he thought the Baptism of Infants, as well as of others, absolutely necessary in case of extream Danger. And by

his very Arguments against the Practice of Infant-Baptism in ordinary Cases, he sheweth, that it was then commonly practis'd; and doth not produce any one Argument to prove either its Unlawfulness or Novelty; which if he could have done, would have been a much stronger Argument than any he hath used to confirm his Opinion; and was so obvious, that a Person of his Learning and Sagacity could not have overlook'd it; and which therefore being not urged by him, is a manifest Indication, that he had no such Opinion of its being either novel or unlawful, though for other Reasons in his singular Opinion he thought better to defer it.

Origen, who lived very little after him, speaks again and again of the Baptism of little Children in that Age, and saith expressly, *that the Church hath received it as a Tradition from the Apostles*, to give Baptism to little ones.

St. Cyprian Bishop of *Carthage*, a very small time after this, was a great Admirer of *Tertullian*, whom he often used to call his Master. But the Evidence for Infant-Baptism was so clear to him, that he declares for the baptizing of Infants, even *recens nati*, those that were just born: And there were sixty six Bishops joined in Council with him, who agreed in the same Opinion, and sent it as their common Resolution to *Fidus*, who thought that Baptism ought to be deferred at least to the eighth Day, according to the Law of Circumcision.

In the next Age lived *Athanasius*, who again and again makes mention of Infant-Baptism, and lays a great Stress upon it.

Much about the same time *Gregory Nazianzen* lived, who though his Opinion was, that where it could be safely deferred, it was better to let it alone till Children were three or four Years old, and were able to answer the Interrogatories that then used to be put to those that were baptized; yet doth he vehemently urge, that in case of Danger they should be baptized in their Infancy, and took his Reason from the Circumcision of Children at the eighth Day, and from the saving of the first-born in *Goshen* by the Sign of the Blood on the Lintel of the Door and the two Side-posts: and saith, *that though Infants be not sensible either of the Gain or Loss of it, yet that it is better, in case of Danger, that they be sanctified without the Sense of it, than that they be let alone uninitiated and unconfessed.*

St. Chrysostom is plain for it in the Beginning of the next Age, and saith, *For this Cause*, that is, beause there are so many Benefits of Baptism, *we baptize Children though they have not Sin.*

And *St. Austin* speaks of it in many Places; and urgeth it as an Argument against the *Pelagians*, for the Proof of Original Sin, which they denied. And it is very observable, that they in their Answer to him never denied the Lawfulness of that which he press'd so upon them, nor yet the Universality of the Practice,

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Practice, or the Antiquity of it in the Church of God : But rather on the contrary owned it for an Apostolical Tradition, and practised it themselves, though for other Reasons than that for which it was urged by St. *Austin*. These were very sagacious Adversaries, and would easily have discovered the Innovation of the Practice, if such it had been, by which they might have best put off any Argument that could from it have been produc'd against them.

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To these might be added many other Testimonies out of St. *Ambrose* and St. *Jerome* in that Age ; and also others in the following Ages. So vain is the Pretence of some Anabaptists, that *Pope Innocent* was the first that introduced this Practice into the Church. And as vain is what they produce from || *Walafridus Strabo*, and *Ludovicus Vives*, the eldest of which lived some Ages later than the Fathers before mentioned : It is in vain, I say, what they produce from them against the Practice of it in the Church in the former Ages, when we have such clear Testimonies from those Ages for it, and when these Authors give no Proof at all of their Opinion by which the Reader may make any Judgment about it.

Now from what hath been thus discours'd about the Judgment and Practice of Antiquity in this Matter, so near the Age of the Apostles, and that agreeably to the Practice of the Jewish Church in their admitting of Proselytes and their Children also by Baptism, is it not a fair and reasonable Inference, to conclude that this was the Practice also of the Apostles between, and was as old as the Churches that they planted, and was derived to the succeeding Ages from them ? For if this had been a new upstart Invention, or had been brought in by false Teachers, and especially if it had been of such a pestiferous Nature, as the Anabaptists pretend, and had all been but profane Trifling and Mockery, it is not easy to be imagined how it should so early and universally obtain in the Christian Church, and that it should not be more vehemently opposed, and the Mockery, Profaneness and Pestilency of it discovered, as that of other Heresies was. *Had the Churches erred, they would have varied*, saith *Tertullian* ; but what is one and the same among them all, (as this of Infant-Baptism was) *Non est erratum sed traditum* ; doth not come from Error but Apostolical Tradition. And so St. *Austin* upon this very Subject, *That which the universal Church doth hold, and was never instituted by Councils, but was always retained in the Church, we most rightly believe to have descended from nothing else than Apostolical Tradition.* And such was the case of Infant-Baptism.

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And this Custom and Practice is still continued in the Churches of Christ, though of several Denominations, unto this Day. All the Protestant Confessions of *Helvetia*, *Bohemia*, *Belgia*, *Auspurg*, *Saxony*, *Wittenberg*, *Sweve-land*, *France*, and *Piedmont*, do universally give their Testimony to it. And Histories give us the same Account of the Practice of it among the *Russians*,

Muscovites; the Christians of *St. Thomas* in *India*; those in *Syria*, *Cyprus*, *Mesopotamia*, *Babylon*, *Palestine*; amongst the *Copti* in *Egypt*; the *Abassins* in *Africa*; the *Armenians* in *Turky*; the *Maronites* inhabiting *Aleppo*, *Damascus*, *Tripoly* of *Syria*, *Cyprus*, and *Mount Libanus*. And many of these Churches are at vast Distance one from another, and therefore can have but very little Intercourse or Communication one with another. And as for the *Abassine* and *Indian* Churches, they seem in all Probability to be Original Plantations, and not to have derived their Faith and Practice from any other Churches; and yet all retain and continue the Practice of baptizing Infants.

These things one would think should be enough to sway with all modest Persons: And they would learn not to prefer the new upstart Opinions of those, who because of the Smalness of their Number are fain to call themselves the *little Flock*, before the universal consentient Practice of all the Churches of Christ besides in the World. An humble Person should far more highly esteem of Godly Antiquity and the Universal Church, than of such late and novel Singularity.

Objections against Infant-Baptism answered.

HAVING thus, with all possible convenient Brevity, endeavoured to clear up and confirm the Doctrine and Practice of Infant-Baptism, I shall now consider the Objections that use commonly to be raised against it, and shall endeavour to give them a satisfactory Answer.

Object. I. *That Infants are not capable of the Ends of Baptism; that it doth them no Good, but they are as well without it as with it, because there is no Benefit that they can receive thereby.*

Ans. The contrary to this is most true. For,

I. They are capable of Baptism, as it is an outward Badg or Mark of their Relation to God, as his Children and peculiar People, and of God's gracious Respect to them, and owning them for such; and so as it is a visible Rite of their Admission into the visible Church of Christ. This is one of the Ends of Baptism, and Infants are capable of this, because for this End it may be administered to those that are meerly passive, and do not understand any thing of the Matter: As Infants are capable of Civil Adoption, and of being entered into any Family, Tribe, College, or other Society, by such a Rite as shall be appointed for that end. And thus Infants in the Jewish Church were baptized to this end, together with their proselyted Parents, as we have seen before: and we do not find that ever any of the Prophets, or our Saviour, or

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the Apostles, did find fault upon the Account of Infants Incapacity, or otherwise; therefore we may conclude, that they were capable of Baptism, and that their Baptism was likewise well approved of. And so by God's own Appointment and Institution Infants were circumcised to the aforesaid Ends and Purposes. And how are they incapable then of Baptism to the same Ends to which they were capable of Circumcision?

2. Infants are capable of Baptism, as it is a Sign, or Note, or Seal, on God's or Christ's Part, to assure us of his gracious Favour to us, and to consign over to us the Benefits of the Covenant of Grace. Thus Infants are capable of Baptism, as it is a Mark or Seal of the Remission or doing away that original Guilt and Obligation to Death, which they derived from the first *Adam*, and of their being brought into a new State of Regeneration and Life by Christ Jesus. And so as it is a Seal of the Promise and Gift of the Spirit for the sanctifying and renewing them hereafter; though for the present they understand nothing of it: For it is sufficient also for this, that they be meekly passive in the Administration. As Baptism is to the Adult a Sign or Seal of the Remission or washing away of that original Guilt which they have from *Adam*, and also of that which they have contracted by their own actual Sin; so may Baptism be a Sign or Seal of the washing away of the original Guilt to Infants derived from *Adam*, though they have no Guilt at all of any actual Sin of their own to be remitted or wash'd away. And yet as Baptism is a Sign or Seal of the new Covenant for the Remission of all Sin to Believers, not only of what is past, but also of what is to come, when they come to repent of it; and to perform the Terms of the Gospel required to such Remission; so may Baptism be to Infants a Sign or Seal of the Remission of all the actual Sin that shall ever be committed by them, upon their future performing of the same Terms. And so as Baptism is to the Adult a Sign or Seal of their being brought into a new Regenerate State, and of having a Right to Life by virtue of their Adoption, their Sin being done away by the Blood of Christ; so may it likewise be to Infants a Sign and Seal of God's gracious Favour in giving them a Right to the Heavenly Inheritance. As Infants, by virtue of any Civil Adoption, may be Heirs to a Temporal Estate, and are capable of any Acts of Favour from Man, and to be instated in any Privileges, before they come to understand what they are. As suppose the King should send for a Traitor's Child out of the Cradle, and in the Presence of several Persons assembled for that purpose, should say, *You know the Blood of this Child is attainted by his Father's Treason, and by Law he hath forfeited all Right to his Ancestors Estate and Titles, and is quite undone, though he be not sensible of his wretched Condition: But I will pardon this Infant freely, and here I restore him to all his forfeited Rights: I justify him freely, and declare my self reconciled unto him, and moreover do adopt him into my*

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Royal Family, and do settle part of my Dominions upon him, and as a confirmatory Sign of this my Respect unto him, I do order and command before you all, that he be washed with pure Water, to signify that he is cleansed from his original Attainder and Corruption of Blood, and that I am perfectly reconciled unto him. Who would say that this were an insignificant or useless Sign, because the Child did not understand the meaning of it? Or who could say that the Child, who was capable of the thing signified, *viz.* the removing the Attainder, and being vested in a Right and Title to a noble Inheritance, should be incapable of the washing with Water for a Sign hereof? especially considering that a bit of Flesh was appointed and ordered by God to be cut off by Circumcision, when the Child was but eight Days old, to the same Intent and Purpose, though he understood as little of the meaning of that, as Infants do of the meaning of Baptism now for this end.

