

**The Grounds and Ends of
the Baptism of the Children of
the Faithful Opened.**

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THE
GROUNDS AND ENDS
OF THE
BAPTISM
OF THE
CHILDREN
OF THE
FAITHFUL.
OPENED

In a familiar Discourse by way of a
Dialogue, or Brotherly Conference.

By
The Learned and Faithful Minister of
Christ, John Cotton, Teacher of
the Church of *Boston* in *New-England*.

LONDON,

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TO THE READER.

THe compiling of the ensuing discourse, and in this familiar style, was put upon me by a more then moral inevitable necessity. *Paul* acknowledgeth there is a constraining power in the love of Christ, 2 *Cor.* 5:14. And surely the love which through Christ I bare to some gracious Saints in *Lincolnshire*, (now with Christ) constrained me to reserve a tender affection to their surviving children. One of them being formerly well affected to the ways of Christ, and accordingly respected of the godly where he lived, He coming over into these parts, was received into fellowship in a Neighbour Church, and well approved. But falling into acquaintance with some who stood aloof to the Baptism of Children, and receiving some Books from them against the same, He withheld his child from Baptism (as others had done theirs; to the offence both of the Lord, and the Church, whereof he was a member. The Elders of that Church took much pains with him to convince him of the error of his way and I suppose some

of their learned and elaborate discourses are sent over by this Ship, for more public satisfaction. Withal they advised him to confer with other friends, and acquaintance in other Churches. To me therefore he came, and acquainting me with some of his Scruples, I thought what I said to him, might have satisfied; and so it seemed to me, it did for the present. But he told me, other scruples he had, which were all comprised in a printed book: the Author I forbear to name; but he was then reputed one of the chiefest note of that way, for moderation and freedom, from the leaven of other corrupt opinions, which are wont to accompany the denial of Infants Baptism. Since then other Books have been published, of the same argument, but with more learning and better method. But this Book which he brought me; containing all his scruples, he desired, that it might be answered, and he should so rest satisfied. I was then full of other business, and could not possibly (though I much desired it) gratify his desire. In this strait, a young Scholar, (but of pregnant gifts and parts) Mr *Benjamin Wedbridge*, dwelling then in my house, seeing me solicitous for the young man, undertook the answer of the Book: which God helped him speedily and acutely to perform. But the young man took not that satisfaction from it he well might have done: but excused himself, it was so full of Scholarship and terms of Art, that he could not well understand it, and so could not satisfy his conscience with it.

Whereupon I was forced, either to suffer an hopeful Son of gracious Parents (and my dear friends) to fall and lie under that burden, or else I must Answer the book my self, and that in such a familiar language, as

might be suitable with his capacity. Which by the help of Christ having done, other friends perusing it, pressed me to give way to let it pass to more public use of other, as well as of him. I was very loth to hearken to them, the Book (whereto I give answer) being so immethodical and confused, and my self being forced to follow him in like confusion, that the young man might not complain (as he did before) of too much Art or of Omission of Answer to any thing material in his Book.

Thus have you a short and plain account of this present labour of Love. You will receive I hope by other hands from hence, more Elaborate Answers to more Elaborate discourses in the same and other Arguments.

Now the God of Truth and Peace accompany all the Labours of his Servants (which bear witness to his Truth) with a Spirit of Power to cast down all false Imaginations, and to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ Jesus.

John Cotton.

TO THE READER.

THe due Application of *Baptism* to all those Persons Christ would have it Administered unto, cannot but be apprehended, by all that have any insight into the Controversies of these times, to be of a very high importance; whether we respect the Ordinance it self, the Persons right, or the Consciences of these in Error about it.

For the Ordinance it self; as it was one of the first of those institutions of the Gospel, so in respect of the things sealed at therein, it is the Greatest: our first Union with Christ, the great promise of the Spirit, (the foundation of all grace and glory.) Our representation by, and communion with Christ, is his death & resurrection, being hereby at once sealed up by God to the persons that partake thereof as belonging to them, and to have all these misplaced, to persons not capable, through want of divine warrant; of any benefit thereby, cannot but be esteemed a great prophaning of it: As on the other side, the withholding it from such as Christ hath bequeathed this Legacy unto, would be found as highly derogatory to the great goodness and rich grace of the Testator. And so withal an injury unto the Persons of Infants having right thereunto, in those whom Christ

hath made Administrators of these his Mysteries. Great also it the moment thereof to the Consciences of many good souls, as in the consequents of the contrary Opinion of denying Infants Baptism, is in same (I must not say of all) too apparent. the vindication therefore of this great Truth, doth deserve and challenge the choicest abilities of the Divines of this age: it being in the days of this second Reformation with us, a fresh, if not as much controverted, as in the times of the first Reformation it was in Germany. And it is more light and less violence (though in truths taken generally for granted) that must end this and all ether controversies of this elevation that are amongst us. And it will surely be rewarded by Christ at the latter day, as a work of more then ordinary charity, to have pleaded and maintained the right of these poor members of his, who want a tongue to speak for themselves.

In 4 manner half the Church of God, and that, purissima pars Ecclesiæ, the purest part of it, elect Infants, die, (as well-nigh half the rest of mankind) in their bud and infancy, and grow not up to partake of the dews and influence of any other outward Ordinance; and were they deprived of this, should go out of this world, (into which God only sent them to receive that which should make them meet for the common inheritance of the Saints) without any outward owning them, or visible way of blessing from him, that hath blessed them and us with his choicest heavenly blessings in Christ. Yea, and the ether half of these that grow up to glorify God in their riper years, whereof many are also holy even from the womb, these also should during their years of nonage want an outward badge, and any outward acknowledgment of what they are, even fellow heirs of the Kingdom with their brethren, which even in the infancy of the world itself, whilst all were under Tutors and Governors, was their privilege. To clear therefore their evidences, and set

right their title to this Kingdom, And to shew forth a writ and warrant for their entailment and admission into it, by Baptism, is an act of the greatest Justice as of charity.

These and the like weighty considerations have stirred up the Spirit of this learned, grave and holy Man, (though full of other labours and employments, and now therewith of years) to bring forth of his rich Treasury things both new and old for the averting this so important truth. Of the Author himself, what is said of Ezra his search into the Ordinances of the Law, that his heart was prepared to seek the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel Statutes and Judgements: The same I may say of him concerning Institutions (those heavenly things (Heb. 7:3.) , as in comparison of the other, the Apostle speaks) of the Gospel. Much of his thoughts and attention have been spent thereon, both to sever them from the additions and inventions of men, and to preserve them in their Dignity from the disregard of others. And he was a chosen instrument of God to hold forth the purity thereof in a great measure, well-nigh from the first of his settled Ministry, with much constancy and integrity, and with an eminent blessing both of protection and success upon his Ministry in those evil times, which since hath been further crowned with further light therein. Who continues still to esteem the clearing any part or portion thereof, a sufficient reward of his choicest pains. And yet he hath not made those lesser, and mere outward things if the Gospel, the chiefest or first born of his strength, but in a due proportion the greater matters of Faith, and of the common salvation: which he hath more universally traversed, even the whole circle of Theology, and in his Ministry gone over; besides many select Bodes of Scripture opened by him therein, then most Divines alive.

I shall add nothing for the present about the subject matter

of this Treatise, I having already in my public Ministry it large delivered my self of what I have to say in this Argument, which though I have been provoked enough to make more public, yet hitherto through many; what more urgent diversions, what personal infirmities to deal in many things at once, I have been hindered from casting that worthless Mite into the public Treasury.

Tho. Goodwin.

**The Grounds and Ends of Baptism of
the Children of the Faithful.**

Opened in a Familiar Discourse by way of a
Dialogue or Brotherly Conference.

PREFACE.

B Rother *Silvester*, for the love I have to you, and your godly Patents, I have been much provoked in Spirit, to endeavour the pulling you forth of that error into which you are so deeply plunged. I doubt not your Elders and others of your Brethren have not been wanting to use the means for your conviction and satisfaction. But if the Lord espyed an Idol set up in your heart, he might justly leave you to see nothing but according to your Idol. If the heart be once taken with the love of an Error, it is all one (if not worse) as not to be taken with the love of truth. And in such a case, God is wont to give up the subtle to strong delusions to believe lies, 2 *Thes.* 2:10, 11. But (besides your own Elders and Brethren) you wanted not other friends (the Elders and Brethren of some other Churches) whom you have been wont to confide withal in less matters, and them you acquainted not with your scruples, which whether it were out of loathness to grieve them, or out of loathness to be removed from your way, I do not know.

Silvester. I am not so wedded to my way, but I am willing to hear counsel from the word of God: And therefore neither am I unwilling to acquaint your self with my scruples in this point,

The Grounds and Ends of Baptism
OF THE
CHILDREN
OF THE
FAITHFULL.

Opened in a Familiar Discourse by way of a
Dialogue, or Brotherly Conference.

PREFACE:

Shewing the occasion of the Conference.

B Rother *Silvester*, I feel your loss at my heart, for the love I bear to you, as to your godly Parents before you; I hear God hath lately burnt your house over your head, and most part of your goods with it. And it troubleth me the more for your sake, because I fear this I hand of God is gone out against you, to visit upon you and your family, your breach of Covenant with the Lord and his People. For though I know that all outward things fall alike to all (the Sheep and Servants of *Job* were burnt at well as your house: and many a godly man hath been struck with sickness for his trial, as well as *Moses* for neglect of an Ordinance) yet whilst *Moses* lay under the neglect of an Ordinance, In suffering his child to lie by him uncircumcised, It had been no rash judgement in others, nor want of holy wisdom in himself to think, that God by making a breach upon hit health, did visit upon him his breach of Covenant with the Lord, in delaying and neglecting, (though it may be for his wives sake) to bring his child under the Stale of the Covenant, we may in brotherly love well conceive, that God hath made the breach in your estate, to try your faith and patience, as

he did *Jobs*. But surely it will be your wisest and safest course so to construe God's meaning, That your breach of Covenant with God, did kindle a fire in his wrath, which brake forth upon your house, and burnt up so great a part of your Estate. For even our God (the God of the New Testament) is a Consuming fire, as well to Christians now, as to Jews of old. And when doth the jealousy of God most kindle, but against the Violation of his Ordinances? which being delivered to us in the a Commandment, are ratified by a Sanction from the Jealousy of the Lord our God. *Exod.* 20:5. You saw, not long before, a like fire of God's wrath breaking forth in burning the houses of others of your brethren and neighbours, who had a while before turned aside into the way same of error with your self; which when you took no warning by, the same fire burst for that lair upon your self. How wise and righteous was the hand of the Lord, that when water was neglected to Baptise your child, water should be wanting to quench the fire that consumed your house?

Silvester. I cannot think, that the delay of my child's Baptism could kindle that fire, that burnt up my house. For (if I know mine owns heart) I was very ready even at that time, to hear Counsel, and to receive conviction from our Elders and other brethren, if they could shew me any error in this way.

Silvanus. I doubt not your Elders and other brethren have not been wanting to use the means for your conviction, and satisfaction. But if the Lord espied an Idol set up in your hearty then he in his just displeasure would leave you to see nothing, but according to your Idol. If the heart be once taken with the love of an Error, it is all one (if not worse) as not to be taken with the love of truth. And in such a case, God is wont to the give up the soul to strong delusions to believe lies, 2 *Thes.* 2:10, 11. But (besides your own Elders and brethren) you wanted not other friends (the Elders and brethren of some other Churches) whom you have been wont to consult withal in less matters, and them you acquainted not with your scruples, which whether: it were out of loathness to grieve them, Or out of lothness to be removed from your way, I do not know.

Silvester. I am not so wedded to my way, but I am willing to hear counsel from the word of God: And therefore neither am I unwilling to acquaint your self with my scruples in this point

which I have gathered out of some books, chiefly out of those which seem to me most orthodoxal. For they do not (at some others of that way do) deny Magistrates, nor Predestination, nor Original Sin: Nor do they maintain Free-will in conversion, nor Apostasy from Grace: but only deny the lawful use of the Baptism of children; because it wanteth a word both of Commandment and Example from the Scripture.

Silvanus. It is well that any of that way do condescend so far unto the truth, in these controversies, which do so nearly concern the grace of Christ and power of Godliness and Public peace. And I am bound in Christian love to believe, that they who yield so far, do it out of conference, as following herein the Example of the Apostle, who professed of himself, and his followers, We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. But yet I believe withal, that it is not out of love to the truth, that Satan yieldeth to much to the Truth, but rather out of another ground, and (is his manner is) for a worse end. He knoweth the times, that now (by the good and strong hand of God) they are set upon purity and Reformation. And now to plead against the Baptism of children upon any of those Arminian and Popish grounds, which be so grosly ungratious, as those above-named, Satan knoweth, and seeth they would utterly be rejected. He chooseth therefore, rather to play Small Game (as they say) then to lost all. He now relinquisheth all those gross and ungratious tenents, whereby he was wont to plead against children's Baptism, and now pleadeth no other Arguments in these during times of Reformation then may be urged from a main Principle of Purity and Reformation, to wit, "That no Duty of God's Worship, nor any Ordinance of Religion is to be administered in the Church, but such as hath just warrant from the word of God. And by urging this Argument against the Baptism of children, Satan transformeth himself into an Angel of light: and the Spirit of Error and Prophaneness into a Minister of Truth and Righteousness. And so he hopeth to prevail, either with those men who do believe the lawful and holy use of children's Baptism to renounce that Principle, and so to renounce also all Reformation brought in by it: or else, (if they stick to that Principle) then to renounce the Baptism of children: And so the Reformation begun, will nei-

ther spread far, nor continue long. For if Godly Parents do withdraw their children from the Covenant, and from the Seal of the Covenant, they do make void (as much in as them lieth) the Covenant both to themselves, and to their children also. And then will the Lord cut off such souls from his People. *Gen.* 17: 14 And so the Reformation begun with a Blessing, will end in a curse, and in a cutting Separation either of Parents or of children, or of both from the Lord, and his People.

Silvester. That place in *Gen.* (17:14) speaketh not of Baptism, but of Circumcision: Between which though there may be some Resemblance in regard of their common Nature, and use, yet this difference between them chiefly sticketh with me, That *Abraham* and his natural Posterity had an express Commandment and word of Institution from God, for the circumcising of themselves and their Infant seed. But the Believers of the New Testament, though they have a Commandment from God to be Baptized themselves, yet they have neither Commandment, nor Example for the Baptism of their Infant seed.

Silvanus. It is a Tempting of God, even limiting of the Holy one of *Israel*, to put upon him to deliver his will only by Commandment or Example, or not at all; As if God might not deliver his will, by promise or threatening, by Proportion, or deduction, by Consequence, as well as by express Commandment, or Example. What Commandment or Example is there for women to partake of the Lord's Supper? yet the Proportion of the Lord's Supper with the Passover, and Deduction from such Scriptures as put no difference between male and female, make it to be received as the will and Ordinance of Christ, That women able to examine and judge themselves mould partake of the Lord's Supper, as well as the men: Every shred of Gold hammered, or drawn out of the wedge of Gold, is as well Gold, as the whole lump and wedge. Whatsoever is drawn out of the Scripture by just consequence and deduction, is as well the word of God, as that which is an express Commandment or Example in Scripture. But to help you (if the Lord will) over this (tumbling block (which you stick at) the Baptism of children is not without a Commandment, and word of Institution from Scripture as may appear two or three ways.

Silvester. Shew me any Commandment, or word of Institution for the Baptism of children, and it sufficeth me.

CHAPT. I.

Declaring and Maintaining the first ground for the Baptism of Children.

First, the Commission of the Lord Jesus given to his Apostles, doth give us a Commandment, and “word of Ininitiuion for the Baptism of children. *Mat.* 28:19, 20. Go (saith he to his Apostles) and make Disciples (as the word signifieth) all Nations (some at least of all sorts in all Nations) Baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you to the end of the world. In which Commission the Lord Jesus giveth commandment to his Apostles, and to their Successors to the end of the world,

To perform three Acts

1 To make Disciple.

2 To Baptize them.

3 To teach them to observe all the Ordinances of Christ.

From whence two Arguments offer themselves for the Institution of the Baptism of the children of the faithful.

Argument. 1. Such as be disciples they are to be Baptized.

But the children of the Faithful, they are disciples; Therefore children of the Faithful, they are to be Baptized. The former proposition is clearly expressed in the Text, Make disciples and baptize them: All Disciples therefore are to be baptized.

The latter proposition, That all the children of the Faithful (in which is all one, all the children of the Church, for the

Church is a Congregation of the faithful) that they are all of them Disciples, may appear by the Testimony of the Prophet *Esay*: who speaking of the times of the Church in the New Testament, All thy children (saith he) shall be taught of God, *Esay* 54:13. and if they be taught of God, then are they Disciples, for that is the meaning of the word Disciples. Disciples are taught or learnt of God. Do not put me off with that Evasion; That the Promise is made not to the children of the visible Church, but of the Invisible: For look what promises are made to the Invisible Church, they are for their sakes offered to all the Members of the Visible Churches, whereof the lively Members are the chief.

Silvester. [here or further down?]

By the children in *Esay* may be meant, not Infants, but men of years, unto whom the whole Church may be counted a Mother, and they to her, as children.

Silvanus. [here or further down?]

I deny not, but that may be part of the meaning: yet so, as not to exclude the Infants, or children of the Faithful, from the number of the children of the Church. For the same Prophet speaking of the same Church, fetcheth in Infants among the blessed ones of the Church, and blessed with such spiritual light, and life from Christ, as if they had lived an hundred years “in the Church. *Esa.* 65:20. There shall be no more (saith he) “thenceforth an Infant of days, nor an old man that hath not “filled his days. For the child shall die an hundred years old, “but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. How shall the child die as at an hundred years old, but that he is so well instructed and enlightened by Christ, and thereby as capable of entrance into heavenly glory, as a grown disciple of an hundred years old? The Allegorical sense which some force upon Infants (as if by them were meant young Converts, though of riper years) the Text will not bear it. For the Text maketh an express opposition between these Infants, in the Church, and sinners of an hundred years old. Where the two extreme periods of man’s life, old age of an hundred years, & Infants being set one against another, Infants cannot be fitly meant of any but those of fewest days, even Infants of a few days, of a year or two old. And besides, the Holy Ghost in the Text giveth a Reason of this Grace (together with some other like favours) unto Infants in the Church above Sinners of an hundred years old, taken from the Covenant of their blessed Ancestors *v.* 23: For they are (saith he)

the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their off-spring with them. And evident it is, that the Apostle *Peter* reckoneth Infants of the Church for Disciples. For in *Acts 15:10*. reproving the way of false Teachers who would have put Circumcision upon the Gentile Churches, and their seed, Why tempt ye God, saith he, to put a yoke upon the neck of the Disciples? If the Infants of the Church had not been Disciples, the false Apostles could have pretended no power to have put that Ordinance upon them. And *Peter* rejecteth it, not because Infants were no Disciples, but acknowledging them to be Disciples as well as their Fathers, the yoke of Circumcision was now too heavy for them, as drawing upon them the yoke of the Ceremonial Law. It is to the same purpose that Christ speaketh of such little Children, *Mark 10:14*. *Luke 18:16, 17*. Of such (saith he) is the Kingdom of God; which argueth, that even little Children are the members of the Church (which is the Kingdom of Grace) here, and heirs of the Kingdom of Glory hereafter; and therefore Disciples, for to whom Christ is a King, he is also a Prophet.

Silvester. [goes where?]

Silvanus. [goes where?]

Christ doth not say, that of Infants is the Kingdom of God, but of such (as Infants be:) that is, of such simple ones, so free from pride and malice.

Then he might as well have said, Suffer Doves and Lambs to come unto me: for of such (such simple and harmless ones) is the Kingdom of God. But that Christ speaketh of little children (as such) may appear further from the Text? In that he saith, Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God, as a little child (to wit as a little child receiveth it, for so much the Grammar construction requireth) he shall in no wise enter therein. Now it cannot be said of Doves and Lambs, Whosoever receiveth not the Kingdom of God, as a Dove or a Lamb receiveth it, he shall in no wise enter into it. 2. Wherefore should Christ command little children to be brought unto him, and be so angry with his Disciples for rebuking them that brought them, if they were not at all capable of spiritual fellowship with Christ in his Kingdom, but only served to fetch a Similitude from their Simplicity and Innocency? Did he ever say, Suffer Doves and Lambs to come unto me: for of such is the Kingdom of God? 3. Why doth Christ put it for all one, for little children to come to him, and to be brought to him (as he doth *Luke 18:15, 16*) but that he accepted the Act of Parents in bringing their chil-

dren to him, as all one with their Act of children in coming themselves to Christ Jesus? for Christ saith, Suffer little Children to come to me: and yet they came not to him but as their Parents brought them. 4. Christ his Imposition of hands upon them argueth their consternation unto God, not as Sacrifices of Bulls and Goats to be slain, (which was one use of laying on of hands *Levit. 1:4.*) nor to ordain them unto office, (which was another use) but as partakers of spiritual blessings, and of Adoption into the family of *Israel*, which was another use of laying on of hands. *Gen. 48:5.* with 14. So that let all this Testimony of Christ concerning little Children and his carriage towards them be well weighed; and it will evidently evince that for which it is alleged. That little children born in the Church, are accounted by Christ amongst those blessed ones of Christ, of whom his Church and Kingdom consisteth: And so are taught of God, as the Disciples of Christ: And therefore are commanded of Christ to be baptized with their believing Parents.

Silvester. “The blessing of Christ upon these infants was for bodily cures, “as is manifest by the desires of those that brought them to “Christ, which was not that he should baptize them, but that he “would touch them and lay his hands upon them, and pray, as “*Mar. 5:23. Mat. 19:13, 15.* This was the ordinary way of “healing in the time of the Law, by such as were enabled by God “thereunto, as is clear by these Scriptures compared together, “2 *Kings 5:11.* with *Mat. 19:13. Mat. 8:3. Mat. 9:18. Luke* “4:38, 40. Never were any so brought to Christ but for some “cure, and for his blessing of them, which was in respect of that “temporal Mercy he bestowed upon them, according to that “they came to him for: and to shew his Bounty and Humility, “that he was no respecter of Persons; as such might stem to be, “that suffered others to come, and would have kept back children: “And for such to belong to the Kingdom as those children did, “and therefore they ought to come, as well as any others. For “they were children of the Jews, and at that time Members of “that Church, and so of that Kingdom, and had as much “Interest in Christ for outward blessings as any else.

“And further Christ is pleased to make use of children’s Humility and Innocency to reprove the high-mindedness of His Disciples, & to draw them forth a pattern from the same, as *Mat. 18. 1, 2, 3.* with *Mark 10:5. 1 Cor. 14:20.* so that all this maketh

“nothing for the Baptizing of Infants they being not brought to Christ for Baptism.

Silvanus. Neither do I allege this place for to prove that Christ baptized these Infants. For it doth not appear that their fathers who brought them, were baptized themselves: and therefore neither might their children be baptised according to rule. But I allege the place to prove that the Infants of believers are amongst the blessed ones of Christ, such of whom his Church and Kingdom consisteth: and so come under the fellowship of his Disciples whom Christ commandeth to be baptized; neither will your exception against this prevail. Your deceptions, or rather evasions are “two: You say that Christ his laying hands on these children, “was only to reach forth some bodily cure to them, it being “the ordinary way of healing in the time of the Law.

Whereto I answer, 1. You bring not one Scripture to prove, that healing of diseases in the time of the Law was wont to be wrought by laying on of hands, but only one: which speaketh of *Naaman the Syrian*, who had such a misconceit that the Prophet would have so healed him, but was therein foully mistaken. All the other places alleged by you do shew, that Christ was wont sometimes to heal diseases by laying on his hands. And so indeed he did, as did also His Disciples after him, by gift from him. But why you should make this an ordinary way of healing in the time of the Law, I see not how it stands with truth.

An. 2. There is not one word in the Text, nor any circumstance of the place, that maketh any mention, or giveth any notice of any bodily disease, which these children were subject to, or that their parents come to Christ for the healing thereof. And to give that for the meaning of a Text, which neither the words of the Text, nor the circumstance of the place doth hold forth, is to set up an Image in our own heart, and to bow the Text to our own Imagination.

An. 3. It is not credible that if these children had come with any disease about them, or if their Parents had brought them for healing thereof, that the Disciples would have been so inhumane, unnatural, and barbarous, as to have rebuked them that brought them. The diseases of little children do affect all men (that have not the bowels of humanity) with as much compassion as the diseases of Elder persons, or rather more. And withal the Disciples knew that the Lord Jesus was wont before that time to vouch-

safe to cure the diseases of young children, as well as the diseases of Elder persons, *Joh.* 4:49, 50. *Mar.* 5:41, 42. and therefore they would never have rebuked their Parents, if they had “brought them to such an end. But say you, Never were any so “brought to Christ, but for some cure and for his blessing of them: “which was in respect of that temporal mercy, which they came “for, and he bestowed upon them.