3. Infants are capable of Baptism, as it is a Mark or Sign on our part of their Dedication to God, and to the Service of Jesus Christ, and of their entrance into, and coming under a Covenant-Engagement to be the Lord's for the future, even whilst they are *under* the Age of Consent, to concur hereto by any Act of their own. As Infants are capable of being entred into a School or College, and of wearing a Badg belonging to it, in order to future Instruction and Learning, though at present they understand nothing of it. And as it is usual by Wills and Contracts to bring Infants under an Obligation to perform certain Conditions when they come to Age. This is plain from the Covenant-Engagement, that the Seed of *Abraham* was brought under as well as *Abraham* himself, and received the Sign of Circumcision to confirm this at eight Days old: For that Rite laid an Obligation upon them to observe all the Laws of *Moses*, though the Rite was administered to them in their Infancy by the Act of their Parents, long enough before they themselves came to Age of Consent; *Gal. 5. 3. For I testify to every Man that is circumcised, that he is a Debtor to do the whole Law.* Circumcision, though primarily the Rite of the Abrahamic Covenant, yet being incorporated into the Political Law of *Moses* also, and so was withal an obligatory Rite to the Observance thereof.

Thus also in like manner, *Deut. 29. 11.* The little ones are likewise said to enter into the Covenant with the Lord, and into his Oath, as well as all the Men of *Israel*. And it hath been ever reckoned, that the Parents may lay an Obligation on the Children: as *Esth. 9. 27. The Jews ordained and took upon them and upon their Seed, and upon all such as joined themselves unto them, so as it should not fail that they would keep the Feasts of Purim.* And thus *Hanna* dedicated *Samuel* to the Service of the Lord from the time of his weaning, *1 Sam. 1. 28.* And *Samson* was a Nazarite from the Womb, *Judg. 13. 15.* And the Covenant was made between *David* and *Jonathan*,

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both for *themselves and their Seed*, 1 Sam. 20. 42. And the Covenant that *Joshua* and the Men of *Israel* made with the Gibeonites, obliged all their Posterity. And thus, as hath been said, all the Jewish Infants were consecrated and devoted to God by the Rite of Circumcision: For Children are look'd upon as Parts of their Parents; and what their Parents do for themselves or them, especially when they are in their Infant-state, and under the Age of Consent themselves, is reasonably esteemed as laying an Obligation upon them, as if it were done by them, when the thing it self is just and reasonable, and may be beneficial to them. For though we cannot lay a Burden upon others without their own Consent, yet we may procure a Favour for them, and oblige them to the Performance of certain Conditions for their future Participation thereof, when it is for their Benefit to be so obliged: Indeed if they will, they may afterwards renounce the Obligation, but then they must renounce and quit the Benefit too; which if it be considerable, there is no wise Man that is in his Wits will ever do, but will stand to the Obligation under which he is brought for his own Advantage, and will esteem it a great Advantage that he was brought under it.

And now is all this no Benefit? *They shall be saved without it*, they will say. But what then? Is there nothing to be ever esteemed a Benefit but Salvation it self alone? Is all this that hath been said of Infant-Baptism no Benefit?

Is it no Benefit to be enrolled thereby into the Number of God's peculiar People, to have the Mark and Badg of his Children, and to be reckon'd amongst those that he hath called to a Covenant-relation to himself? Is it no Benefit to partake of the Rite of visible Admission into the Church of Christ? Is this no Privilege? no Benefit? If the contrary would be a great Evil, to be cast out as common and unclean amongst the rest of the World, is it not then a Benefit to have the Badg and Mark of an holy Separation to God, as the People of his Adoption and Grace?

Is it no Benefit to partake of the Mark and Seal of the Blessings and Promises of God, of the Removal of the Guilt and Death which they were liable to by *Adam*, and of the Promise of the Spirit for their Regeneration and Sanctification, whose Assistance therefore, to that end, they may comfortably hope for, and expect from God, as they have need of it, whether there be any present Operation or Work of the Spirit upon them or no? And is it not a Benefit to them that they have a Seal and Assurance of the Forgiveness of all their actual Sins also afterwards, upon their Repentance and Return to God? As Baptism is a Benefit to grown Persons, as it is a Sign and Pledg both of present and future Blessings; so it is also in the same manner to Infants, as being a Seal both of all those Blessings which they have need of, or do partake of at present, and also of those which they have or may have need of afterwards.

So that suppose they may be saved without it, yet this is a Mark or Seal of their Salvation if they die in their Infant-state; and of all the Blessings and Privileges that belong to them now, or are to belong to them afterwards, if they live according to the Terms of the Gospel, just in the same manner as it is to grown Persons. So that if upon these Accounts it is a Benefit to grown Persons, it is upon the same Account also a Benefit to Infants; that is, it is a Benefit both to one and the other, as far as a Sign, or Seal, or Pledg can be a Benefit.

And lastly; Is it not a Benefit to partake of that Ordinance that is a Mark, or Note of their early Consecration and Devotedness to God, and to the Service of Christ, whereby they are brought betimes into a Covenant-Engagement to be his? For that this is so, hath been proved; and accordingly God so looks upon them; and thereupon there is to be all Care taken about their Christian Education, that they may be instructed and brought up in the Knowledge of those things which belong to the People and Children of God. And this will be useful to them as an Argument to prevail with them to live to God betimes, as they grow up, because of the Oath and Covenant that they are so early entred into, and engaged in. This Consideration indeed doth not affect them immediately, whilst they are in their Infant-state, but it may come to affect them as soon as any thing else can that is of such a Nature, that is, as soon as their Reason comes to be of use to them: Whereas if this had not been done for them betimes, there would have wanted this Argument to deal with them. And it may be, it would have been very long before they themselves might have been brought to consent to enter into such an Obligation, as we read it often was among many that yet were brought to the Profession of the Christian Faith in the Primitive Times: Some staying off for this, some for that carnal Reason or Fear, for a long time, to the great Scandal of their Profession: Some keeping off for fear of sinning after Baptism, and so forfeiting the Grace of it, as they thought, thereby: Some from the Love of the World, and the Pleasures thereof, being loth to part with their Sins and their vain Pleasures, which they were sensible this obliged them to, notwithstanding they owned themselves Christians: Some again deferring it out of want of Leisure: Some pleading the Inconvenience of the Time; and others, because they could not have it done in the Place they desired, or by the Person they most affected: Some taking Exception at the mix'd Company they were to be baptized with: And some delaying it for fear of Persecution from the Heathen: And some for fear lest they should be accounted *Trisheites*: Some on pretence that their Relations were not present: And some hanging back because of the little Charge they did use to be at at that time. These things gave Occasion to such vehement and sharp Expostulations of the Fathers of that Age to reprove their Slackness, as are to be

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found in their Writings. And how many do you think, upon one or other of these Pretences, there would be that would put it off in like manner still, if they were not baptized in Infancy; and it may be some would hardly ever bring themselves into so near a Covenant-Engagement to God at all? Whereas this being done for them so early in their Infant-state, it may be a powerful and prevailing Motive to engage them betimes to a sincere and upright walking with God, which otherwise they might not probably have been brought so soon to. If it be objected, *that this would be more apt to prevail with them, if it had been their own Act, when they came to Age.* It is plain by Experience, that those that are sincere, or have any Sense of Honour or Gratitude, among those that have been baptized in their Infancy, do hold themselves as much obliged by it, and do stand to the Obligation that they were then brought under, and as faithfully discharge it as any of those that are baptized at Age, and do look upon it a great Blessing, that they were brought under so early a Pre-engagement: And those that are not sincere, that are baptized at Age, do as little perform or discharge the Obligation that they brought upon themselves by an Act of their own, as any of those that were baptized in Infancy.

Object. 2. *That Infants are not capable of performing those Acts, or having those Conditions that are pre-required in Scripture, in Persons that are to be baptized. Forasmuch as they cannot learn, or be taught, or confess their Sins, or believe, or repent, or make any visible Profession of their doing so. And yet these things are required in Scripture of Persons that are to be baptized, and were always performed by Persons before the Apostles did baptize any. According to these and the like Texts; Mark 16. 15, 16. Go into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature: he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved. Matth. 3. 6. They were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their Sins. Acts 2. 38. Repent and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ. And ver. 41. They that gladly received his Word, were baptized. Acts 8. 12. When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, they were baptized. Ver. 13. Then Simon himself believed, and was baptized. And ver. 36. The Eunuch said, See here is Water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine Heart, thou mayst. Acts 18. 8. And many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized. From these and such like Texts it is argued, that here is a Prohibition laid, and a Bar put against Infants Baptism, because they have no Reason or Understanding about what they ought to be or do, and can neither hear, learn, repent, or believe, or make Profession of either in their Infant-state, and therefore are not capable of Baptism, before the Administration of which these things are required and used to be*

Ans. 1. That it is by vertue of that Covenant-relation to God as his People and Children, which God is pleased to admit Infants to, though themselves do not believe, they being the Seed or Pupils of profess'd Believers with whom this Covenant is made, and with their Seed and Family, that Baptism is to be administred to them. The Ground then which I build the Baptism of Infants upon, is God's Election or choosing of them, together with their believing Parents, or those that shall undertake for them to be his own peculiar Covenant-People; as likewise their Parents or Susceptors are. For this was always God's Method, and the way of his Grace, to own and receive the Children of his Covenant-People into the same Covenant with their Fathers, and so to treat with them, and to seal the Covenant and Promise to them, in the same manner, and by the same Rite as he did to their Parents. So that it is not the Childrens own Faith or Profession that qualifies them for Baptism, but it is God's Election or Choice of them for his People, though they have not actual Faith or Repentance of their own, upon their descending of such Parents, or being taken into such Families, or undertaken for by such Persons as stand in a Covenant-relation to God. And out of Respect to *them*, and in Prospect of that Religious Education that they shall afterwards receive from them, God is pleased to own them for his, and to confirm his Promise and Covenant to them: So that their Parents or Susceptors Faith is, as it were, vicariously imputed to them for a while, till they come to Years, and is reckoned accordingly for their Good, though they do not yet actually believe themselves, because hereafter they are to do it through their Parents Instruction. As the Children of the Levites of a Month old are said to keep the Charge of the Sanctuary, Numb. 3. 28. because they are so designed, and are to be brought up to it, and are in a near Capacity for it. And Levi is said, after a Sense, to have paid Tithes in *Abraham*, being in the Loins of *Abraham* when he paid it to *Melchizedek*, Heb. 7. 9.

And why should these things be thought unreasonable? If God is pleased to own and adopt little ones for his, why should our Eye be evil, because his is good? Or why rather should we not rejoice in his Mercy and Grace in behalf of our little ones?

If Infants may contract Guilt, or lie under an Obligation to Death by the Sin of their Parents, why may it not likewise be supposed through the Grace and Goodness of God by Christ, that they may be invested with a Right and Title to certain Privileges, and partake of the Mark and Seals of them through the Faith of others? So that as God visits the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children unto the third and fourth Generation of them that hate him; so he may also shew Mercy to Thousands of them that love him and keep his Commandments. And as some were brought to be healed by Christ (and were healed) through the Faith of others, so why should we not think that In-

Mat. 8.
Mark 9.
John 4.

Infants

Infants may partake of the Favour of God through Christ, and of the Badg or Sign of this Favour, with respect also to others Faith? So that the Faith of their Parents may be said to be *their* Faith, whilst they are in their Infant-state, they being as Parts of their Parents, and having no Use of Power, Understanding, or Will to provide for themselves, till they come to Years of Discretion: As the Parents Act in taking a House, or making a Bargain or Covenant, may be called the Child's Act, as no less beneficial and obliging to the Child than to the Parent, and binding the Child to the Performance of the same Conditions.