If you mean never were any so brought to Christ, to wit, in the Arms of their Parents. It is true we never read of any other in the Gospels, brought to Christ in the Arms of their Parents at all, neither for bodily cures, neither for any temporal or spiritual blessing. But what is that to the purpose? that will not argue that these Infants were only brought for bodily Cure. If you mean none were brought at all but for bodily cures, what mean you then by so brought? It is true the Palsey man was brought by four men in a Couch for a bodily cure, *Mark* 2. but Christ blessed him not only with a temporal, but a spiritual cure in the pardon of his sins, *Mark.* 2:5. which was more then they came for; why do you therefore deny the like spiritual blessing the these Infants upon this ground, because their Parents come for no more, unless you think, they had no sin to be pardoned? But If none were brought to Christ for spiritual blessings besides these Infants, the greater was the Faith of these Parents: and the greater was the sin of others.

“Your second Evasion is, That these Infants be big children of the Jews were at that time members of that Church, and so of that Kingdom, And had as much interest in Christ for outward blessings, as any else.

Answ. 1. If that be all, then there were some children of the kingdom of Heaven, which had only Interest in Christ for outward blessings; and then indeed they had no Interest in Christ, nor in his kingdom at all.

2. If the Infants of Christian Parents be not the children of the kingdom of Heaven (as well as the infants of the Jews were) then the encouragement which Christ gave to these Jewish Parents then, will not reach to Christian Parents now, to bring their children to him now, so much as for bodily cures. Suffer (saith Christ) little children to come unto me, to wit, (say you) for bodily cures, for of such (saith Christ) is the kingdom of Heaven. True (saith you) such were the children of the Jews. But then it will follow by your Doctrine, That we Christians are not

allowed to suffer our children to come to Christ, no not for bodily cures: for of such at our children be, the kingdom of heaven is not.

2. A second argument for the Baptism of children may be fetched from another word of the same Commission given of Christ to his Apostles. The Commandment is clear there for the baptizing of Disciples. And neither you nor your leaders doubt of it, that therefore believing Patents are to be Baptized. But what if it appear in God's account, and in Scripture phrase, that Parents themselves are not reputed of God to be baptized, if their children remain unbaptized? Surely in the old Testament a man was accounted of God at uncircumcised himself if his children were uncircumcised, for so it is written in *Exod.* 12:48. that it a man will come and keep the Passover, all the males in his house must be circumcised: and the reason given, is, for no uncircumcised Person shall eat thereof, which plainly argueth, that a man is uncircumcised himself, and (as an uncircumcised person) is to be debarred from the Passover, until all his males be circumcised. If then our Lord's Supper come in the room of the Passover, and our Baptism in the room of Circumcision, look as he that had not circumcised his males, was accounted at one uncircumcised himself, and so to be debarred from the Passover, so he who hath not baptized his children, is accounted of God, at not baptized himself, and so to be debarred from the Lord's Supper. If therefore you forbid Baptism to children, you evacuate the Baptism of their Parents, and so make the commandment of God, and the Commission of the Apostles, and the Baptism of believers of none effect.

Silvester. "In the Apostles Commission, by Disciples is meant believers, for "so when the Evangelist *Mark* recordeth the same Commission he rehearseth it thus, Go (saith Christ) into all the world "and preach the Gospel unto every creature. He that believeth and "is baptized, shall be saved: he that believeth not shall be damned. "*Mark.* 16:15, 16. So that unless children were believers, they "are not subjects capable of Baptism: no Faith, no Bap-
"tism.

Silvester. If children have no Faith to be baptized, then have they no Faith to be saved. For the words of the Apostles commission are as plain and pregnant for the one as for the other. He that believeth and is baptized (saith Christ) shall be saved, he that believeth

not shall be damned, *Mark* 16:16. If therefore children as being unbelievers cannot be baptized, then as being unbeliever, they cannot be saved.

Silvester. “It is very doubtful to me, neither hath the Scripture revealed “it, that such as die Infants are in a state of salvation; for without “the hearing of the word no faith, and without faith no salvation.

Silvanus. See what uncomfortable and desperate conclusions these ways of error drive men unto; *Jacob* while he was yet in his mother’s womb was in a state of election, *Rom.* 9:11, 13. and therefore in a state of salvation, though he had died then: *John Baptist* was filled with the holy Ghost from his mothers womb, *Luke* 1:17. and if he had then died, the spirit of life which dwelt in him had quickened him to immortality. To what end were the children who died Infants in the old Testament circumcised? what did their circumcision state to them? *Canaan* they did never live to see, much less to inherit; if it did not seal unto them spiritual and saving blessings, it was to them a seal without a thing signified; what though children do not receive faith by hearing of the gospel, as the Nations of the Gentiles do (of whom the Apostle speaketh, in the place whereto you allude:) yet as children can see the light, and be taken with it, and turn their eyes to it: so the Lord can shine into the dark hearts of children, and give them faith to see his light, and to be taken and affected with it, though they never heard of it by the hearing of the care.

Silvester. “What the Lord can do in enlightening Infants, is a secret “known to himself; the Lord can even of stones raise up children “unto *Abrabam*, *Matth.* 3:9. In which sense children may also be “said to be capable of the Spirit; *to wit*, as well as stones. But if “children should be said to be capable of the spirit, so as to comply with the Spirit in hearing, receiving and believing the Spirit’s testimony, and so to be capable of regeneration, faith and repentance, this I deny: and to affirm this to be the way to bring “persons to the faith by working so upon them by his Spirit in “their infancy, argueth some ignorance of the true nature and “work of graces, as the Gospel holdeth it forth.

Silvanus. There is a middle way between both these two, in which God can and doth convey the spirit of grace unto infants: for neither are infants so incapable as stones, (for stones must first have a reasonable soul conveyed into them, before they can be capable of the spirit of grace, whereas Infants have a reasonable soul already:)

Neither yet are infants so capable of complying (as you call it) with the Spirit, as to hear, believe, and repent, yet nevertheless, Infants being reasonable creatures they are also capable, though not of apprehending, yet of receiving the holy Ghost from their mother's womb: for even then *John Baptist* was filled with him, *Luke 1:15*.

Silvester. "It is one thing to be filled from the mothers womb, with the "holy Ghost, as *John* was: another thing to believe, *Act. 6:5*. "and *4:31*. Secondly, all such so testified of as *John* was, I shall "acknowledge; but to affirm that what God testified of *John* "Baptist in the womb, holdeth true of all other infants likewise; "this indeed were weaker then infancy to affirm it, and grosser "then ignorance to believe it: *Job* is said to be a guide to the di- "stressed from his mothers womb, *Joh. 31:18*. shall it thence be "concluded, that in his infancy he was a guide to such? or if he "were so, must it needs follow that all infants are capable guides "also, because it was so said of him?

Silvanus. To be filled with the holy Ghost, doth always imply thus much at least, as to be filled with the gifts of the holy Ghost; or if men had received the gifts of the holy Ghost before, yet when it is said again, they were filled with the holy Ghost, it implieth they were filled with a greater and fuller measure of those gifts then before. And that is the meaning of those places which you quote out of the Acts; whence it will follow that *John* being filled with the holy Ghost from his mother's womb, was therefore filled with the gifts of the holy Ghost, as the gift of faith, the gift of wisdom, and zeal, and patience, &c. Although he was no more able to exercise them, or put them forth, then he was able to put forth any act of reason, and yet his soul wanted not the faculty of reason from his Mother's womb.

There is no man so weak or ignorant as to believe or affirm that all infants are in the like sort filled with the holy Ghost, as *John Baptist* was. But yet if you believe or affirm that none else were filled or sanctified with the gifts of the holy Ghost but *John Baptist* only, or that all infants are not alike capable of those gifts, as well as he; I may say as Christ said in another case, You err, because you know not the Scriptures nor the power of God. *David* saith, as of Christ in substance, so of himself in type, Thou didst make me to hope or trust at my mother's breasts, *Psal. 22:9*. *Esay* saith in like sort, The Lord hath called me from the womb, *Esa. 47:1* and

the Lord saith the same of *Jeremy*, I sanctified thee before thou comest forth of the womb, *Jer.* 1:5. Yea little children are so far forth capable of receiving the holy Ghost, or (which is all one) the kingdom of God (for by his Spirit he setteth up hit kingdom in us) that our Saviour expresseth it generally, that whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child (to wit, as a little child receiveth it, for so the syntax carrieth it) he shall not enter these in, *Mar.* 10:15. What though it be said that faith cometh by hearing? so his also laid, the Spirit cometh by the hearing of faith, *Gal.* 3:2. And yet you see as some have received the Spirit, that never heard of faith, so the same have received faith, that new heard the word.

As for *Job*, the place which you quote, *Job* 31:18. argueth the like of him that hath been said of the former, that *Job* from his mother's womb was indued with an indoles or inbred disposition and affection to pity and succour the fatherless and widow; which doubtless was wrought in him by the holy Ghost, as all other good gifts be. And all other infants as well as hear capable of the same and the like gifts, if the spirit of the Lord be pleased to work them.

Silvester. "I am not against any that have faith, but am absolutely for "all that believe, whether infants or others, so that their faith "appear by such effects as the word of God approveth of. But "whereas some say, that infants are capable of the Spirit of God, "and of the grace of the Covenant, though not wrought in the "same way, and by the same means, yet the same things, and by "same Spirit, so far as is necessary to union with Christ, and justification of life thereby (else children were not elected, nor "should be raised up in their bodies to life) I wish it may be minded, that touching union with Christ three things are essential "to the same.

"1. Gods revealing and tendering of Christ, as the all-sufficient "and only way to life.

"2. An heart fitly disposed by faith to apprehend and receive "Christ so tendered.

"3. The spirit of grace uniting and knitting the heart and Christ "together.

"And this I understand to be that effectual and substantial union with Christ: to the justification of life, which the word of "God approveth of. For justification to life, ever presupposeth the "parties knowledge of the thing believed, *Rom.* 10:14. *Heb.* 11:6.

“Now let this be well examined by the rule of truth, and then see how capable infants are of union with Christ, and justification to life thereby. As for some evil consequences, which some (to darken and obscure the truth) do say, would follow thereupon, that then infants were not erected, nor should then their bodies be raised again to life, &c.

“I would first enquire of such, whether infants with reference to their nonage, were the subjects of God’s election?

“Secondly, if infants so considered, are capable subjects of glory? And if not, as I suppose none will affirm, then why are they any more capable of grace then of glory? The word of God sheweth, that he hath elected persons to the means, as well as to the end, the means being the way unto the end; and that was the adoption of sons, to be called, and justified by believing on Jesus Christ, *Ephes. 1:4, 5. Rom. 8:29, 30. 1 Pet. 1:2. 2 Thes. 2:13, 14. &c.* And to return free obedience unto him again; as *Rom. 9:23, 24. Ephes. 1:6, 12.* And for the raising of infants, it is the power of God that raiseth the dead, and not union with Christ, *1 Thess. 4:16.* And when any of God’s elect can by the Scriptures be shewed to die in their infancy, then it will be granted their bodies are raised to life eternal.

Silvanus. “When you say, you are not against any that have faith, whether infants or others, so that their faith appear by such effects as the Word approveth. I demand what if their faith appear not by the effects? is it not enough if it appear by divine testimony? Christ hath said, that of such is the kingdom. And that all that receive his kingdom, must receive it as little children do, as hath been shown above; and is not his testimony of their faith as good an evidence of their faith, as the effects of their faith can be? As for the 3 things which you would have to be minded as essential to union with Christ: The first of them (the revealing and tendering of Christ as the all-sufficient and only way of life) if you mean the revealing and tendering of him by the Ministry of the gospel, you know the Ministry of the gospel is but an outward instrumental cause of faith, and no outward instrumental cause is essential to the effect, whether we speak of natural or supernatural effects: certain it is that the spirit of God, who is the principal cause of faith, though he be wonted to work it by the Ministry of the Word, yet he can also work it without the Ministry, or else how came the Wise men from the East to seek af-

ter Chart; and to worship him by the sight of a star? If you say that was extraordinary, but you speak of ordinary means; that will not save, for that which is essential to a thing, the thing cannot be without it, neither ordinarily, nor extraordinarily; a thing cannot be, and be without his essence, or that which is essential to it. Besides, Christ speaketh of it as no extraordinary thing for infants to receive the kingdom of God; and they cannot receive it without Christ, nor without faith in Christ; and yet they never received either Christ, or faith by their own immediate hearing of the Word. And for the second thing which you make essential to union with Christ (an heart fitly disposed by faith to apprehend and apply Christ:) Be not unwilling to understand that which is the truth:) The heart is fitly disposed by faith to apprehend or apply Christ, when faith is begotten in the heart: for by this gift of faith begotten in us, Christ apprehendeth us; and by the same gift of faith, the heart is fitly disposed to apprehend Christ, even in infants, for when faith is wrought in infants, the heart is quickened with spiritual life, and made a sanctified vessel fit to receive Christ; which reception of Christ, though it be passive, (as Dr. Ames calleth it, in *Chap. 26. de Vocatione, lib. 1. Medullæ Theologia*) yet it is all one with regeneration, wherein not infants only, but all men are passive: which gave the Lord Jesus occasion to say, That whosoever receiveth not the kingdom of God as a little child, he can in no wise enter into it, *Luke 18:17*.

It is true, in men of years, the Spirit (as you speak) worketh faith by the hearing of the Word, and by revealing and tendering Christ as the all-sufficient and only way of life. And faith being wrought, apprehendeth and supplieth Christ, not only habitually and passively, (as in infants) but actively to the justification of life. And in such it is true also (which you say) there is ever in the party a knowledge of the thing believed. But I will not say as you do, "That faith ever presupposeth the knowledge of the thing believed, unless you mean habitual knowledge, which is never wanting, no not in infants) where faith is. For knowledge and faith are put one for another, *Esa. 5:3, 11. John 17:3*. So that now, take your own word, having examined what you say (as you desire) by the rule of truth, we have seen and found that infants are capable of the holy Ghost, und therefore of faith: and being in the faith, and faith in them, they are in Christ, and so united unto Christ, *2 Cor. 13:5*. And being in Christ, there is no con-

demnation to them, *Rom.* 8:1. And if no condemnation, then justification belongeth to them. And if union with Christ and justification by Christ belong to them, then were they elected and predestinated thereto. For none are called to union with Christ, nor justified, but those, whom God hath predestinated thereunto, *Rom.* “8:30. When therefore you enquire, whether infants with reference to their nonage be the subjects of God’s election. And “secondly, whether infants so considered be subjects capable of “glory? And when you further suppose, that none will affirm either. Be it known unto you, that as we firmly believe both, so we doubt not confidently to affirm both: both that infants are subjects of God’s election, and also subjects capable of glory. *Jacob* was an elect vessel in his mother’s womb, *Rom.* 9:11. neither was this his singular privilege but common with him to all the elect of God, who were elect vessels before the foundation of the world; and therefore so too in their mother’s womb: To say, and grant (as you seem to do) that though infants be subjects of God’s election, yet not with reference to their nonage; it would imply that you hold the election of God hath reference to their foreseen faith or works, which they grow up unto in riper years: otherwise in their nonage (when you hold them incapable of faith and obedience) it seemeth you hold them also incapable of election; which is rank and palpable Pelagianism and Arminianism. But seeing election it self is a grace of God, infants being capable of election, are capable of grace. And thereby it cometh to pass that heaven and heavenly glory is as fit to receive them, as they are fit to receive the holy Ghost, such is the fruit of election. And if they receive the holy Ghost (as hath been shewed above) then are they “subjects equally capable of grace and glory. But (say you) if “God have elected them unto the end, to wit, unto glory, then “he hath elected them also unto the means and way that leadeth “to that end, to calling, to justification by believing, and free obedience unto him again.

All this is true; for elect infants if they die in their infancy, are made partakers of the holy Ghost, by whom faith is begotten in their hearts, in which they are in Christ, and united to him, which is their calling. By the same faith dwelling in them they are justified; yea, and sanctified also, and so their free obedience is fulfilled to that great commandment both of law and Gospel (which coll-

taineth all the rest.) Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy *Lev.* 19:2. 1 *Pet.* 1:16.

And as concerning the resurrection of infants from death to life, which (was argued above) could not be without union with Christ. “You answer, First, it is the power of God that raiseth “the dead, not union with Christ.

But the reply is ready, the power of God raiseth indeed all the dead, yet none from death to life eternal (which is the life meant in the argument) but by virtue of their union with Christ, *Rom.* 8: 11. 1 *Cor.* 15:49.

“Secondly, you answer again, that when any of Gods elect can be shewed by the Scriptures, to die in their infancy, then it will be granted that their bodies are raised to life eternal. Reply, first, it seemeth then, that till the death of some elect infants be shewed out of Scripture, it will not be granted by you that their bodies are raised to life eternal. So that it appeareth by your Tenent, all the children that die in their infancy, none of them are elected nor saved; an ungracious and uncomfortable doctrine, which hath been refuted above: whereto may be added, that then there is some sort of mankind, to whom the grace and redemption of *Christ* never reached. It hath been said by the holy Ghost, that Christ gave himself a ransom for all, that is, for some of all forts. But now there is a fort of mankind found out [even all that die in their infancy, which are many thousands] for whom Christ gave himself a ransom.

Reply 2. If infants be elect before they be born, and remain elect whilst they are living, can they not die whilst they are infants, as well as any other of the elect of God of riper years?

Reply 3. What if it could not be shewed by the scriptures, that any elect of God died in their infancy? will it therefore follow that no infants are the elect of God? What if it cannot be proved by Scripture that any elect Queens died in their Regency? will it therefore follow, that either no Queens are elected, or if they be, they cannot die in their Regency?

Reply 4. It hath been expressly shewed above from scripture that infants have died as at an 100 years, only because they were as truly seasoned with grace, and as ripe and ready for glory in their infancy, as if they had fulfilled the age of an 100 years, *Esa.* 65: 20.

Reply 5. If none of God’s elect did die in their infancy, then

all outward things did not fall alike to all, contrary to the Scripture *Eccles. 9:2.* death may (by your Tenent) befall (and often doth) to carnal infants, but never to elect infants. And thus elect infants whilst infants should be immortal, which is a paradox I suppose the Church of God never heard of (before now) since the world began.

Reply 6. If none of God's elect did die in their infancy, then in case any of the faithful should come to bury any of their children in their infancy (as many do) they might have cause to sorrow for them, as without hopes for they can have no hope of their salvation or resurrection to life; fixing their infants dying infants, were never subjects capable of God's election, and so must needs die incapable of glory. But for Christians to sorrow for their dead, as others that have no hope, is contrary to the precept of the Apostle, *1 Thes. 4:13.*

Silvester. "I would not be understood so to oppose infants, as to exclude them from salvation, but leave all in respect of them, as a "secret thing to the wisdom and grace of God in Christ.

Silvanus. This doth not excuse your former harsh expression concerning infants, but rather aggravate it with a contradiction to yourself: for you disputed against it above, as against the rule of truth, to say, That infants were capable of union with Christ, and of justification to life thereby. And sure if they be not capable of union with Christ, how can they be saved without Christ? unless you conceive a salvation reserved by the wisdom and grace of God for infants, which is not only without the word, but expressly contrary to the revealed word of God, *Act. 4:12.*

"Again, when you said soon after, that you supposed none "would affirm, that infants with reference to their nonage, were "subjects capable of election, nor subjects capable of glory, and "therefore demanded how they could be capable of grace, "how can you now say, you do not so oppose infants, as to exclude them from salvation? Can they be saved, and yet not be capable subjects of glory, nor of grace, nor of union with Christ, nor of justification unto life?

"God hath proclaimed, that all are by nature the children "of wrath, *Ephes. 2.* And therefore I cannot believe that any "are naturally born in grace, and so believers from the womb, "though, the opposite doctrine teacheth and affirmeth the

Silvanus. The opposite doctrine (if you mean the doctrine of the Baptism, of infants) teacheth as the Apostle doth, that all by nature are the children of wrath, (even believers and their seed as well as others) neither did I think that any had been so ignorant, as to believe or teach, and affirm, that any are naturally born in grace, and so (that is naturally) are believers from the womb; I never heard nor read of any such before, nor do I believe it now. All that for ought I know do hold the Baptism of infants, they teach, that by nature all Infants (Christ only excepted) are born in sin, and children of wrath: and none of them born in grace naturally, but only by venue of the Covenant of grace, which is above nature. Neither do they say that all that are born under the Covenant, are born believers (or partakers of faith) from the womb, but that some by the blessing and grace of the Covenant are made partakers of faith, and of the holy Ghost from the womb: and that all are capable of the same grace from the womb; yea, and God hath promised to work the same sooner or later, in all the elect children of the Covenant absolutely: in the rest according to his Covenant, he offereth to work the same in his own time, if neither their parents nor themselves reject or neglect the means which the Lord offereth them. For as the second Commandment (whereby the instituted means of grace and worship are established) is moral and perpetual: So is the sanction or sanctification of that Commandment moral and perpetual also. Now in the sanction of that Commandment, as God threatened to visit the neglect of his ordinances (which are the means of grace) upon the fathers to the children, to the third and fourth generation of them that hate him; so he promiseth to shew mercy unto thousands of them that love him & keep his Commandments, *Exod.* 20:5, 6. whence it was that God promised to bring upon *Abraham* all the good which he had spoken to him of (which was chiefly to be a God to him and to his seed) because he knew that *Abraham* would command his children & and his household after him, to keep the ways of the Lord, *Gen.* 18:19.

Silvester. “The Scripture in *Matth.* 28:19. being well considered, and “rightly understood, would stop men’s mouths for ever, from “having a word to say for the baptizing of infants. This blessed “commission of Christ to his Apostles, was chiefly for us Gen-“tiles, saying, *All power is given to me both in heaven and earth, Go “ye therefore and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the name of the “Father, Son, and holy Ghost, &c.* As if Christ had said, Go

“now into all Nations, and preach the gospel freely, as well to
 “one Nation as to another, for the gospel shall not now be con-
 “fined any more to one place or people, then to another, God is
 “now a God of the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews; go there-
 “fore as well to the Gentiles as to the Jews, even unto all Na-
 “tions, and there preach the gospel, and so make disciples by
 “teaching them; and such so taught, them baptize in the Name
 “of the Father, Son, and holy Ghost, that is, into the true and
 “orderly profession of that which they have been taught and be-
 “lieved. So that here teaching goeth before baptizing, and pre-
 “supposeth understanding and faith in that which is taught, this
 “being the only place of Christ his instituting the order of bap-
 “tism. And further explained, *Mark 16:15, 16. Go into all the*
 “*world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; He that believeth and is*
 “*btpiized shall be saved.* So from these Scriptures brought to
 “prove the baptizing of infants, it is clearly manifest, that in-
 “fants are not the subjects of baptism appointed by Christ. For
 “all the external benefits and privileges of the gospel are given
 “only to external and visible faith. And so the sealing and
 “confirming ordinances of Christ, do even presuppose faith in
 “the subject to seal unto, and to be confirmed: So here is no
 “ground for the baptizing of infants, but the contrary.

Silvanus. For clearing this Text in *Matthew*, let it be first agreed what is
 the gospel which the Apostles are commanded to preach to all Na-
 tions; men what it is to teach them; and then it will more clearly
 appear who are to be baptized. By gospel is not meant that prom-
 ise only recorded by *Mark 15:16.* much less the curse annex-
 ed to it, He that believeth and it baptized shall be saved: he that
 believeth not shall be damned. For the gospel is glad tidings; nor
 is the promise of salvation to believers and baptized persons, glad
 tidings, (as the word signifieth, as the Apostle declareth, *Rom. 10:*
15.) but only to such as do believe; otherwise to unbelievers,
 the curse lieth upon them, and they that groan under the want
 of Christ, and of faith to receive him, they may languish for want
 of comfort, if all the gospel were comprehended in that promise.
 For they will object against themselves, salvation is indeed prom-
 ised to believers; but I neither do believe, nor can believe. Those
 words therefore in *Mark* are not the sum of the gospel, though
 part of the gospel be contained in them. They are indeed a dou-
 ble motive unto such to whom the gospel is preached, to urge them

to receive and believe the gospel: The one taken from the benefit of believing it; He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: the other from the danger of unbelief, He that believeth not shall be damned. What then is the sum of the gospel which Christ commanded his Apostles to preach to all Nations? yourself do truly express it in general terms. "That God is now a God, "not or the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. But to speak more particularly and fully, the Gospel is summed up in these heads of doctrine.