And what indeed is more common than for such things to be required of Parents before they be admitted to certain Privileges, that when they are admitted to, belong alike to their Children, though *they* could not do those things? Thus those of a foreign Nation must take the Oaths of Allegiance required to a Prince, before they become his naturalized Subjects, or partake of the Privileges of such; but after *they* have taken the Oaths, and are admitted to the Privileges of Naturalization, their Children also are admitted to the same Privileges, though *they* cannot take the Oaths; so that their Parents Act is imputatively theirs, or to their Benefit or Advantage. And so why may it not likewise be here? And as those that are born of Parents, that are admitted into a Corporation, shall partake of the Privileges likewise of that Corporation, which those that are born of other Parents shall not; so, if such be the Grace and Goodness of God, may the Infants of Covenant-Believers likewise partake of their Privileges, which the Infants of Heathens and Aliens are to have no Right unto. And yet all this while the Infants understand nothing of the Matter, but are vested in these Benefits before they come to Understanding.

2. Therefore, I say, as to those things that are said to be pre-required to Baptism, that either they have no need of them at all in their Infant-state, and so may be baptized without them; or by virtue of God's Grace and Covenant they have the same Benefit without them to qualify them for Baptism, which others have by them, and therefore may be baptized without them, though others cannot.

As for Regeneration in the most common Sense of the Word, it would be very rash in any to say, that they cannot have it in the Seed or Root of it: For who can tell what the Operations of the Holy Spirit are, or can be upon them? But though they should not, or could not have it in that Sense that we commonly take it, *viz.* for an internal Change and Sanctification of Heart and Mind; yet they have that which may denominate them regenerate Persons, and so they may be mark'd and signed as such, as being brought into a new and saving State by the Death of Christ, which they shall not fail of the Benefit of, unless they fall from it by their own actual Rebellion afterwards.

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They may be said to be delivered from the Death of Sin, or from the prevailing Power of that Death which Sin brought in, there being the Forgiveness or Dissolution of that Death to them: And so they may be said to be quickned together with Christ, and so to partake of a new Birth by being put into a new State, wherein they have through Christ as immediate a Right and Title to Salvation, as those have that have been regenerate in the common Acceptation of the Word. And why may they not then be qualified for the Sign or Seal hereof? For how can there be any more required to qualify for the Sign than for the Thing signified, which they possess, or have a present Right to?

And though they have not Faith properly speaking, yet being brought into the same Condition of Sonship, and put into as immediate Capacity for Salvation, as adult Believers are through Faith, why should they not partake of Baptism, which is the Seal of these Blessings, as they do? For though they have no Faith properly speaking, yet being by Christ redeemed from Death, and put into a State of Sonship and Life, as actual Believers are, though without actual Faith, till actual Sin takes place, they may be numbred in respect of the Benefits of Faith with Believers. And if Believers are baptized, to seal the great Grace of Adoption to them through Faith, why should not they likewise be baptized for the Sealing and Confirmation of the same Grace, seeing in that respect they may well be *reckoned* with Believers, as partaking of the same Favour with them, through the Grace and Covenant of God in Christ towards them? For what Faith is to adult Persons through the Covenant and Grace of God in Christ, that the Covenant *it self* is to Infants without Faith. And so what Baptism is to adult Persons *upon* their Faith, that it may be to them *without* Faith, through God's Covenant with them alone by the Blood of Christ. So that upon the Account hereof they may full as well be baptized as those that do believe, because they have the same Privileges *without* Faith as Believers have *by* their Faith: It being not Faith it self, or Profession of Faith that is to be the immediate Ground of Baptism, but that Sonship or Relation to God, of which Faith is the Means or Evidence; and when this can be evidenc'd without Profession of Faith, there being no necessity of that Profession to qualify for Baptism, as was shewn before in *Cornelius* and his Company.

And then as for Repentance, while they are in their Infant-state they have no need of it, and therefore may be baptized without it; they have no need of Repentance for Sin, because they have no actual Sin to repent of; and therefore their want of Repentance can be no Bar to their Baptism. To those indeed that have actually sinned, Baptism is a Baptism of Repentance, signifying it already to be in some measure, and obliging to it farther. But where there is no actual Sin, there being no need of Repentance, it may be adm-

nistred to them without Repentance, to oblige only to Holiness and Purity of Life, and keeping of the Commands of God, which is a greater thing than Repentance, and which Repentance it self is for, and to lead to, in those that have sinned. Thus the Baptism of *John*, though it was a Baptism of Repentance to others that had sinned, and to that end he mainly preach'd it, yet was administred to our Saviour without Repentance, because he had no need of Repentance, but he had perfect Holiness, which was better than Repentance; and it was to him also a Sign of Obligation to Holiness, though not to Repentance. So that it may be administred to those that have no Repentance, because they have no need of it in their present State; yet it may be administred to oblige to Holiness, and to Repentance too hereafter, when they shall come to have actual Sin. And so it will be properly also to them a Baptism of Repentance, which it could no way be to our Saviour, and yet was administred to him; it is a Baptism to them, *eis μετάνοιαν*, to future Repentance.

But as for Profession of Faith and Holiness, which Infants cannot make: I answer, that the Baptism of Infants is not for Profession of it, but for Obligation to it, which we have seen before they are capable of.

3. As for those Texts then that are urged to show what is preredquired of Persons that are to be baptized: I answer, That they are spoken of, or to grown or adult Persons that are capable of performing those Acts, and were obliged to it, as the Condition or Proof of their Adoption; and they do only concern them, and no other but them. And therefore they are no Bar to the Baptism of Infants, whose Adoption or Sonship may otherwise be judged of, without these Acts. As for the Adult, we own and contend as much as they that make this Objection, that grown Persons who are come to Years of Discretion, that had been Infidels and Unbelievers before, ought to be taught, and profess Faith and Repentance, before they be baptized; there being no Judgment by the Church to be made any other way, of God's receiving and owning them for his Children and Covenant-People. And this is as much as these Scriptures do prove or hold out to us, concerning this Matter; but they are no Rule for all the Subjects of Baptism: and as for Infants they are not at all concerned in them, and therefore their Baptism is not prohibited by them; there being not the same Qualifications required in them for Baptism, as there are in others. So that though there is a virtual Prohibition of the Baptism of grown Persons, if they do not perform these Acts first, here is no Prohibition of the Baptism of Infants, though they do not perform them. For the meaning of all such Expressions is to be judged of from the Nature and Capacity of those Persons to whom they are spoken. And therefore as by the Apostle's Words, *2 Theff. 3. 10. They that will not work, neither should they eat*; the Relief of lazy Drones is forbidden, that

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can work and yet will not; but here is no Prohibition of the Relief or Sustainment of Infants, or those that cannot work. So by these Texts of Scripture that shew what is required of Persons to be baptized, impenitent Unbelievers that are come to Age, are prohibited from Baptism; but not Infants, there being other Grounds for their being baptized. The Baptism of Infants indeed cannot be concluded from these Texts, (and whoever said it could?) but we have shewn, there are other Scripture-Arguments for the Baptism of Infants: And these Texts, as they say nothing for it, so they say nothing against it, either directly or by Consequence: And therefore Infants may and ought to be baptized, notwithstanding what is said in these Texts.

Baptism, as we have heard, is an Ordinance of the same Use, and to the same Purpose, for the main, as Circumcision was, in the Respects mentioned. Now as Circumcision was administered to different Persons of different Ages, so may Baptism. Circumcision was administered to *Abraham* as a Seal of the Righteousness of that Faith which he had before given Evidence, and made Profession of; so is Baptism a Seal of the same to grown Believers now, upon their Profession of a like Faith with *Abraham's*. But Circumcision was administered to *Isaac*, and was a Seal of the same Righteousness which he should have, without any such Profession made by him; and why may not Baptism then be administered to Infants now, without any such Profession made by them? For Circumcision was administered to *Isaac*, as being the Son of believing *Abraham*, by virtue of God's taking him into the same Covenant-relation with *Abraham*, without any such Profession of Faith required of him (which could not be) as was performed by *Abraham*. And why may not Baptism now be administered to Infants, as being the Seed of believing Parents, by virtue of the same Covenant made with them as with their Parents, though they cannot themselves profess the Faith as their Parents do? Circumcision and Baptism both were administered to Profelytes among the Jews: after their Profession of the God of *Abraham*, but then were likewise administered to their Infants, and to the Infants of them, when they were grown up and came to have Children: And why may not Baptism be administered now to the Infants of profess'd Believers, though the Infants themselves can make no such Profession?

To *Mark* 16. 16. I answer particularly, because it is so much insisted upon; *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.* From hence the Argument is, *That Faith must go before Baptism, because of the Order of the Words.* To which I might answer, that no Argument can reasonably be taken from thence in this Matter; for then by the same Rule, according to the Order of the Words in other Scriptures, Baptism should go first, before the Performance of some of those Acts which they say, should go before it: And so this Argument would be as much against them as for them. Thus *Mark* 1. 5.

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Baptism is placed before Confession of Sin, in the Relation of the Story thereof of those that were baptized; *they were baptized, confessing their Sins.* And the Order of the Words in the Text that is objected especially (as likewise that in *Acts 2. 38.* concerning Repentance and Baptism) is altogether insignificant to the Matter in hand, because here the Design of our Saviour is not to make Faith a necessary Prerequisite to Baptism, (as neither the Apostles in that other Place to make Repentance prerequisite to Baptism) but Faith and Baptism, that is, the Profession of Faith by Baptism, prerequisite to Salvation. But I rather answer as before, that this Text is nothing to the purpose, because it hath no Respect to Children at all, and therefore doth not exclude or prohibit their Baptism: as appears by the second Part added by way of Opposition, He that believeth not, shall be damned. For if the Text be to be so understood, that Infants are to be excluded from Baptism because they do not believe, then must they likewise for the same Reason be excluded from Salvation, which is more than they that urge it will own. So that this Text indeed is nothing at all to the Matter.