1. That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, 2 *Cor.* 5:19. by world is meant Jews and Gentiles.

2. That God hath committed this word of reconciliation to his Ambassadors and Ministers, to persuade all the Nations of the world to be reconciled unto God, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19, 20.

3. That God hath given the Ministration of this gospel to be the ministration of the Spirit of grace to work faith, whereby we receive Christ, and reconciliation with God through him, and all the gifts of the Spirit from him, 2 *Cor.* 3:8. *Gal.* 3:2.

4. This is another head of the glad tidings of the gospel, that to whomsoever he giveth faith to receive Christ and his gospel, to them he giveth himself to be a God to them and to their seed or house.

For so *Paul and Silas* preached the gospel to the Jailor, Believe in the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved, and thine house, *Act.* 16:31. And so when *Zacheus* was become a child of *Abraham* (to wit, by faith) the Lord Jesus promised salvation to him and his house, *Luke* 19:9. And this was the very same gospel which God preached before unto *Abraham*, when he gave him that Covenant of grace to be a God to him and his seed; far this was the Covenant which was before confirmed of God in Christ, *Gal.* 3:16, 17. And the Covenant confirmed by Christ, is no other then the gospel of Christ. And this Covenant to a believer and his seed, is glad tidings, not only to the believer touching himself, but touching his seed also. As it was indeed exceeding glad tidings unto *David*, that God had promised not only mercy to himself, (but as if that had been a small thing in God's sight) to his house also for a great while to come, 2 *Sam.* 7:10. which though it concerned a Kingdom, yet that also was a branch of the Covenant of grace, and concerned the spiritual kingdom of Christ. And surely the promise of salvation, and of the kingdom of heaven, which

by the Covenant of grace is granted to us, and our children, is a greater blessing then the Kingdom of *Israel*, and maketh as partakers of the kingdom of Christ.

Thus have we seen what is meant by the gospel which the Apostles were to preach to all Nations; Now what is it to preach this gospel, (as *Mark* calleth it) or as you translate it out of *Matthew*, To teach all Nations? to preach the gospel, is so to publish and apply it in the demonstration and power of the Spirit, as that disciples may be made by it, for so the word in *Matthew's* own language expresseth it, Go and make disciples all Nations. Now who are Christ's diicples? Disciples are all one with Scholars; and Christ's disciples or Scholars are such as Christ taketh into his school to teach. And they are not only believers, but their seed also, whom (according to the tenor of the gospel opened even now) Christ undertaketh to teach, and teach them he doth, taking his own time, from the belly to their old age. Christ taught *John Baptist* from his mother's womb, though not by the hearing of the ear, yet by the holy Ghost, *Luke* 1:15. He sanctified *Jeremy* before he came forth of the womb, *Jer.* 1:5. And was the God of the Psalmist from his mother's belly, and caused him to hope when he was upon the breasts, *Psal.* 22:9, 10. Do not think that though God took the pains to teach such little ones in the old Testament, yet now in the days of the new Testament he will no more teach such petties. The great Doctor of his Church is not ashamed now, no more then of old, to stoop to such mean work. No verily, Christ in the new Testament affecteth less state and pomp in all his dispensations, then he was wont to use in the old Testament: He putteth forth as much hidden Majesty and glory in riding upon an Ass, as ever he did by ruling his people by *Solomon* in all his royalty. He requireth still little children to be brought unto him, and knoweth still how to ordain praise to himself out of the mouth of babes and sucklings. And though it be recorded in the old Testament, yet it is a prophecy of the estate of the children of the Church of the new Testament; All thy children shall be taught of God, *Esa.* 54:13. Which hath been proved above, to be meant not only of the members of the church of riper years, but even of infants: so that an argument from this Text in *Matth.* doth easily conclude it self into this form.

All the diicples of Christ are to be baptized.

Parents that are brought on to hear and believe the gospel

preached, they and their children, are the disciples of Christ.

Therefore they and their children are to be baptized.

“But you straiten and darken the counsel of God and commandment of Christ, when you limit his meaning to such disciples “so taught, as to have understanding and faith in that which is “taught. For though such a description do argee to the Parents (who are disciples and Scholars of a higher form:) yet when Christ receiveth the parents, who receive him by faith, he receiveth also their seed even from the least to the greatest, to be his disciples, and all his disciples to be baptized.

But that you may see you fight against God, in seeking to thrust out infants out of Christ’s school, and out of the number of *Christ’s* disciples. Observe (I pray you) how *God* leaveth you to such a forced mis-interpretation of the Text) and therein of the very form and essence of baptism, as utterly overthroweth the nature “of it. Make disciples (say you) by teaching them; and such so “taught, them baptize in the name of the Father; Son, and holy “Ghost; that is, into the true and orderly profession of that “which they have been taught and believed. What? is it now “come to this pass, That to be baptized into the name of the “Father, Son, and holy Ghost, is to be baptized into the true “and orderly profession of that which they have been taught and believed? Why, the true and orderly profession of that which we have been taught and believed, that is, of our faith, is but a work of our own, though wrought in us by *God’s* spirit. Faith it self is but a created gift, and so a creature: And the profession of it is but the exercise of faith. And are we now come to be baptized into the name of Creatures? It is easily granted, a man by his baptism may be engaged to the performance of this or that duty; but can it be given for the exposition of the form of baptism, to be baptized into the name of the Father, Son, and holy Ghost, that is, into the true and orderly performance of this or that duty? But thus *God* taketh men in their own wiliness, whilst they go about to shoulder out infant from being disciples unto Christ, and so from baptism, they exclude themselves from the chief benefits of the baptism of Christ (which is to have God the Father, Son, and holy Ghost to be a *God* to themselves and to their seed:) and in stead of approving themselves to be the Disciples of Christ, they take out a wrong lesson from the words of institution, & turn the glorious name of the blessed Trinity into the weak performance

of a Christian duty, and that but an outward duty neither. One-ly because infants are not able to perform such a duty, they shall therefore be debarred from baptism into the name of the Father Son and holy ghost, seeing Baptism into that name, is but into the true and orderly profession of the faith. But the Lord redeem your soul from such guile and falsehood. Let the name of the Father, Son, and holy ghost be (as Christ meaneth it) the Adoption, protection, and government of the Father, Son, and holy ghost (as to have the name of one called upon another, is so meant in Scripture, *Gen. 48:16.*) And then infants are as capable of that grace, and of such a baptism, as their Parents be.

Do not put off yourself nor me, with this pretence, that here teaching goeth before baptizing, &c. For though the Parents must be taught being gentiles and Pagans before they can be disciples; yet the children of disciples are received into the number of Christ's disciples by himself, though themselves understand not what is taught them by the hearing of the ear. Neither put your self off with that other pretence; "That *Matthew's* words are explained "by *Mark 16:15, 16.* For though it be true that one of those places giveth some light to the other, yet either you must take disciples in a larger extent then believers, or else you must account of the children of believers, as God doth, not as infidels (as the children of Pagans be) but as holy and under the promise of grace and faith; and so as believers in their fathers right, till themselves renounce it; or else you cannot avoid it (though you do disclaim it) that if infants be unbelievers, and so cannot be baptized, then as unbelievers they cannot be saved. For the Text is express, *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

Neither yet suffer yourself to be put off from the truth by that "other pretence, That all the external benefits and privileges of "the gospel are given only to external and visible faith: And so the "Sealing and confirming ordinances of Christ ever presuppose "faith in the subject to seal unto, and to be confirmed: For all this, and the baptism of infants, may well stand together. For the benefit and privilege of external baptism is not given to infants, but in respect of the external and visible profession of the faith of their Parents, or of one of them at least. And this ordinance of Christ sealet and confirmeth the Covenant of grace to the believer (for himself and his seed) yea to the whole Church of belie-

vers, and to their seed also, when they grow up to understand the nature and use of it.

CHAP. II.

Thus then at length having (by the help of Christ) cleared this first Argument for the baptism of infants of believers from the commandment of the Lord Jesus: let us now (if you please) proceed to another commandment, a commandment of the holy Ghost, with whom *Peter* being filled in the beginning of his public administration of the Apostolic office, he exhorted the penitent Jews, them and theirs, to be baptized in the name of the “Lord Jesus: His words are thus recorded, *Acts* 2:38, 39. Repent ye (saith he) and be baptized every one of you in the name “of the Lord Jesus for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive “the gift of the holy Ghost, for the promise is to you and to your “children, &c. From whence the argument that these words hold forth, ariseth thus:

They to whom the promise is made of remission of sins, and of receiving the holy Ghost, they have a commandment to be baptized every one of them.

But to such as do repent, and to their children, the promise is made of remission of sins, and of receiving the holy Ghost. Therefore they that do repent, and their children, have a commandment to be baptized every one of them.

The former Proposition ariseth from the reason which the Apostle giveth of his exhortation, Repent ye (saith he) and be baptized every one of you, For the promise is made to you and to your children, as who should say, let every one of you be baptized, both you that do repent, and your children. For the promise is made to you, (that is, to you that do repent) and with you to your children also.

Silvester. The text saith not, let every one of you, and of your children be baptized, but repent ye, and let every one of you (to wit, who do repent) be baptized.

Silvanus. The Reason of the commandment giveth the sense of the commandment: now the reason of this commandment, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you, is this, For the promise it made

to you (to wit, to you who do repent) and to your children. And therefore the sense of the commandment of the holy Ghost is this, Repent ye, and let every one of you, both you that do repent, and your children also be baptized. For the promise is to you, and to your children. And so much is implied also in the change and different expression and extent of the verbs of command; he doth not say, Repent ye, and be baptized, as if he commanded two duties to the same persons, no more to be baptized, but such as do repent; But repent ye indefinitely, and be baptized every one of you, universally and singularly, not only ye who do repent, but your children also.

Silvester. But the event sheweth, that *Peter* intended only them that did repent to be baptized, and not their children: for so it followeth in the Text, *verse* 41. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, which sheweth that none else were baptized, but persons that were grown up to years of understanding, such as were affected with the word, and received it gladly.

Silvanus. It is true indeed the Apostles forced baptism upon none, but administered it only to such as gladly received the Word. But those penitent Jews and Proselytes, who understood that promise was to them and to their children, they gladly received the whole Word, both the word of promise which they received by faith: and the word of commandment, they and their children to be baptized, which they received by offering themselves and their children unto baptism; in which respect it is therefore said, They that gladly received his word were baptized; because both their own baptism, and the baptism of their children was the immediate fruit of the parents gladsome receiving of the word; the act of the parents in such a case is accounted of, Christ as the act of the children, as in *Mark* 10:13, 14. The act of the parents in bringing their children to Christ, is called the act of the children in coming to him, as *Levi* paid tithes in the loins of *Abraham*, (*Heb.* 7:9, 10) so in like sort these children here gladly received the word in the arms of their parents.

Silvester. But the ground of all this argument seemeth to me very weak, for you take that for granted, which to me seemeth very uncertain, (if not untrue) that by the children to whom the promise is made, should be meant their natural children, whereas he rather meaneth the children of their faith (spiritual children) such as God called to repent as well as themselves.

Silvanus. The children to whom the promise was made if they were only the children of the faith of their parents, that is, as you mean, not the children for whom the parents believe, but their children that believe and repent as well as their parents, then a double absurdity would follow.

First, that whereas in the days of the old Testament, upon the faith and repentance of the Proselyte parents, the Covenant and promise did belong to them and to their children: now in the days of the new Testament, the faith and repentance which admitteth the parents, excludeth their children: For the children of these Jews and Proselytes (who heard the Sermon) were in Covenant with God before the Sermon. But now upon hearing this Sermon, and being wrought upon effectually by it unto faith and repentance, though themselves be received, yet their children are cut off from the Covenant. A strange doctrine, that the faith of the Parents should set their children further off from God and his Covenant, then they were before.