But what then is the Design of it? It is a Direction or Commission given by our Saviour to his Apostles, to extend their Preaching to all the World, which was hitherto confined within the Jewish Territories, and so to make Profelytes among the Heathen Nations, that they also might be saved. For being in their Darknes and Infidelity before, they must first be taught before they could be brought to believe, and so before they could be fit for the Participation of the initiating Ordinance into the Church of Christ, which was only to be upon those Terms. But this doth not in the least imply a Prohibition of the Baptism of their Infants afterwards, when the Parents themselves were baptized. No more than if God should have sent forth his Prophets in the time of Law, and should have given them the like Commission, to have profelyted all Nations by Baptism and Circumcision then, would have been a Bar to the Circumcision of *their* Infants, when once the Parents were by Conversion to the true God brought into a Covenant-relation to him, and were circumcised. But as the Infants of such Parents, by the Rule and Practice of Circumcision before, ought to have been circumcised notwithstanding such Commission; nor could the Prophets have understood the Commission otherwise, but as consistent with such a Practice and Rule, unless an Exception of Infants had been expressly put in: so the Infants of Christian Believers ought to be baptized according to the general Grounds of Baptism, notwithstanding this Commission of our Saviour; and this Commission running in these Terms, can by no means be justly interpreted to contain a Prohibition of the Baptism of Children, when there are such Grounds for it, unless our Saviour had put in an express Exception against it. Nor could the Apostles themselves otherwise understand this Commission than as implying and comprehending the

Baptism of Infants, of those that were profelyted to the Faith, according to the general Usage and Practice of the Jewish Church, unless our Saviour had put in an express Caveat against it: For they could not in Reason otherwise understand him, than according to the ordinary Customs and Usages of that Church in which they had been bred and brought up, unless our Saviour had otherwise made known his Mind unto them.

The same Answer would serve for *Matth. 28. 19. Go, teach all Nations, baptizing them, &c.* To which I shall only add, that the Fundamental Mistake of the Anabaptists in this Case, seems to arise from their imagining, that our Saviour, in these Words, hath delivered the whole Institution of Baptism, and every thing that hath Relation to all the Subjects of it: Whereas this Text doth not contain the Institution of Baptism at all, (for that was done long before, though we have not in the Scripture a particular Account *when*) but only contains a new Commission of our Saviour to his Apostles, to go out to all Nations to make Christian Profelytes; the Partition-wall being now taken down, and no longer to confine this Favour to the Jews alone. It is a Direction of our Saviour only about this particular Matter; and as for all other things relating to Baptism, they were to be continued according to former Grounds and Precedents, for any thing that appears to the contrary. And this having been the immemorial Practice of the Jewish Church *before*, in Admission of Profelytes Children, as well as themselves, the Apostle could no otherwise reasonably understand it, but that it ought to continue so still. Nor, considering the Grounds laid down for it, can we now conceive any Bar put herein to it, unless the Matter had been worded much otherwise than it is. And I shall further observe after, that this Text contains rather a good Warrant for Infant-Baptism, if it be understood as it ought to be interpreted, than any Prohibition of it. And so I come to the next Objection.

Objct. 3. *That however Infant-Baptism is not commanded, nor is there any express Example for it in Scripture. And therefore whatsoever the Use or Benefits of Infant-Baptism might be, if it had been commanded, there is no sufficient Ground for it now, nor ought it to be practised, and can be no better than Will-worship if it be. And this they think makes a plain Difference between the Reason of circumcising Infants formerly, and baptizing them now, because that was commanded, and this is not.* This is their great and triumphant Argument, and the last Refuge of any Moment that they have to fly to.

Ans. 1. But will nothing indeed serve besides an express Command? Will no Argument? no Reason? no Consequence serve for the Eviction or Proof of what we are to believe and to do, without an express Declaration, Command or Example? Do we not find, that our Saviour himself proves the

the Doctrine of the Resurrection against the Sadduces, by Argument and
 22. Consequence, only because it was said, that *God is the God of Abraham,*
Isaac, and Jacob; and because *he is not the God of the Dead, but of the Li-*
 29. *ving?* And the Apostle proves by Consequence the Resurrection of Christ
 6. himself, by a rational Deduction from Scripture-Testimony, which he proves
 could be understood of no other but him. And in this manner 'tis usual
 with the Apostles to deduce Conclusions from the Scriptures by reasoning from
 them, in divers Discourses both in the Acts and their Epistles. And thus
 12. our Saviour himself likewise argues the Lawfulness of the Disciples plucking
 the Ears of Corn on the Sabbath-day, from *David's* eating of the Shewbread,
 and from the Priests sacrificing on the Sabbath, and from that Sentence in *Ho-*
 9. *sea, I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice.* And so the Apostle deduceth the
 0. Maintenance of Gospel-Ministers, from the Reason and Parallel of some Pas-
 sages mentioned in the Law. Yea, and do not the Anabaptists themselves,
 as well as others, make use of the same consequential kind of Deductions for
 the proving the Christian Sabbath, and Womens Right to partake of the
 Lord's Supper, when there is no express Command in Scripture, in so many
 04- Words, for either? And indeed the far greater part of such Actions, which
 05. Men and Women perform out of Conscience towards God, are neither in-
 joined by any express Precept, or commended by an express Example in
 Scripture, but either by some general Rule only, or the Analogy of some
 proportional Example. So that by a diligent Use of our Reason, and a close
 Engagement of our Minds to the Search of Scripture, it behoves us to inquire
 diligently into it for the Conduct of our Actions, and for the Information of
 our Minds in the Knowledge of those Truths which lie latent in Scripture,
 and are often delivered to us only by secret Insinuations, and are to be de-
 duc'd thence by just and rational Conclusion. And how would a great part
 of the Scripture else in many Respects be wholly useless to us? And I con-
 clude therefore, that there is no Necessity for the Proof of Infant-Baptism,
 that there should be a plain and express Command for it in Scripture; but it
 is sufficient, if it may be justly and reasonably inferred by Force of Argument;
 by the diligent Application of our Minds to the Consideration of those Grounds
 upon which it may be warranted and built. And if there be sufficient Ground
 for it, it ought to be received, though the Reasons for it should lie deeper
 than they do, and could not be discovered without a more narrow and accu-
 rate sifting into the Matter.

And it is in vain to pretend, that *in doing thus we reject a Divine Command*
for humane Consequences. For what Divine Command do we reject? *that of*
baptizing profess'd Believers? But do we reject that Command, because we
 hold that Infants may be baptized as well as they? or is this only an uncertain
 and humane Consequence? The Act of Reasoning indeed is ours, in deduc-
 06. ing

cing the Conclusion from such Principles. But if the Premises, from which the Conclusion is drawn, be certain and divine, then so is the Conclusion which is drawn from them, if the Deduction be duly and regularly made. For the Conclusion always follows the Premises, and is of the same Nature with them, as being virtually contained in them, though the bringing of it to light is by Means of our Reasoning.

2. Therefore I answer, and argue thus: That for which there is a sufficient Warrant without an express Command, may and ought to be received without an express Command: but for the Baptism of Infants there is a sufficient Warrant without an express Command; therefore it may and ought to be received without it.

If the Anabaptists deny that there is or can be any such sufficient Warrant for Infant-Baptism without an express Command, (as no doubt they will do) we must come to the Proof of it. If we cannot make this good, then I acknowledge we must produce an express Command, or else we must give up the Cause. But if we can, then there is an End of the Objection. So that our Business is to come to the Trial, whether we can or cannot; and so the Objection however is at an end. And this, I think, is a sufficient Answer to it: And so refer the Vindication to what is before argued.

3. But yet that I may answer a little more directly, I shall add this further, that in the Grounds which I have laid for Infant-Baptism, there is that which is *equivalent* to a Command: Because it is reasonable thence to conclude, that it is the Mind and Will of God, that we should make use of it, (and that howsoever it be made known to us, is our Rule which we are to walk by.) For how can we conclude otherwise, when God hath been pleased to appoint a discriminating Badg and Character for his People and Children, whom he hath chosen and called into a near Covenant-relation to himself from the rest of the World, and hath appointed Baptism for that purpose now, and for such other Ends, as little Children for the main are capable of, as well as grown Persons; how can we otherwise conclude, I say, but that it is the Mind and Will of God, that it should be administered to them as well as others, when it is in the Nature and Ends of it accommodated to their Use and Benefit, as well as grown Persons; and when a former Ordinance, which was for the same Ends, was expressly commanded to be administered to them? And when we consider that this had been the Practice before in the Jewish Church, to receive the Infants of Profelytes also by Bapasm, as we are informed by the most authentick Records of that People, and the doing of this in the Christian Church is no where forbidden, how can we conclude, but that it was the Mind and Will of God, that it should be continued still, though he gave no express Command for it? there being no need of an express Command for the doing of that which used commonly to be done, but

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for the doing of that which had not been done before, *viz.* the profelyting of all Nations to the Faith of Christ as already come, without giving any Order about their Children, because there was no Alteration made about them, as the Subjects of Baptism, from what had been commonly observed before. And what is all this but a virtual Command, though it be not express'd in so many Words? or how could the Apostles then, or we now, otherwise understand it? And we now much less, considering that it was the universal Practice of the Christian Church next and immediately after the Apostles, which we cannot conceive how it should come to pass, unless it had had its Original before.

And considering the Premises, if the Anabaptists will prove, that it is not the Mind and Will of God that Infants now should be baptized, it is not enough for them to alledg, that we have no express Command for it, but they must either produce an express Prohibition of it, (which they do not pretend to do) or else that which is equivalent to a Prohibition, by shewing the Absurdity or Incongruity of it in the Nature of the thing, to the Use of Infants, as unfit or incapable Subjects of it. And then indeed we should conclude as well as they, that it is contrary to the Mind and Will of God, to have it administred to them. As we hold the baptizing of Bells, or other inanimate things amongst the Papists, or should hold the Baptism of Dogs or any other brute Creatures to be so, because though the Baptism of such Creatures be not expressly forbidden, yet it is altogether incongruous in respect of the Nature and Ends of Baptism, to have it administred to such. And therefore the baptizing of them is an Abuse of Baptism, and a gross Superstition. But when Baptism is so ordered and constituted by God in the Nature and Ends of it, as that Infants are capable Subjects of it; and when there are such other just Grounds laid for the Application of it to them, and no Prohibition or Caveat put in, to warn us about it, we cannot but hold rather that it is the Mind and Will of God, that it should be applied and administred to them. And this I take to be equivalent to an express Command.

I shall only add this further, that it may be said, That there is a general Command, which may likewise extend to Infants, even in the general Commission; *Matth. 28. μαθητεύσατε* Go, disciple all Nations, baptizing them. For Infants are a Part of the Nations: And if Infants may be made Disciples, (as that Word here translated *teach*, should be rendred) then as Disciples too, they should be baptized, for all that are Disciples should be so. Now that Infants may be Disciples is plain, because they are so called, *Acts 15. 10. Why lay ye a Yoke upon the Necks of the Disciples?* which must be understood of Infants as well as others; it being the Yoke of Circumcision that the Apostle there speaks of, which used most commonly to be administred to Infants, or to them together with others; and was called a Yoke, because of the

the Burdensomeness, and Painfulness, and Bloodiness of it. So that it is reasonable to conclude, that Infants here are some of the Disciples meant. And it is no way unreasonable to call them by that Name, though they are in no present immediate Capacity of learning, or being taught; for it is sufficient that they be entred into Christ's School for that purpose, and engaged to learn of him, as of their Master. And this they may be, and so may be visible admitted Disciples by Baptism, in order to future teaching, though they are not capable of present. As for Aliens and Infidels of grown Age, to whom the Apostles were sent, they must be first taught before they become Disciples, because they can be brought to be Disciples only by their own Consent; whereas Children may be entred into Christ's School without any present actual Consent of their own, by the Act of others that are their Parents or Guardians, and so may become Disciples first, and so be baptized as such, and then be taught afterwards.