Secondly, to say the children to whom the promise was made, were meant only their penitent and believing children, would make the Apostles argument a vain and superfluous flourish, whereby he encourageth these Jews and Proselytes to repent and believe, upon this motive taken from a promise made, not only to themselves, but to their children. For by this doctrine the promise belongeth no more to the children of believers, then to the children of Pagans. For even the children of pagans (whilst their children remain Pagans) have the promise belonging to them, as soon as themselves do repent and believe. And what more have the children of believers belonging to them then so? Yea, the Apostles argument is made no argument at all, so far as he urgeth them to repent and believe, by the blessing of the promise thereby redounding to their children. For whether they repented and believed or no, the promise would belong to their children, when the children came themselves to repent and believe. Otherwise if their children repented not, the promise would not belong unto them though their parents did repent. Let me add for confirmation an argument or two more; take this then for a third argument, conversion unto faith and repentance, is it self given by the Covenant, to the children of the Covenant. And therefore the children of the Covenant, were under the Covenant before their conversion, and so before their faith, even by the faith of their parents.

For so the same Apostle *Peter* (in his next Sermon to the Jews) testified, Ye are the children of the Covenant (saith he) which God hath made with our fathers, &c. unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, hath sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities, *Acts* 3:25, 26. If Christ then be given by the Covenant, and conversion by Christ to the children of the Covenant, then the children of the faithful are not first converted, and so come under the Covenant, but are first under the Covenant, and so come to be converted.

A fourth argument may be taken from the easier engrafting of the natural seed of holy Parents, into Christ, then of the posterity of Pagans; which could not be but in respect of their interest in the Covenant, and the benefit redounding to them from thence. For otherwise the Apostle's reasoning (*Rom.* 11:24.) will not hold; If thou (*Roman*) were cut off the olive tree wild by nature, and grafted contrary to nature into the good olive tree; how much more shall these Israelites which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? What reason can be given why the Israelites should be much more capable of engrafting into Christ, then the Roman Pagans were? Surely, not in respect of the greater ingenuity and better indoles (or disposition) of nature, that will be found in the Israelites, above what was found in the Romans: (for by nature all are alike corrupt and averse from Christ, one as another, *Rom.* 3:12. & *Psal.* 14:3.) but only in respect of God's greater propension to shew his saving and converting grace to the children of his confederates. And so indeed the Apostle explaineth himself *verse* 26:17, 18. There shall come (saith he) the deliverer out of Zion, and turn away ungodliness from *Jacob*. And this is my covenant when I shall take away their sins: As touching the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for their Father's sake.

Silvester. "The words in the place in hand, *Acts* 2:39. are not unto your seed, but unto your children, wherein there is a great difference. For by seed in Scripture, is often meant a natural generation, begotten, and born after the flesh. But by children a spiritual generation, walking in the steps of the faith of such as have gone before them, as *Act.* 3:25. & 13:26, 33. and so *John* 8:37, 39. *Rom.* 9:7, 8. And so the words import as much, which is to you, and to your children, and to all a far off even as many at the Lord our God shall call; so that the promise is

only to such as the Lord our God shall call, and none else.

Silvanus. You much mistake it, if you take it, there is any such difference to be put between seed and children: for both of them are taken alike promiscuously. Sometime seed is put for the spiritual children, and children are put for the carnal seed. And sometimes again the seed are put for the carnal children, and children for the spiritual seed, in *Gal.* 3:26. when the Apostle saith, If you be Christs, then are you *Abraham's* seed, and heirs according to the promise; there seed is put for spiritual children. But when he saith, *Jerusalem* that now is, is in bondage with her children, (*Gal.* 4:25.) there he putteth children for the carnal seed: And so he doth also even in some of those Texts, which your self allege to the contrary, as in *Acts* 3:25. when the Apostle saith, Ye are the children of the Prophets, and of the Covenant which God made with our fathers, he speaketh of such whom he exhorteth to repent, and to be converted, *ver.* 19. And therefore yet they were the carnal seed. And he speaketh to them to whom he saith, Christ was sent to turn every one of them from their iniquities, *vers.* 26. And therefore he knew no other of them, nor spake no otherwise to them, then as to men yet in their sins. And so in that other place which you quote out of *Acts* 13:26, 33. the Apostle plainly calleth them the children of the stock of *Abraham*; who were the natural seed of *Abraham*, and whom afterward he calleth despisers, *vers.* 41. And amongst whom many of them contradicted and blasphemed his doctrine, *verse* 45. So that from the word children, it cannot be gathered that in this Text, the Apostle meaneth, children walking in the steps of the faith of their fathers.

No, nor from those other words of the Text, which you say import so much, which speak of the promise made to you and your "children, and to all afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call; for these words do not import what you say, that the promise is only to such as God shall call, and to none else: as many as the Lord our God shall call, is not a limitation of those remote words, you and your children, but of the next words immediately going before, all that are afar off, lest it should be thought, that the promise is to all that are afar off, that is, to all Pagans, and infidels, he explaineth himself in the words next following, even to as many as the Lord shall call from amongst them. And all they indeed from among the Gentiles, whom the Lord shall call, they still partake of the same promise of grace with the Jews, that

as the promise of grace is made to the Jews and their children, so is it now to the Gentiles called, and to their children: there is no difference now between Jews and Gentiles, in respect of any spiritual privileges or promises. The children of the believing Gentiles are now as holy as the children of the believing Jews, and the promises pertain to both alike.

Silvester. “But it is not said in the Text, the Covenant is to you and “yours, but the promise. Now we know that every promise is “not a Covenant, there being a large difference between a promise “and a Covenant. Let it then be well considered, what is here “meant by the promise and that is God’s sending of the Messias, “or the seed in whom all the Nations mould be blessed; and so “the sending of a Saviour or a Redeemer unto Israel, as these “Scriptures manifest compared together, *Esa.* 11:1. *Jer.* 23:5, 6. “with *Luke* 1:68, 74. *Acts* 13:23. & 3:25, 26. This was performed by Christ’s coming, First, in the flesh, in which respect “he came of, and to the Jews only by promise, as *Joh.* 4:21. “*Rom.* 9:5, *Matth.* 10:5, 6. & 15:24. *John* 1:11. Secondly, in the preaching of the Gospel, by which he was held forth as “a Saviour to all that by faith laid hold on him. And this way “also Christ was first tendered to the Jews for a Saviour to save “them from their sins, *Acts* 4:12. And for to be their King, as “to save them, so into whose State and government they were to “submit, as *Luke* 19:14, 27. *Acts* 2:36. In which sense the Apostle speaketh, when he saith, the promise is to you and to your “children, and to all far and near, as God shall call. That is, “the promise, or the promised Saviour is come, and is now according to God’s promise tendered to you by the Gospel, calling “you and your children, and all else, where the word of grace “shall come, to believe and receive him by faith, who is now come “to save you and all that believe, from their sins, *Acts* 3:25, 26. “And therefore it is said, as many as gladly received or believed “these glad tidings, the same was sealed or confirmed to them by “Baptism, *Acts* 2:41. according to *John* 1:11, 12, 13. By “all which it is manifest, that the promise, *Acts* 2:39. is meant of “the sending of the Messias, or a Saviour to the house of Israel, to “call them to repentance, and to save such as believe from their “sins, as is clear also by these Scriptures, *Esa.* 59:20. *Act.* 13: “23, 26, 31, 38, 39. And thus the promise is to you and your children, that is, the promised Saviour is offered, and offereth him-

“self freely to save you, notwithstanding your crucifying of him, “yet now repent and believe; for his promise is upon the same, “freely to forgive and to save you from all your sins. Thus the “promise is applied to faith, which is the way of preaching the “gospel, and not an absolute conclusion of persons to be in the “Covenant of grace and life, whether they have faith or not “What is this, but to keep the wicked from leaving his way, by “promising them life? This God did not in making of his Co-“venant at the first, nor the Apostle by his applying of the same, at “the last.

Silvanus. In this your long answer, some things are impertinent, some things false some fraudulent, and some confused; but one thing only alleged out of the Context that may seem to the purpose, and that also misapplied. 1. It is impertinent to put a difference between the promise and the Covenant. As it was before curious to put a difference between seed and children. For though every promise be not a Covenant: yet there is no such large difference (as you speak of) between the promise of God and his Covenant, but that they are ordinarily put one for another. The Covenant of not drowning the world any more with a flood, was no more then a promise: yet it is called a Covenant, *Gen. 9: 11.* and the Promise that God gave to *Abraham* of the inheritance of the world (*Rom. 4:13.*) was by the Covenant, confirmed by the sacrifices of beasts, divided asunder, *Gen. 15:5, 9, 10, 17.* And that which God calleth the promises, *Gal. 3:16.* he calleth the Covenant in the next verse, *verse 17.* Besides, whatsoever difference there may be between the promise and the Covenant, it is here pleaded altogether impertinently. For if it were granted you which you plead for (though there be no mention of it in the Text) That by the promise is here meant the promise of sending the *Messiah*: yet that promise is either given by the Covenant of grace, or by the Covenant of works. If Christ be given and sent by the Covenant of grace, then the promise that giveth him is the Covenant of grace. So that if the promise of sending Christ be to them and their children, (as the Text speaketh) then the Covenant in which that promise is given, is to them and their children. And to indeed the same Apostle telleth them in his next Sermon. *Acts 3: 25, 26.* Ye are the children of the Prophets, and of the Covenant which God made with our Fathers, &c. Unto you first God having railed up his son Jesus sent him to bless you &c. the promise

therefore offending Christ, was given by Covenant. And then what difference is there between promise and Covenant, in this case?

2. It is false (which you say) that Christ came only to the Jew by promise. For though he came to the Jews, & to the Jews first, and to them by promise: yet God gave a more ancient promise of the coming of the *Messiah*, to our first parents. *Gen.* 3: 15. And they were then the common stock and roots both of Jews and Gentiles. If *Job* had not a promise of Christ his coming to be his Redeemer, how doth he challenge him to be his Redeemer? I know (saith he) that my Redeemer liveth, *Job* 19.

“Again, It is a very truth, which you falsely deny, to wit, “an absolute conclusion (as you call it) of any persons to be “in the Covenant, whether they have faith or not. For what “think you of *Isaac* and *Jacob*, and all other elect infants born “of faithful parents: may not a man say, that all such are absolutely under the Covenant even before they believe? yea their very believing which in God’s appointed time is given to them, is it not the effect of the grace of the Covenant; and not the cause of it?

It is also another falsehood, to say, That the concluding it of “persons (meaning of Infants who may want faith) to be in the “Covenant of grace and life, doth keep the wicked from leaving “his way, by promising him life.

For we do not promise life to any by the Covenant, unless they be elect. And though they be elect, yet because it is unknown to them, and to us too, till they do repent and believe, we tell them they cannot partake in any saving benefit of the Covenant till they be regenerate and quietened by the Spirit, as Christ told *Nicodemus*.

“And it is yet another falsehood to say, That God did not conclude absolutely any in Covenant of grace when he first made it, “nor that the Apostle did so apply it at the last.

For when God first made the Covenant, he did absolutely conclude *Isaac*, and in him all the Elect seed under the Covenant. For it is a branch of the meaning of that promise of God, when he first made the Covenant, My Covenant (saith he) will I establish with *Isaac*, *Gen.* 17:31. And yet it doth not appear that *Isaac* had any faith, muck less visible, And for the Apostle his apply-

ing of the Covenant, or the promise (call it whether you will, all is one to me) certain it is, the Apostle doth not suspend the children being in Covenant upon their own faith, but upon the faith and repentance of their Fathers. Repent (saith he, speaking to the fathers) and so let every one of you be baptized, &c. For the promise is made to you and to your children. Whence the scope of the Apostles exhortation fitly ariseth into this argument, and concludeth after this manner; as hath been shown above.

To whom the promise is made, they ought to be baptized every one of them.

But to you repenting, and to your children, the promise is made.

Therefore you and your children ought to be baptized every one of you.

And besides, the Apostle in his next Sermon so expoundeth the Covenants given not only to them that are converted, and so brought on to believe: but to them who yet want faith and conversion. And therefore he saith, *Acts* 3:25, 26. Ye are the children of the Covenant unto whom God having raised up his Son Jesus, hath sent him to bless you, in converting (or turning away) every one of you from his iniquities. Their being in Covenant (who were the children of the faithful) was not the fruit of their own turning to God; but their turning to God is held forth by him as a blessing and fruit of their being in Covenant.

3. “This is fraudulent, that you hold forth the coming of Christ in the gospel to be for this end, to call upon men to repent and believe, and submit themselves to his State and government. Which though it be very true, yet it is like the fraudulent practice of *Ananias* and *Saphira*, to pay part of the price, that they might more cunningly conceal the rest. So you in like manner, hold forth this end (which is indeed part of Christ’s coming in the gospel) the more closely to conceal another part of it, which is, to give faith and salvation to the children of believers, and accordingly to call their parents to submit their children and households, as well as themselves, to the state and government of the Lord Jesus. For why should Christ encourage children to come to him (*Mark* 10:14.) if it were no end of Christ’s coming, to come to save them?

4. “These things are very confined in your answer, that you put it for all one, Christ to come to save men from their sins, and to call men to believe.

For though these follow one another, yet they require a far different state of the subject, unto whom this different grace is tendered. For if you speak of saving from sin (or justifying) *Christ* justifieth or saveth none from sin, but believers, or such at least, as have faith. But when he calleth men to believe or to repent, he cometh to them not as having fifth or repentance, but as wanting both. And yet when he cometh to call them unto faith and repentance, he doth it out of respect of his Covenant with their Fathers, whose children they were: yea, and in this call of them, he cometh to give them repentance and forgiveness of sins, *Acts* 15:31. And in giving it to their Fathers, he promiseth also to give the same unto their children, *Acts* 16:31.

Lastly, there is one thing alleged out of the context, which may seem pertinent to the purpose if it were fitly applied. You “truly allege that in *Acts* 2:41. it is said, As many as gladly received his word (or is you call it, glad tidings) they were baptized, or as you say, the same was settled and confirmed unto them by baptism. But this will not prove that which you allege it for, that therefore it is manifest, that by the promise “(*Acts* 2:39.) is meant the sending of the Messias. For the text will every way as fitly (and more fitly) carry it to be meant of the promise of remission of sins, and of receiving the gift of the holy Ghost; so the words run directly; *Repent ye* (saith he) *and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the holy Ghost, for the promise is to you and to your children*: What promise? Here is no promise mentioned before, but the remission of sins, and gift of the Holy Ghost: And the gift of the Holy Ghost is called a promise *verse* 33. & *Acts* 1:4, 5. But it is not material to the purpose, whether by the promise you understand the coming of Christ, or the gift of the Holy Ghost, or remission of sins purchased by the one, and sealed by the other. For all these promises are given by one and the same Covenant of grace. And if any one of these promises belonged to them, the whole Covenant of grace belonged to them also. But to deal ingenuously and faithfully with you, the Text which you quote (out of *Acts* 2:41.) might hold forth a just colour of an Objection (if you had so applied it) against the argument gathered out of *verse* 38, 39. for the baptism of infants. For if they who were baptized were such as gladly received his word (*verse* 41.) then it doth not appear out of this place, that infants were at that time baptized with the rest: because they could not receive the word,

much less gladly, least of all express their gladness by any viable profession. This objection (I confess) would have prevailed with me to have forborn any proof of the Baptism of infants out of this place; were it not partly for the Reasons which have been alleged above (from the words of *verse* 39.) partly also for that I find, the Lord Jesus is wont to accept the acts of Parents (in the duties of the second Commandment) as done for themselves, and for their children, as hath been touched above. For look as when *Levi* is said to pay tithes in *Abraham*, it was because *Abraham* in paying tithes was reputed of God, as paying them for himself, and for *Levi*, *Heb.* 7:9. And as when Parents came and brought then children to Christ, their coming was reputed of Christ as the coming of their children, as well as of themselves, *Mar.* 10: 14. So when *Peter's* hearers received the word gladly, they gladly received in both for themselves and their children, to wit, both the word of promise, which was expressly given to themselves and their children: and also the word of Commandment (which was grounded upon the promise, and urged as far as the promise extended) Be baptized every one of you: and thereupon they in receiving his word gladly, did gladly give up both themselves and their children to be baptised.

Silvester. “But before you take the baptism of infants concluded out of “this place, consider what you will say to another interpretation, “which I have seen made of this place. For there be that say, “That by the Promise to you and to your children, is not meant “the Covenant of grace to you and to your children; but the “promise of sending the Holy Ghost to enable them, and their “sons and daughters to prophecy: Which promise *Peter* quoted “out of *Joel*, *Act.* 2:16, 17. which promise *Christ* received of the “Father, and had now shed abroad in their sight and hearing, “*verse* 33. and which *Peter* promised to them upon their repentance and, baptism, *verse* 38. because the promise was to them “and to their children.

Silvanus. Thus sometimes you will have the promise to be understood of sending Christ, and sometime of sending the holy Ghost, but the truth is, both are but effects of the same grace, and both given by the same Covenant. The English proverb speaketh of such men as are loath to see what they do see, that they cannot see the wood for trees: so these men cannot see the Covenant for the promises; what is the wood but a storehouse of trees? and what is the Co-

venant of grace, but the storehouse of the promise of grace? In the Covenant of grace when God giveth himself to be the God of the faithful and of their seed, the Father promiseth himself to be their Father, Christ promiseth to be their Redeemer, and the Holy Ghost promiseth to be their sanctifier. You may as soon separate the persons in the Trinity from being one God, as separate the gift of one of these persons to us and to our children, from the gifts of the other; or separate all these gifts, or the promises of these gifts from the Covenant of grace.

Silvester. But if the gift of the Holy Ghost be here promised to these Jews and Proselytes and to their children, that they might speak with new tongues, and prophecy, then in this place by children cannot be meant infants; for infants are not capable of speaking with tongues and prophesying.

The Apostle Peter, though he speak of the promise of the gift of the Holy Ghost, which in the former part of the chapter did enable the Disciples to speak with new tongues, and prophecy; yet he did not intend to limit and confine the gift of the Holy Ghost to that work in these Converts here; for that would have been small comfort to them who were pricked in heart, and enquired the way of salvation, to put them off with a promise of the Holy Ghost, to work such gifts of tongues and prophesying, at were common to hypocrites, *Matth.* 7:22, 23. *1 Cor.* 13:1. The Apostle therefore who better knew how to satisfy and heal these wounded souls, he promiseth to them such a gift of the Holy Ghost as is joined with remission of sins, and accompanieth salvation, *Act.* 2:38, 39. And though infants (whilst infants) are not capable of speaking with tongues, and prophesying, (which is but one gift of the Holy Ghost, and but a common gift neither) yet they are capable of the Holy Ghost for regeneration and remission of sins, which are the chief blessings of the Covenant, which these Converts then stood in need of, and for the effectual working of which, the Apostle telleth them, *The promise is made to them and to their children*; which indeed cannot be wrought, but by the gift both of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost.

And now having said enough (as I conceive) if not too much for the clearing of these two first Arguments for the Baptism of the infants of believers; Let us now proceed to add a third taken from the Analogy of the Circumcision of the seed of *Abraham*, and the Commandment of God for the same.

Silvester. I have heard much agitation of such an argument (and more of that than of any other) out I am very slow to believe the baptism of infants upon that ground.

CHAP. III.

Silvanus. DO you not believe that God made a Covenant of grace with *Abraham* and his seed? *Gen.* 17:7. &c.

Silvester. What if he did?

Silvanus. Did he not by that Covenant give him a Commandment to receive the sign of Circumcision, the seal of the Covenant of grace to him and to his seed? *Gen.* 17:9, 10.

Silvester. What of that?

Silvanus. Hath not the Lord given that Covenant of grace which we then to *Abraham* and his seed, now to believers and our seed?

Silvester. What then?

Silvanus. I demand further, hath not God abolished Circumcision, and given us baptism in the room thereof?

Silvester. What of all this?

Silvanus. Then out of all these it followeth, that if the same Covenant of grace be now given to believers and our seed, which was given to *Abraham* and his seed; and if baptism be now given to us as a seal of the Covenant, in the room of Circumcision, then the same Covenant, which gave a Commandment, or a word of institution for the Circumcision of *Abraham* and his seed, giveth the same Commandment, or a Word of Institution for the baptism of believers and our seed. As by like proportion, it is justly gathered, that if Baptism be given us in the room of Circumcision, and the Lord's Supper in the room of the Passover, then as no uncircumcised person might eat of the Passover: so now no unbaptized person may eat of the Lord's Supper.

Silvester. Here are many things presupposed, but not proved: as, first, that the Covenant which God made with *Abraham* and his seed, was a Covenant of grace. For some say it was a Covenant of temporal blessings (as of the inheritance of *Canaan*) not spiritual. Others say, it was a Covenant of works, not of grace. And others say, that though it was a Covenant of grace to *Abraham* (and to his faithful seed) yet it was a Covenant of works, at least to his carnal seed.

Secondly, it is presupposed, but not proved, that Circumcision was a seal of the Covenant of grace to *Abraham*, and to his natural seed.

Thirdly, neither is it proved, that God hath made a Covenant of grace now with Believers and our natural seed.

Fourthly, Neither is it proved, that Baptism with water is given us of God in stead of circumcision.

Silvanus. It is true, the Devil hath bestirred him (else mightily to call in question all these truths of the Covenant of grace; that so he might make the Covenant of none effect both to Parents and children. Now the Lord rebuke him, and make us wise to discern his enterprises. But to clear all these points, let us (by the help of Christ) prove them one and other, as well as presuppose them. We must not lose nor cast away any Divine truth, because it is questioned, but rather contend for it; and the more earnestly, because it is opposed.

For the first there is a troth in it, though not the whole truth, that the Covenant made with *Abraham*, was of temporal blessings, (such as deliverance from Egypt, and the inheritance of *Canaan*) but not of temporal blessings only nor chiefly, even as the Covenant of grace with us, though it chiefly convey spiritual and eternal mercies, yet it reacheth also to temporal blessings also, *Hos.* 2:18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. Reasons hereof from the word are plain and strong. 1. From the Tenor of the Covenant, I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee, *Gen.* 17:7. Now God to be a God to us and our seed, is more then a temporal blessing, even all-sufficient goodness for us and ours, for our souls, and for our bodies, for this life and for ever: God giving himself to be our God, the Father giveth himself to be our Father; God the Son giveth himself to be our Redeemer; and God the holy Ghost giveth himself to be our Sanctifier and Comforter. And indeed, that Christ was promised and given in this Covenant, is clear from *Luke* 1:54,55. and *Verse* 69, 72, 73. The holy Ghost also is here promised and given in this Covenant as well as Christ the Angel of the Covenant, *Esa.* 63:9, 10, 14.

Secondly, in the words of this Covenant, God giving himself to be a God to *Abraham* and to his seed: he therein promised life to them, yea life after death. For the Covenant was so rehearsed by *Moses*, after the death of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, *Exod.* 3:6. Whence Christ undeniably concludeth thai God promised and

gave to them resurrection from the dead, and eternal life, *Mat.* 22:31, 32. *Luke* 20:37, 38. Surely resurrection from death, and living to God after death, are not temporal blessings.

3. *Canaan* it self was not given as a mere temporal blessing: but as a pledge of a spiritual inheritance, a seal of the Church, a type of Heaven. *Hence it was that *Jacob* gave such a solemn charge by oath unto *Joseph*, and *Joseph* to his brethren, the one to bury his dead body in *Canaan*, the other for the transportation of his bones to *Canaan*; which they would never have done for an earthly inheritance, but to nourish in the hearts of their posterity, faith and desire of their communion in the Church, and of their rest in heaven, whereof the rest in *Canaan* was a type, whereunto not *Moses*, but *Joshua* must bring them, that is, not the law, but Jesus, *Heb.* 3:11. with Chap. 4, 5. 8. And their calling out of that Country by captivity was their calling out of God's sight 2 *Kings* 17:28 Whereby their Church Estate was dissolved, the Communion of Saints scattered, the Ordinances of his public Worship removed from them, and their hopes of heaven.

Silvester. But I have read it strongly pleaded, that the Covenant made with *Abraham* was an old Covenant, a Covenant of works, which Christ hath therefore disannulled as old and weak, *Heb.* 8: 13. Now still to plead our own and our children's right unto that Covenant, and to the Seal thereof, is to confound the Old and New Testament, Law and Gospel; besides Circumcision (which was a Sign and Seal of the Covenant with *Abraham*) bound them that received it, to keep the whole Law, *Gal.* 5:3. And therefore the Covenant to which it was annexed was a legal Covenant, a Covenant of works, and not of grace.

The Old Covenant spoken of *Heb.* 8:13. was not the Covenant made with *Abraham*, but with the *Israelites* on Mount *Sinai*, when God brought them out of *Ægypt*, as is expressly said, *Heb.* 8:9. which Covenant coming 430. years after the Covenant with *Abraham*, is expressly distinguished from it, as that which could not disannul the promise or Covenant, which went before unto *Abraham.* *Gal.* 3:17.