Now, as for the other part of the Objection, *viz. the want of an express Example of Infant-Baptism*, that is of less Moment: For an Example is of much less Moment than a Command; and if a Command be not necessary, then much less is an Example necessary. But if Infant-Baptism may be concluded upon the Grounds aforesaid, without an express Command, then much more without an express Example; so that the Answer to the former Part of the Objection will also be easily applicable here.

And indeed it is not at all strange, that such a Practice, though then in being, should be silently pass'd over in Scripture: Because the Scripture is not intended for a perfect Register of all Facts that were done, though it be a perfect Rule of Faith and Practice in all things necessary to Salvation. So that the thing might be done then, though the Scripture doth not mention it. And it might be pass'd over for this very Reason, because it was no new thing, but was common before among the Jews, and so there need to be less notice taken of it; or because the Apostles and Ministers Business then was principally to preach to, and convert, and so baptize grown Persons and Fathers; and then the Baptism of Children followed of Course by the general and common Rule and Practice, and therefore there was less notice taken particularly of them.

But yet though there be no particular Example of it, it may reasonably be inferred, that it *was* practised, because there were such reasonable Grounds to build the Practice upon, and considering the Practice that had been among the Jews before, of the baptizing Profelytes Infants; and considering that there was no Complaint amongst any for the Neglect of their Infants, notwithstanding the Cessation of Circumcision, as it is probable there would have been, if there had no other Ordinance succeeded in the room of it, which might be applicable to Infants, because then they might well think, that their

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Infants by *their* becoming Christians were in a worse and more neglected Condition than before; for whereas before by Circumcision they were differenced from the Common and Unclean that were the Uncircumcised, now they must be reckoned among the Uncircumcised too, being not circumcised, and so also common and unclean, if no other Ordinance should succeed in the room of Circumcision. So that these Considerations give just Ground to infer, that it was then practised, though it be not particularly mentioned. *Add* to which, that they are likely to be included in those Households mentioned to be baptized; for the Household contains all that is in the Household, and 'tis strange if in all those Households there should be no little ones. And though those that heard and believed were baptized upon their *own* Faith, yet it is reasonable likewise to infer, that the Infants were baptized, though without a Faith of their own, as the Infants of Proielytes before, by virtue of God's Covenant, which, upon the Faith of their Parents, they come presently to share in. And then moreover the Antients delivered this as a Tradition and Practice derived from the Apostles, as we have seen; and there being no other probable Ground to be assigned for the Original of it so soon in the Christian Church, and for the universal Practice of it, that did every where obtain, it is fairly agreeable, that it was the Apostolical Practice before.

And there is as little to be said from Scripture-Example for the baptizing of Persons at Age, whose Parents were Christians when they were born, and who had been educated from their Childhood in the Christian Religion. For there is not the least hint in Scripture of any such that were baptized by the Apostles, but only of those that were converted from Judaism or Paganism unto Christianity, and *that* presently after their Conversion. And yet the Anabaptists do not doubt, but that such were baptized, though there be no express Example of it. But if this Argument be good against Infant-Baptism, because there is no Example of it, it will be as good against the baptizing of such, because there is as little Example of their being baptized. And so the Argument would prove too much, and more than they intend; and so they must turn Quakers too, and deny all Baptism now, for the same Reason that they deny Infant-Baptism. But if to save this, they will argue, that the Warrantableness of baptizing such grown Persons may sufficiently be deduced to Scripture-Consequence, from the Reason and End of the Institution of Baptism, without any such Example, we will allow the Argument. But then we must desire that Justice of them, that the Practice of Infant-Baptism be likewise allowed to be warrantable for the same Reason, if we can likewise deduce it by just Consequence from sufficient Grounds, though we produce no Example of it.

of INFANT-BAPTISM.

To conclude, there is no need of an exprefs Example, when we have sufficient Warrant besides without it. We must not teach God how he must notify his Mind to us; but if he hath made known his Mind and Will to us in any way, we are to practise accordingly, whether there be Example or no Example left of such a Practice: The Mind and Will of God however made known to us, being to be our Rule, and not only when it is done this way or that way.

Object. 4. *That this is the Reason why the Church is so full of Hypocrites and carnal Professors, and profane Persons. For being all almost are baptized in their Infancy, and thereby admitted Church-Members, they are therefore so still esteemed; and so the Churches of the Pedobaptists are overloaded with such Persons which defile their Communion.*

Ans^w. But what! are there no such Persons to be found among those of the other Perswasion? I heartily wish indeed, for the Honour of our holy Master, and the Credit of his Religion, that there were no such either among them or us, or those of any other Denomination. But this is not to be expected in this imperfect State of the Christian Church, which is as a *Net cast into the Ma Sea, that receives of every kind*, where good and bad are mix'd together; and 47 so we must expect it will be till the End of the World, *when the Angels shall come forth, and sever the Wicked from among the Just.* But let us not blame that for this, which is not to be blamed. It is not to be laid to the Charge of Baptism either in Infancy or in Age, nor to that in Infancy more than to that at Age. For if once the Baptism of adult Persons were the general Fashion, and as commonly received, and as much encouraged, as Infant-Baptism now is, I doubt not but the Church would be as full of Hypocrites then, and carnal Gospellers, for any thing that Baptism at Age would do more to prevent it than Infant-Baptism now doth: For it is no great Matter to make such a Confession of Faith as may serve turn for Baptism; and if once it were Mens Interest to do so, it would be easily enough gone through.

As for so many *profane Persons, which they say are in the Church by reason of Infant-Baptism, because so many are look'd upon of the Church that were once baptized, and these are for the most part bad.* I answer, However that be, yet Infant-Baptism is not to be blamed for it, but generally it is the want of Care in Parents and Godfathers about the Instruction and Education of Children that have been baptized; and want of Discipline in the Church, to expel those that are profane out of it, when they once become scandalous in it. It is not Infant-Baptism that is to be blamed, for that is a proper Means rather to make Persons good, and that betimes: That will do its Part well if it be rightly adverted to, when they grow up to Understanding, by Reflection upon it; and full as well as if Baptism were administr'd at Age. This

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tends to continue and help forward the Conveyance of Religion down to after-Generations, by laying a strict Engagement upon Children to be good betimes, and upon Parents to educate them and bring them up well in order to it; so that there might be still a young Nursery of tender Plants growing up in the Vineyard of the Lord. And to say otherwise, is a Reflection upon the Wisdom of the Jewish Church, in admitting the Children of Profelytes, together with their Parents, yea and of the Wisdom of the holy God himself, (who loves the Purity and Glory of the Church certainly more than any of us can do, and knoweth best what most tends to further it) who himself ordered the Token of his Covenant to be applied to Children at eight Days old. For according to this Opinion, it had been much better to have let it alone till all had come to Age. And the same Censure will lie upon the Jewish Church for admitting of Members then in their Infant-state, as much as it can now upon the Churches of the Pedobaptists. But let not us go to teach God, or instruct him what Means are best to promote the Churches Purity. I can make no doubt but Infant-Baptism is as great an Advantage to the Church now, as Infant-Circumcision was then in all the spiritual Respects of it, or as the Baptism then of Profelytes Infants was.

But if there be other Ordinances and Duties neglected, which God hath appointed, which should be for the procuring of a pure Church, or for the cleansing of it when it is impure, it is the Neglect of those Ordinances and Duties, that is the true Reason of that Impurity in the Church, and not the keeping up of *that* Ordinance, which rather helps towards its Purification, as well as admits into the Communion of it. They of the other way, when profane Persons are at any time found among them, don't blame their Baptism at Age for it, as if that were the Reason of their Badness, which would rather tend to make them good: and if these Persons continue still in their Church, no doubt it is the Churches Neglect, and not the Fault of their Baptism. And so if profane Persons be found in the Church, wherein the Members are admitted by Infant-Baptism, let not Infant-Baptism be blamed for *that*, but the Neglect of those other Ordinances and Duties that should tend to promote the Churches Purity.

Object. 5. *Why may not the Lord's Supper be administered to Infants as well as Baptism, that being as well a Seal of the Covenant as Baptism is, and was likewise administered to them in some of the first Ages of the Church?*

Ans. If the Lord's Supper should be administered to Infants, it could be of no other Use to them than Baptism is, *viz.* to be a visible Badg or Mark of their being owned and received by us as the Children of God, and Members of the Church of Christ, and a Seal of the Blessings of the Covenant, and of their Communion therein. These things are sufficiently confirmed to

them by the Ordinance of Baptism; and the Ordinance of the Lord's-Supper could be of no further use to them than what this comes to. And therefore the Administration of the Lord's-Supper to them would be supervacaneous and needless, because it can do no more for them than Baptism doth.

Nor is the Ordinance of the Lord's-Supper so fit and proper to be administered to them for the Ends aforesaid, as Baptism is: Because Baptism is a Sacrament or Ordinance particularly designed or appointed for this purpose, to be for their visible *Initiation* or *Infition* into the Church of Christ, and is therefore to be administered to all the Members of it, as a Token or Sign of their being the Children of God, and Members of Christ; and so to seal to them the Blessings of the Covenant, and to engage them on their part to the performance of the Conditions. And Infants being capable of all these Ends and Uses of it, which are the chief Ends of Baptism, it is therefore proper and fit to be administered to them. Whereas the Lord's-Supper is a *Sacrament of Growth or Perfection*, for the strengthening and refreshing of our Souls, and for our Growth and Progress in Grace; which is promoted and furthered by an Act of Reflection on our parts upon the Death of Christ, and the Benefits that he hath purchased thereby; and is to be a thankful Memorial, or for solemn Thanksgiving to Christ for this great Grace and Love of his, that he hath manifested to us in his dying for us, and thereby purchasing and obtaining so great Benefits for us: This being the chief End of that Institution, as appears by our Saviour's own words, *Do this in Remembrance of me*. Now all this requires great Knowledge and Consideration, and pious Reflections upon what we are about, which Infants are uncapable of.

Nor is there the like Scripture-ground for the Administration of the Lord's-Supper to Infants, as we have seen there is for Baptism: Nor is there the same Parallel of it, or Pattern for it from the Practice of the Jewish Church, as there is for Infant-Baptism, in their Administration of Circumcision to Infants for a Token of the Covenant betwixt God and them; and likewise in their baptizing the Infants of Profelytes. Whereas the Children of the Jews were not admitted to the Passover, which is that other Jewish Ordinance, which may seem to answer most to the Christian *Eucharist*, till they were old enough to enquire about the meaning of the Service, and were capable of understanding the Nature of it, as it was done in Remembrance of their Deliverance out of *Egypt*; *Exod. 12. 26, 27*. And so, agreeably to this therefore, neither should the Children of Christians communicate at the Lord's-Supper, till they are capable likewise of understanding the Nature and Ends of it; as it is a *Sacrificial Feast* in Remembrance of Christ's Death and Passion, and of our Deliverance from Sin and Death, which we have thereby. And this indeed may well require more Years over their Heads, before Children will be capable to come to the Understanding thereof, than what might

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capacitate the Jewish Children for the understanding the nature of the Pass-over, because that Myſtery is greater; but this is merely accidental. But as ſoon as our Children are capable of understanding the Deſign of this holy Communion, and of performing thoſe Acts that are required with reſpect unto it, we hold it their Duty likewiſe to participate in it.

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leſſon.

And then as for the Practice of Infant-Communion in the Chriſtian Church, we have not near the like Evidence of the Practice of it from Antiquity, either as to the Antientneſs, or the Generality of the Practice of it, as we have for that of Infant-Baptiſm. There being none of the moſt antient Writers, *Ireneus*, *Origen*, *Tertullian*, that ſpeak any thing of it, as they do of Infant-Baptiſm; and *Origen* particularly, as a Cuſtom or Tradition derived from the Apoſtles; nor near ſo many in the following Ages mentioning it, as there do Infant-Baptiſm. And many of thoſe that owned the Neceſſity of Infant-Baptiſm, as the *Pelagians*, yet never owned the Neceſſity of Infant-Communion. And as for the Practice of Infant-Communion therefore, the Weſtern Churches have long ago relinquish'd it, as apprehending it to be a Miſtake, grounded neither upon any Text of Scripture, nor Apoſtolic Tradition, and being in the Nature and Deſign of it improper for Infants; but yet have ſtill retained Infant-Baptiſm, as being in all reſpects well grounded, and moſt aptly to be accomodated to them.

It was an eaſy and charitable Slip which the Ancient Church was ſuffered to fall into amongſt other things, to give the Lord's-Supper to Infants, (as they uſed to do to grown Perſons preſently after their Baptiſm) that they might partake of all the viſible Seals of Divine Grace and Favour. Rather than deprive them of any, they would give them all. This, tho' a Miſtake, yet was a Matter of no dangerous Conſequence in Religion; as the Anabaptiſts pretend that of Infant-Baptiſm to be in the higheſt degree, as introducing a meer Mock-Chriſtianity, and a Mock-Church and Miniſtry into the World. Now it is not imaginable, that God ſhould ſuffer ſuch a Church-destroying Corruption ſo early to prevail in *that* Church that was ſo famous for Miracles, Martyrdom, and true unaffected Holineſs as the Antient Church was. But for ſuch a harmleſs and innocent Miſtake as that of Infant-Communion, it is no ſtrange thing that their Charity ſhould a little be let alone to over-biaſs their Judgment. And I ſhould much rather chooſe to join with *them* in their Charity, than with theſe *Duri Patres Infantum*, that are ſo unkind to deny *that* to Infants, which God hath been pleaſed in his great Grace and Kindneſs ſo freely to vouchſafe unto them, and to inſtate them in.

The CONCLUSION.

Thus have I endeavoured, with all convenient Brevity, and I hope with Perspicuity, to manage the Argument I have taken in hand: And I do not know, that I have balk'd any considerable Argument or Objection, that seem'd to me to be of any force against it. And I have desired to follow the Apostle's Direction, *to speak the Truth in Love*, without any bitter Reflection upon the contrary-minded; whom, notwithstanding their Dissent, I shall respect as Brethren. But as for the way that they have taken up, considering what I have said in Defence of our own, I can no otherwise esteem of it than as a very culpable Schism. If the Denial of Infant-Baptism had been a simple Error, I should have less concerned my self about it. But when there is such a Train of dismal Consequences following at the heels of it, as the unchurching all Churches that are not of the like Communion, and the denial of all other Ministry and Ordinances besides their own, which must needs naturally be accompanied with many fierce Animosities and unbrotherly Contentions, to the destroying of Christian Love and Peace; it seems to me to look with a frightful Aspect. Therefore they must excuse me, if out of a Love to Truth and Peace, I have endeavoured to rectify the Mistaken Judgment of those that have gone astray, and to settle those that have need of Establishment in the way of Catholick Verity, Love and Union.

But that the Doctrine which I have defended, may be more effectually vindicated from that Contempt and Scorn that is poured upon it by those of the contrary Perswasion, it is our part to make that good and holy Improvement of the Baptism that we have received, as is futable to the Nature of it. And you that are Parents, and Godfathers and Godmothers, pray consider your Charge and Trust that is committed to you, and remember, as it is excellently express'd in the Exhortation after Publick Baptism, *That it is your Parts and Duties to see that the Children be taught, so soon as they shall be able to learn, what a solemn Vow, Promise and Profession they have made by you: And that they may know these things the better, to call upon them to hear Sermons, and provide that they may learn the Creed, the Lord's-Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his Soul's Health; and that they may be vertuously brought up to lead a Godly and a Christian Life.* It is the Carelessness of Parents and Godfathers about the Education of Children, and their Neglect to inforce upon them their Baptismal Obligations, that hath been one great Cause of Offence, that those

of the contrary Perswasion have taken against Infant-Baptism. For what wonder is it, if *that* be counted a Nullity, that there is so little good use made of? And to what purpose is the sprinkling or washing Children with Water, if there be no care taken to instil into them, and to bring them up to that Christian Purity in Heart and Life, that is signified thereby? They are bound indeed afterwards however, when they come to Understanding, to reflect upon the Obligations that in their Infancy they were brought under: But there can be little Expectation ordinarily, as we see by sad Experience, that ever they *will* do it, if their Education and Instruction be neglected in their younger Years. Indeed it is to be doubted, that the Baptism of Infants with many is turned into a meer Formality: And the Charge that is so solemnly and particularly undertaken by Godfathers and Godmothers, is never thought of afterwards to any purpose. But many Parents think that they do their Duty sufficiently, if they bring up their Children to some Art or Trade, or provide Portions and Estates for them, whereby they may be able to live in the World: And Godfathers and Godmothers, if they do but give them something, as a Token of their Respect in some small Gift. But that they may be brought to lead a truly Christian Life, that they may deny Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, and live Godly, Righteously and Soberly in this present evil World, which is the great End of Baptism, Ordinances, Gospel, and Life it self: How little is that reflected upon by many, as if it were none at all of their Concern and Duty? A right practical Improvement of our Infant-Baptism by our selves, and a Religious Care taken in the Education of our Children suitably to the Obligations thereof, will be a better Vindication of the Usefulness of Infant-Baptism, than all the Arguments that can otherwise be brought for it, (tho never so good) which will seem all but Noise and Sound to many, unless the Practical Influence and Power of it be made more to appear in real Benefit and Fruit.

Now the God of Peace, which brought again from the Dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, make us perfect in every good Work to do his Will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be Glory for ever and ever. Amen.

A N

A P P E N D I X;

Wherein is shewed,

That it is not *necessary to baptize by Dipping.*

HAVING dispatch'd the Controversy of Infant-Baptism, I shall here add a few Words of the Manner of Administration of Baptism; and shew, That it is not necessary, that Baptism should be administered by Dipping, or Plunging, or Dowzing into the Water.

If it be necessary that Baptism should be always administered by Dipping, this Necessity must arise from the Will and Intention of our Saviour some way declared to us in the Institution of Baptism, or in the Administration of it left to us in Scripture. And there must be some Notices or Evidences, by which this Intention or Will of our Saviour may be made manifest to us; from which we may necessarily infer, or conclude, that this particular Form of Administration is determinately prescribed by him. And this, I think, can be collected no otherwise, but by one or other, or all of these three ways, *viz.* Either from the Use and Signification of the Words, by which this Ordinance is express'd; or from the Examples of the Administration of it, that are left us in Scripture; or from the Nature and Ends of the Ordinance itself. And if it cannot be necessarily inferred from all, or either of these Considerations, that it was our Saviour's Will and Intention, that Baptism should always be administered by Dipping; then, I suppose, it will be allowed, that Dipping is not essential to Baptism. Now I shall endeavour to prove, that it cannot be necessarily inferred any of these ways.

I. Not from the Use or Signification of the word *Baptize*, which is not used to signify Dipping, but washing or cleansing by Water, which way soever it be. For,

1st. It is to be observed, That whenever the Holy Ghost in the New Testament hath occasion to mention the Act of Dipping, it is never expressed

by this word that signifieth to Baptize, but by another, which we have but four times in the New Testament, *viz.* *Luk.* 16. 24. *Joh.* 13. 26. *Mat.* 26. 23. *Rev.* 19. 13. But whenever the Act of Baptizing is exprest, it is always exprest by another word, and not by that which is commonly used to exprest the Act of Dipping. From whence we may probably infer a difference in the Signification, not a Sameness: For if they were both of the same Importance or Signification, it is most likely that they would be used promiscuously.

2dly. I say the word *Baptize*, or Baptism, is often used to signify any kind of washing or cleansing by Water, by the Application of Water any way to the Thing, and not only by dipping of it into Water; which in some cases was not customary, nor likely. As when it is said, *Mark* 7. 4. *The Pharisees eat not, except they wash*: In the Greek it is, *Except they be baptized*. And *Luke* 11. 38. the Pharisees marvelled, that *our Saviour had not first washed before Dinner*: In the Greek likewise it is, *that he was not first baptized*. Now the manner of washing in that case seems usually to have been by Aspersion of Water on the Hands: And therefore this is to exprest the Office of a Servant to his Master; 2 *Kings* 3. 11. *Elisha poured Water on the Hands of Elijah*. And the same word is used to exprest their frequent Ceremonial Washing of *Beds or Tables*; as likewise it is in that Text, *Mark* 7. 4. In the Original it is, *the Baptism of these things*. And it is no way likely, that this should be ordinarily done by Immersion, or putting them all into, or under Water, but rather by pouring Water upon them, and thereby to cleanse them. And *Heb.* 9. 10. we read of *divers Washings* that they had: In the Greek *divers Baptisms*, many of which were Sprinklings. Therefore there can be no Argument for Dipping, &c. solidly grounded upon the bare Signification of the word *Baptize*, because *that* is used to signify any kind of Washing without Dipping as well as by it.

3dly. It is sometimes to be observed, that the Act of Baptizing is so exprest, that it would be very uncouth and improper to understand it of *Dipping*: As when it is exprest by baptizing *with* Water, not by baptizing *into* Water, or *under* Water: as *Luke* 3. 16. *I indeed baptize you with Water*. And so *Acts* 11. 16. it would be very uncouth and improper to say, that a Man is dipp'd *with* Water.

4thly. Again; this same word that is used to exprest Water-Baptism, or baptizing *with* Water, is in like manner used to exprest Christ's baptizing *with* the Holy Ghost and with Fire; as in that same Text, *Luke* 3. 16. Now that cannot be so understood, that Christ should *dip* or *dowze* Men into the Holy Ghost; but the usual way of Expression is, that the Holy Ghost with his Gifts and Graces was *poured upon* them: thus *Act.* 2. 17, 18. *I will pour out in those days of my Spirit upon them*. And *Acts* 10. 45. *On the Gentiles also was poured*

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poured out the Gift of the Holy Ghost. And *Tit. 3. 6.* *The renewing of the Holy Ghost, which is shed, or poured on us abundantly.* And why should we not understand the baptizing *with Water*, in Proportion and Similitude to this? So that I can see no reason to conclude, that it was our Saviour's Will and Intention, that Baptism should always be by Dipping, from the Use or Signification of the Word.

II. It cannot be necessarily infer'd or concluded from the Examples of Persons being baptized, that are mentioned in Scripture. For in those Examples that seem to be most express for Dipping, the most that can be concluded, is only a bare Probability of it. And in some it is highly improbable, and the Probability is rather on the other side. And if it could be demonstratively and satisfactorily made out by Scripture-Examples, that the usual way of Administration of Baptism then was by Dipping, yet that would lay no necessary Obligation upon us to the like.

1. I say, that in those Examples, which seem to be most express for Dipping, and therefore are most commonly urged for the Proof of it, there is at most but a bare Probability of it, and hardly *that* in some; but there is no demonstrative Proof can be made from any of them, either from the express Words or Story of those Examples, or by just Consequence from them. There are three Texts of Scripture that are usually urged to this purpose. I shall consider them severally.

The first is *Mat. 3. 13, 16.* which sets forth the Baptism of our Saviour by *John Baptist at Jordan*: For *ver. 16.* *Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the Water.* But what then? Can it be necessarily infer'd from hence, that he was dipp'd in it, or under it? If he went into it, (as the manner usually was in that Country, to wash their Feet, that were dirty or foul with travelling) and so *there* was baptized; yet was there no way to have this done, but by Dipping? But indeed this Text, if rightly interpreted, doth not so much as prove, that our Saviour went into the Water at all. For in the Greek it is only, ἀνέβη ἀπὸ τῆ ὕδατος, he came up *from* the Water, not *out* of it. And so he might be very well said to do, if he only went to the side or brink: There being some little Ascent at least from the Water to the dry Ground. But however, there is no determinate manner of our Saviour's Baptism in it express, nor can be necessarily or demonstratively infer'd. And therefore at most that particular Form, which the Anabaptists insist upon, is but a meer Probability.

Another Text that is urged, is *Joh. 3. 23.* *That John was baptizing in Enon near to Salim, because there was much Water there.* And because of the numbers of those that went to *John* to be baptized, it was most convenient that it should be in such Places where there was Plenty of Water. But can any

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one prove hence, that they were baptized by dipping into it, or under it? Is this any thing more than a Conjecture? tho he baptized there, where there was much Water, yet the manner of baptizing there is not stated or determined. So that this which is so much insisted upon, at most from hence, is but a Conjectural Probability; and therefore can be no matter of Faith, nor can lay any Obligation upon Practice. For besides, in that place it is not said, that there was much Water together; but πολλὰ ὕδατα, *many Waters*, that is, many Streams or Rivolets, which were not very common generally in that Country. And thus there might be, tho there were not Water of a sufficient Depth to dip a Man in it. But let that be how it will, there is no determinate Manner express'd, or to be certainly and evidently concluded, as ought to have been to build a Consequence of such a Nature upon, as to issue an Obligation to such a determinate Manner.

Lastly, that of *Acts* 8. 36. useth to be insisted upon, concerning the Baptism of the Eunuch by *Philip*. For *ver.* 38. it is said, *They went down both into the Water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him: and when they were come up out of the Water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip.* Yet neither here is the particular Manner of the Administration express'd, nor yet to be certainly collected. It is no strange thing, that they did go down into the Water in that warm Country; that they might do, and yet *Philip* not dip the Eunuch in it, but take up Water with his Hand to pour it upon him. And yet the words in the Original may be as conveniently interpreted, that they both went down to the Water, (as the Eunuch was journeying upon the Road by) and came up from it only: For so the Particles here rendred *into* and *out of*, are often expounded. And if so, then this Text doth not so much as prove, that they went *into* the Water, but only to the Bank or Side of it. And besides, that Water, if they did go into it, is reported by those that have travelled into, and viewed those Parts, to have been only a Rise or Fountain, so small or shallow, as that a Man could not be dipp'd in it. *St. Jerom* saith, it was *Fons ad Radicem montis ebulliens*, a Fountain bubbling out at the bottom of the Hill; *Et ab eadem in qua gignitur, sorbetur humo*, and forthwith drank up by the Earth that produced it, as it is expressed by *Sandys* in his Travels, speaking of the same Place; and therefore it is not likely to be of any considerable Depth. And so the Expression in the Story of the *Acts* seems to intimate, *ver.* 36. they came ἐπι τὴ ὕδαρ, unto a certain Water, or somewhat of Water, enough to baptize the Eunuch, tho not by dipping. But from none of these Relations of Baptism can the particular or determinate manner of the Administration certainly be gathered; and therefore much less the Necessity of any Form be concluded. So that at most, all that these Places amount to, is a meer Probability of the thing, that it was done in that manner, and no more. And yet these are all the Places from Example; that

use to be produc'd to prove the Necessity. But how short doth all come of a demonstrative Proof?

2. In some of the Examples or Instances of Persons baptized in Scripture, it is very improbable that the way of the Administration of Baptism was by Dipping; and the Probability is rather on the other side, that it was not by Dipping, but rather some other way.

As when we read of such vast Multitudes baptized by *John*, which the Evangelist giveth us an Account of; *Matth. 3. 5; 6. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the Region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him.* This great Conflux of People to him, seems to be chiefly at the Beginning of his Ministry, though that continued but a little time neither at most. And we have no Account that *John* had any Assistance in baptizing any; for we do not read that his Disciples baptized, though the Disciples of our Lord did. So that the whole Work must lie upon him, in baptizing so many thousand People, as it is likely there were, that came to him day by day. And what a tedious and dangerous Drudgery must this be for him, if he must stand so many Hours, or whole Days together in deep Water, and must take all this Company one by one, to bury them under Water, and take them up again after the Mode? How unlikely, or improbable therefore is this?

And so when we read of *three thousand Persons* that were baptized, and added to the Church the same Day, *Acts 2. 41.* For it seems that they were baptized the same Day that they heard the Word, and were converted to the Faith of Christ. And this Work, it cannot well be supposed, that they could go about before Noon at soonest: For *St. Peter* began his Sermon but about nine of the Clock in the Morning, or *the third Hour of the Day*, ver. 15. And after that there must needs some time pass in Discourse, &c. before they could be ready for the Work of Baptism. And how unlikely is this, that all this could be done, and so many Persons dipp'd after the Mode, by so few as there were to do it, in an Afternoon? And that in the City *Jerusalem*, wherein there was no Water of Depth, there being only the little Brook *Cedron* running by? And as for Cisterns, or other Receptacles of Water, where should they find them to dip such a Multitude in, and that upon a sudden? The most of that Nature, we may suppose, were about the Temple, for the washing and bathing of the Priests; but it is not likely there could be so many as to serve for such a Multitude; nor that they should have leave to use those that were. And the Water-pots that were in private Houses were commonly less, as serving chiefly for the washing of their Feet when they came in from Travel. And there is not the least Intimation of their going out of the City to perform this Work. And if they had, that would have taken up

more time than what could have been spared in an Afternoon. And yet as Geographers report, there was not any Water near the City of that Quantity, that could be sufficient for this Performance, neither. (And besides, was all this done, and were they baptized naked, or in their Clothes? If naked, where was the Modesty that became such an Ordinance, in the dipping of such a vast mix'd Multitude, as it is likely, of Men and Women together, at Noon-day? If in some Clothes, must they all go home first and fetch Clothes to change, or must they walk to their several Habitations, it may be a considerable space, in their wet Clothes? Which way soever Mens Imaginations may work to form a Supposition, how strangely improbable is all?)

So when we read of baptizing a whole Household, in the deep of the Night, in a private House, in a City, without the least Intimation or Likelihood of their going forth to a River, or any Water out of the House for it; As we read in the Story of the Jailor, *Acts 16. 33. For he took them the same Hour of the Night, and washed their Stripes, (that is, of Paul and Silas) and was baptized, he and all his straightway, viz. in the very Prison; and then brought them into his own House, which was probably joined to the Prison, and set Meat before them. This is not very likely, in these Circumstances, to be done by Dipping neither.*

And what an unlikely thing is it, that *St. Paul*, when he was in that weak Condition through Fasting, and that great Consternation of Spirit that he was in by reason of his Vision, should be baptized by Dipping in cold Water, in his private Lodging, as the Series of the Story seems to intimate to us, that he then was; *Acts 9. 9. He for three Days was without Sight, and neither did eat nor drink. But ver. 18. when Ananias came and spake to him, he received Sight forthwith, and arose, (being, it is likely, before upon the Bed, through Weakness and Trouble) and was baptized: And when he had received Meat, which it seems was not till after his Baptism, he was strengthened.*

Considering these things therefore, if we consider the bare Relations of the Scripture, it seems highly improbable, that in these Instances Baptism was administred by Dipping; but it seems more probable that it was done some other way, by Asperision or Application of Water, not by Dipping. So that if in the former Instances there was a Probability that Baptism was by Immersion or plunging in the Water, (though in some of them we have seen it hardly amounts to that neither) yet in these now mentioned there is a Probability at least on the other side. So that here is Probability against Probability. And I will appeal to any Man that is not prejudic'd, whether those Accounts of Baptism, that we have in the former Relations, can ever be rationally supposed to contain a demonstrative Evidence and Proof of the Necessity of Dipping,

as being essential to Baptism, when there are such Probabilities in others of a quite different Administration?

3. But I shall add this further, that if it could be demonstratively proved by Scripture-Examples, that the way of Administration of Baptism in those times, was by Immersion or Dipping under Water, yet could it lay no necessary Obligation upon us to the like, unless it could be proved, that this determinate manner was appointed by Christ's Institution, which it is impossible to prove by these Examples alone, if the thing be capable of being performed otherwise. For our Saviour might give out the Command of baptizing with Water in general, without determining the manner of Administration, but leaving the particular Form or Mode indifferent, and to be used *ad libitum*, this way, or that way. And they might take up this Mode of Immersion (if they did do so) as most suitable to their Apprehensions, or Inclinations, or Customs. But it doth not follow therefore; that we must needs observe the same Manner, if the same Thing can be done another Way, and to the same Ends and Use. Therefore unless they can prove this Particularity by the Institution, or such Texts as are clearly declarative of it, these Examples will not bind us to the like Observation. For an Example is no Rule or Obligation of it self; so that the Rule it self must be first proved, before an Example can be made use of in Argument. So that this Argument from Example alone is of no Force at all. And we have seen before, that there is nothing to be certainly concluded from the bare Words by which the Ordinance is express'd, to prove this Form of Administration that is so contested about.

If it be said, *That the Sense of our Saviour's Institution may be competently gathered from their Customs.* I answer, That they had several sorts of Baptisms, or Washings, and Purifications, and many of these were by Sprinkling: So that which of those are we sure that our Saviour referred to?

If it be said, that their manner of Baptism before was by Dipping or Immersion, and so that our Saviour in the Institution of Christian Baptism supposed, at least, or ordered it to be administered in their Mode, and that the word *baptize* must signify to do as they did. I answer, first, that that must be proved by Scripture to be *their* Mode of Administration, before a Necessity can be inferred by this Argument, that it must be ours. For if they produce an unscriptural Proof, though the thing be true, though it may illustrate an Argument, yet it will not be enough to enforce an Assent, so as to build the Necessity of such a Practice upon. And yet again, if it could be proved never so substantially from Scripture it self, that this was always the Jewish Mode of Administration of Baptism, yet it will not follow that this Mode or Manner was prescribed by our Saviour in his Institution: For his Institution respects the End rather than the Manner, that is, he bid them do what they did

did to such an End, (as Baptism is now designed for) but he did not bid them do it only in *that* way. For our Saviour's Institution doth not seem to respect the Way at all, but the End and the Matter; so that if there be any kind of Application of Water to such an end, the Institution is satisfied. And these Examples do nothing at all to oblige to this or that particular Form.

And yet it is to be observed again, that if the Institution had respected the Manner as well as the End, that many things have been observed and done in the first Administration of an Ordinance, in conformity to such Particularities in the Institution, that in after-Administrations have been omitted or altered, *viz.* in Matters that have not related to the Essence of the Ordinance. Thus it was in the Matter or Business of the *Passover*, which according to the first Institution was to be eaten *standing*, and *in haste, with their Loins girded, and Staffs in their Hands*; to denote, perhaps, their hasty Passage and Deliverance out of *Egypt*. But these Circumstances, when they came to possess the Land of *Canaan*, in after-Generations, were wholly omitted. And we find Christ and his Apostles in a Table-posture, in that *Passover* which he celebrated with them, quite different from the first Institution; the particular Posture being not relative to the main End of the Institution; and the Circumstances being altered that the Institution at first had respect unto: And so why may it not be in this Case? So that though it should be supposed, that *their* way of Administration of Baptism was by Immersion, and that our Saviour had respect to that way in the first Institution, it having been *their* Mode and Custom *before* in that warm Country; yet upon Variation of Places and Customs, why may we not here also suppose an Allowance, if the Alteration of the Manner, in Accommodation to such Places or Persons, parallel to that Alteration that was before about the *Passover*? For surely a Change of Climates makes a great Alteration of Circumstances; the Northern Climates being much colder than the Southern, on this side the Equinoctial. And Immersion or Bathing in cold Water, which was pleasurable enough in *Judea*, will be very troublesome and dangerous in the Northern Regions, especially at some times of the Year, and to some Persons that are sickly or weak. And yet no doubt but our Saviour intended that Baptism should be common to all Places, and Times, and Persons: For we do not read in Scripture, that ever they deferred Baptism after they were converted to the Christian Faith, at what time soever of the Year it was. And yet withal it is plain, from the general Rule, that God requires Mercy and not Sacrifice; and therefore our Saviour, we may be sure, would not have an external Ordinance to be ordinarily detrimental or dangerous to any of the Subjects of it; as plunging in cold Water must needs be to some Persons, especially in cold Climates, without a continual Miracle, which we are not ordinarily to expect: For as he

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tells us in another Instance, *the Sabbath was made for Man, and not Man for the Sabbath*; and therefore was not to have any Detriment from it, that could be conveniently prevented. For a natural Law must be supposed always to over-rule positive Institutions. And why may we not in the same manner argue, that Baptism likewise was made for Man, and not Man for Baptism? And therefore when such a Manner of Baptism would ordinarily become hurtful to Man in some Places, we may by the same Rule conclude, that another Manner may be substituted in the room of it, if it may answer to the same Ends and Purposes. And though *that* of Dipping might be the manner in that warm Country, where the Institution was first delivered, yet it is not reasonable to suppose that *that* should be alike prescribed to other Persons and Places, to whom and where it would become dangerous and hurtful to the Life and Health of Man, when another will do as well.

III. I come therefore now to shew, that it is not necessary to the Ends of Baptism, that it should be administered by Dipping. For the cleansing Nature of Water, without considering the Quantity, will be sufficient to signify all that is intended by it. And it is the Significancy of Water alone, as a Sign, and not the natural Virtue of it, can here be intended. And this Significancy may be sufficiently express'd by the Use of it in any Quantity, it being the purifying and cleansing Property of Water that is considerable in this Ordinance. So that whether we take it as a Sign from God to us, of his cleansing us from Sin and Guilt by the Blood and Spirit of Christ, and his owning us for his own holy peculiar People; or whether we take it as a Sign from us to God, of our Obligation and Dedication to Purity and Holiness, as the Servants of God; the Use of it, by Asperision or Application of it to us, will be of like Significancy to Immersion or Plunging of us *into it*.

And that this may not be thought to be only our Imagination, it is to be observed, that those very Benefits which are signified by Baptism, are often set out by the Expression of *sprinkling*. And if the thing signified may be sufficiently express'd in this way, then surely it is sufficient that the Sign should be so used, as to represent or express the same. For the Sign is but for the sake of the thing signified. Thus the Expiation of Sin by the Blood of Christ, and the Communication of the Benefits of his Death, is set out by Sprinkling, 1 Pet. 1. 2. *Through Sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ*. And Heb. 12. 24. *This is that Blood of Sprinkling that speaketh better things than the Blood of Abel*. And so Heb. 10. 22. we come to have *our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience*. And the Communication of God's Grace, and Assistance of his holy Spirit, for the Sanctification of our Hearts and Lives, is set out in the same manner. Thus we have that Prophecy, with respect to Gospel-

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times, *Isa. 52. 15.* *He shall sprinkle many Nations, that is, by bestowing his Word and Spirit upon them, to convert and bring them to an holy Submission to himself.* And so *Ezek. 36. 25.* *Then will I sprinkle clean Water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your Filthiness, and from all your Idols will I cleanse you.* And thus we find the manner was in the Ceremonial Cleanings; as in cleansing of the Levites, *Numb. 8. 7.* *Thus shalt thou do unto them to cleanse them; sprinkle clean Water of purifying upon them.* And so when any one was unclean with any Ceremonial Uncleanness, he was to be purified, by sprinkling the *Water of Separation*, *Numb. 19. 13.* So that it seems that all sorts of Purification or Cleansing may be sufficiently express'd by sprinkling of Water or Blood. So that the Sprinkling of Water in Baptism is likewise sufficient to express or signify what is to be signified thereby: It being not the Quantity, but the cleansing Nature of Water, that is intended in it, as a Sign to the Purposes to which it is designed. As in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, it is not the Quantity of Bread and Wine that is necessary to the Significancy intended therein, of strengthening and refreshing our Souls by the Body and Blood of Christ; but Bread and Wine used in any Quantity whatsoever. So the Significancy and End of Baptism doth not depend upon the Quantity of Water used therein, but only upon that Use of it, whatever Quantity it be in.

But say our Brethren of the other Perswasion, that the Significancy of Baptism is not sufficiently express'd, unless, according to the Apostle, we are buried in Baptism under Water, as they understand that Place, *Rom. 6. 4.* *We are buried with him by Baptism into Death:* Which Place they produce, both to prove the manner of Baptism by Dipping, and also the Necessity of it. Whereas I think that neither one nor the other can be proved from it: The Apostle's Design in that Place is to engage Christians to a Forfaking or Renunciation of Sin: And the Argument he useth is taken from their Baptism, because *they are baptized, in their Baptism, into the Similitude of Christ's Death, and so are buried with him by Baptism into Death,* so as to die to Sin: *That as Christ died for Sin, so we by our Covenant-Engagement in our Baptism, undertake avowed Death to Sin, evermore to renounce and forsake it, and to live a new regenerate Life answerable to Christ's Resurrection.* And this is to be *planted together with Christ in the likeness of his Death;* and so we are to be *in the likeness of his Resurrection.* And *our old Man is crucified with him, that the Body of Sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve Sin:* And therefore we must reckon our selves, by this our Covenant-Engagement, *to be dead indeed unto Sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord;* to live a Life of Holiness according to the Will of God. So that 'tis a departing from Sin which the Apostle here intends, and argues from

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from Baptism as an engaging Covenant-sign thereunto, and makes use of the several Metaphors of Death and Burial, and planting into Death, and Crucifixion, to express this departing from Iniquity, to which by Baptism we are engaged.

But say they, *The Apostle alludes to the Practice or Custom of baptizing by dipping under Water.* But how doth that appear? they must prove the Custom before they can prove that this is an Allusion to the Custom; For an Allusion to a Custom supposeth it, which must be made out some other way. For it must first appear, that *that* was the Custom, before it can appear that this is an Allusion to it; so that this Text alone doth not prove the Custom. And we see that the Apostle's Discourse may be very well understood without supposing such an Allusion. And yet if the Custom be owned, and the Allusion be granted, the Apostle's Allusion doth not prove the Necessity of it. In other Scriptures we see, there is an Allusion to Sprinkling, yet we don't argue the Necessity of Sprinkling from such an Allusion: Nor can the Necessity of Dipping be argued from this. For the Force of the Apostle's Argument doth not lie in this, that they were buried under Water, (though it be admitted they were so) but that they were obliged by their Baptism, as an engaging Sign, to depart from Sin; which they may be as well, if Baptism were administered by Sprinkling; so that the thing designed is equally attained this way, though not under the Notion or Metaphor of Burial, yet under another Notion that signifieth the same thing, though not in the same manner. And it is the thing it self that is to be respected, and not as it is express'd under such or such a Metaphor. And therefore I can never think, that there should be so much Stress laid upon a Practice only for the sake of a certain Metaphor to be built upon it, when the thing it self may be argued without it, or under any other as well as that.

Thus I hope I have made out, that there is no Necessity of baptizing by Dipping to be proved by Scripture. And no body pretends, as I know, the Necessity of any other particular determinate Form.

Inference 1. And hence then I infer, that the particular Mode or Form of Baptism is a thing indifferent, as not coming under any Precept, or being any way essential to the Ordinance. As the Anabaptists do allow, that it is indifferent whether Persons be baptized naked or in their Clothes, (though I think that that may fairly admit of a Dispute) there being as they think no positive Rule for either. So for the same Reason shall I make the like Conclusion concerning the Mode of the Administration, whether by Dipping or Sprinkling.

2. And then if the particular Form or Mode be indifferent, then to lay such a Stress upon It, as if the Worship or Ordinance could not be otherwise acceptably performed or observed, can be nothing else but an unreasonable Superstition.

3. And if it be indifferent, then to make a Breach and Schism in the Church for the sake of it, to cry down all other Baptism for a Nullity, besides their own, and to condemn all other Churches as no Churches, and their Ordinances as no Ordinances, and their Ministry as no Ministry, for the sake thereof; and to promote, continue, and carry on with so much Impunity, a causeless and uncharitable Separation and Division by means thereof, must needs be very highly criminal.

19. I shall conclude all with the Apostle's Exhortation to the Romans, *Let us follow after the things that make for Peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.* And that to the Corinthians; *Finally, Brethren, farewell: Be perfect; be of one Mind, live in Peace; and the God of Love and Peace shall be with you.*

T H E E N D

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