Silvester. But why should the Covenant with the *Israelites* on Mount *Sinai* be called old, in companion of the Covenant with *Abraham* which was 430 years older then it?

The Covenant made on Mount *Sinai* is not called old in comparison of the Covenant made *Abraham*: but in comparison of

* *Gen.* 47:21. to 31. and Chap. 50:2; *Heb.* 11:22.

the Evangelical dispensation of the Covenant of grace by the Lord Jesus: in whom the sacrifices and Levitical Ceremonies being accomplished and abolished, we look for atonement not in blood of Bulls and Goats, nor in Legal Ablutions, but in the blood of Christ only.

And as for Circumcision, though the Apostle say, that every one circumcised, is bound to keep the whole Law; yet that doth not argue, that circumcision was to *Abraham* a sign and seal of the Covenant of works; for a double answer may justly be given to it. First, they that hold that the Covenant given on Mount *Sinai* to was the Covenant of works, (as do *Melancthon*, *Chemnitius*, *Piscator*, &c.) They would answer that circumcision was a sign of the Covenant of works, not as circumcision was given to *Abraham*, but as it was given by *Moses*, for *Moses* also enjoined circumcision as a Levitical rite, *Lev. 12:3*. But *Christ* himself observeth a difference between circumcision as given by *Moses*, and as of the Fathers, *John 7:22, 23*.

Secondly, but they that hold the Covenant on Mount *Sinai* to have been a Covenant of grace, but only veiled under types and shadows, (as do *Calvin*, *Bucer*, *Bucan*, &c.) they would answer, that circumcision did bind to the keeping of the whole Law; not as it was given either to *Abraham*, or to *Moses*, but as it was urged by the false Apostles who expessed justification from the observation of it. To such indeed it is truly alleged, that if they look for justification by the observation of circumcision, they are then bound to observe the whole Law. For it is not the observation of one commandment of the Law, that can justify, but the observation of the whole Law, for he that breaketh any one commandment of the Law, is guilty of all, *James 2:10*. Whence it is that *Paul* putteth the observation of circumcision (to wit, in the sense of the false Apostles) as all one with justification by the works of the Law, *Gal. 5:3, 4*. And thereby proveth that if the Galatians be circumcised, Christ should profit them nothing, *ver. 2*. they were fallen from grace, *ver. 4*. And yet *Timothy* who received circumcision, not in the sense of the false Apostles, as necessary to justification; but for other respect, to avoid offence, he did not thereby fall from *Christ*, or lose his profit in Christ Jesus. But to put it out of doubt that circumcision given to *Abraham* was a sign and seal not of the Covenant of works, but of grace, the Apostle's words are evident, *Rom. 4:11*. *Abraham* (saith he) *received the sign*

of Circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith. Now righteousness of faith is not found in the Covenant of works, but in the Covenant of grace only. The Covenant of works holdeth forth no righteousness but by the works of the Law.

Silvester. “I would not deny that the Covenant made with *Abraham* was “a Covenant of grace to him and to his faithful seed, and consequently Circumcision was a sign and seal of the same Covenant of grace to them; but to the carnal seed (such as *Ishmael* and “*Esau*) it was not a Covenant of grace to them: for then as they “fell away from that Covenant; so they had fallen away from a “state of grace, which would too much countenance and cherish “the Arminian and Popish error of Apostasy from grace. Neither “could circumcision be to them a sign or seal of the Covenant “of grace, nor of the righteousness of faith given in that Covenant, for neither had they faith, nor righteousness by faith “before their circumcision, as *Abraham* had; nor after their “circumcision, as the elect seed had. And how could then God set his “seal to a falsehood?

Silvester. What if that were granted you which you say (which yet many good Divines will not admit) that the Covenant of God with *Abraham* was a Covenant of grace only to him and to his faithful seed, and to them Circumcision was a seal of the same Covenant: but to the carnal seed, the Covenant was a Covenant of works, and circumcision a seal of the Covenant of works? Though all this were granted, yet still it remaineth good, that all the seed of *Abraham* (spiritual and carnal) were in Covenant with God, one Covenant or other, either of works or grace; and were all partakers of the seal of the Covenant, to wit, circumcision, though in a different respect. But then it will unavoidably follow, that if the Covenant given to *Abraham* and his seed be given to believers and our seed; then as all the seed of *Abraham* (whether carnal or spiritual) were in Covenant with God, and so circumcised: so all the seed of believers are in Covenant with God, and should now be baptized. If you say, then Baptism shall be a seal of the Covenant of works to the carnal seed of believers, and that were an absurdity now in the days of the new Testament.

Answ. No greater absurdity then to say, that circumcision was a seal of the Covenant of works to the carnal seed of *Abraham*. For *Paul* speaking of the two Covenants under which the twofold seed of *Abraham* lay, he saith, *As it was then, so it now: As*

it was then in the old Testament, so it is now in the New: *Gal.* 4:10, Head from *vers.* 34. to the end of that chapter. As it was then, for is it now; not only in this respect, that he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the spirit: But in this also, that as then some of the seed of *Abraham* were born of *Hagar*, that is, born of the Covenant of works, and born after the flesh: and some were born of *Sarah* the free-woman, that is, born of the Covenant of grace, and born after the Spirit; so is it now, in the days of the new Testament.

But to give you a further answer and safer, and more generally accepted; Let me shew you, how the carnal seed of *Abraham* might then, and may now partake (after a sort) in the Covenant of grace, and in the seal of the Covenant of grace, and yet fall away from grace: and nevertheless their falling from grace be no countenance to the *Arminian* error of apostasy from grace.

There is a double state of grace, one adherent, (which some not unfitly call federal grace) sanctifying to the purifying of the flesh, *Heb.* 9:13. another inherent, sanctifying of the inner man. And of this latter there be two sorts, one, wherein persons in Covenant are sanctified by common graces, which make them serviceable and useful in their callings, as *Saul*, *Jehu*, *Judas*, and *Demas*, and such like hypocrites. Another whereby persons in Covenant are sanctified unto union and communion with Christ and his members in a way of regeneration and salvation. In respect of adherent or federal grace, all the children of a believing parent are holy, and so in an estate of grace. In respect of inherent common graces, *Saul*, *Jehu*, and *Judas* and *Demos* were sanctified of God to their several callings for the service of his people, as Apostates may be, *Heb.* 10:29. Now there is no doubt but men may fall away from adherent federal grace, as also from inherent common graces; and yet without any prejudice to the perseverance of sincere believers, and without any countenance to the *Arminian* error of Apostasy from grace, to wit, from such grace as accompanieth salvation. And as for the circumcision of *Ishmael* (and such as he) it was a sign and seal of the righteousness of faith, not of that which he had received, but of that which God offered to apply to him in the use of the means of grace in *Abraham's* family; which means, as *Abraham* having circumcised him (and so having set God's seal and property upon him) was bound to apply to him, (*Gen.* 18:19.) to

prepare him for grace. So *Ishael* being circumcised, was bound (as he grew up to understanding) to yield up himself in professed subjection, both to the Lord and his father, in receiving and following the means of grace applied to him: for God having by Covenant offered himself to be a God to *Abraham* and his seed, the Lord did thereby promise to afford both to him and his seed, the means whereby they might come to enjoy the Lord for their God. For he which promiseth the end, promiseth also the means that lead to that end. And *Abraham* for his part accepting the Covenant for himself and his seed, and so having circumcised himself and them in token thereof, he had now bound himself to train up and educate all his seed in the means and ways of grace, whereby they might come to enjoy that great promise of the Covenant, to have the Lord for their God, which also *Abraham* was careful to do, as the Lord testifieth of him, *Gen.* 18:19.

Yea, and *Ishmael* himself with the rest of *Ahrahams* seed having been received into the Covenant of God, and to the seal thereof, he and they all were bound to yield up themselves to the Lord, and to *Abraham*, in attending to the means of grace dispensed to them in that Covenant, that so they might come to enjoy the sure mercies of the Covenant, to have the Lord for their God. But now when *Ishmael* rejected the means of grace, as he did by mocking at *Isaac*, and as did *Esau* also, (by selling the birthright of the Covenant for a mess of pottage) now their circumcision was made uncircumcision, as *Paul* speaketh in a like case, *Rom.* 2:15. And so they did discovenant themselves and their posterity from the Covenant of grace, and chose to be (as the bewitched *Galatians* did, *Galat.* 4:21.) under the Covenant of works. It is therefore a groundless and false collection, which some of your way do make, “that because there was in *Abraham* (when God made a Covenant with him) a double seed, (the one a spiritual seed, the other a fleshly seed) and accordingly because there were in the “Covenant some spiritual blessings, and some outward and carnal blessings therefore they must be thus distinguished, that the “spiritual blessings belonged to the spiritual seed, and the outward blessings to his carnal seed.

For all the blessings were promised to all the seed in the Covenant. To the spiritual seed, both spiritual and outward blessings were promised and given effectually: To the carnal seed,

not carnal blessings only, but spiritual also were promised, and offered: So as that their falling short of the grace of God, was not from the defect of the Covenant, but from their profane refusal of it, and of the means of grace offered in it. For it is an evident and confessed Truth, and the Text is clear for it, That in the Covenant, God offered himself to be a God to all the seed. Now God is not an outward or carnal blessing: but as himself is a Spirit, so is he also a spiritual blessing to whom-ever he is dispensed.

Silvester. Well then, though it be granted that the Covenant which God made with *Abraham* and with his seed, is a Covenant of grace, and that circumcision was given as a seal of that Covenant unto his seed; yet still, this is not proved, that God hath made a Covenant of grace now in the new Testament with the seed of believers, especially our natural and carnal seed: Or that our Baptism is given to us of God in stead of circumcision, to confirm such a Covenant with such a seed.

Silvanus. Both these may be well proved; rightly understood; rightly understood I say. For if by carnal seed of believers be meant the children of believers walking after the flesh, and carnally rejecting the Covenant of grace, as *Esau* sold his birthright for a mess of pottage; and the Jews rejected the righteousness of Christ, to establish their own righteousness, (which are properly called by the Apostle the carnal seed, and Israel after the flesh) then we willingly grant you, that the Covenant of grace is not extended to the carnal seed of believers. Or if by carnal and natural seed, be meant the children of believers begotten of their bodies, and considered as descending from them only by power of nature, and carnal generation, then we consent unto you herein also, that the Covenant of grace doth not extend to the children of believers considered as their natural land carnal seed. For the children of believers, though begotten of their bodies, yet are born under the Covenant, not by any power of nature, or any force of carnal generation: but, by the grace of Christ offering the Covenant to believers and to their seed, and by the faith of believers receiving the Covenant for themselves and for their seed. But that the Covenant of believers begotten of their bodies, are born under the Covenant of grace, by the grace of Christ offering the Covenant to them, and by the faith of their parents receiving the Covenant

for them, and for their seed, may be proved from sundry testimonies of Scripture.

First, from the testimony of *Paul* to the *Galatians*, *Gal.* 3:14, 15, 16. where he teacheth us, that by Christ his redemption of us from the curse of the Law, the blessing of *Abraham* is come upon the Gentiles, *vers.* 14. This blessing is called the Covenant, *verse* 15, 17. And this Covenant he calleth the promises, *verse* 16. And these promises he there telleth us were made to *Abraham* and his seed: and by seed he meaneth Christ. And by Christ he meaneth Christ mystical, that is, Christ and all that are in Christ, whether by election, or by their own faith, (as all the living members of Christ be) or by adoption, as all the Israelites were, for whom *Paul* had continual sorrow, *Rom.* 9:4. Or (which is of like extent) by participation in the stock of *Abraham*, the stock of the faithful, as *Paul* calleth the Jews, the children of the stock of *Abraham*, to whom the word of salvation is sent, *Acts* 13:26. And such are in Christ, as branches in the true olive, or in the vine, till they come to cut off themselves, by calling off the Covenant, and the faith of their parents. For the Apostle there in that place of the *Galatians*, speaketh of the blessing of *Abraham* as come upon us Gentiles: And the blessing of *Abraham* was the Covenant and promises of the Covenant made unto *Abraham*; and unto his seed in Christ. Now that seed in Christ was of such large extent, as that *Ishmael* at first partaked in the Covenant made to it, and in the seal of it (as being himself one of the seed and stock of *Abraham*, as well as *Isaac*) until he rejected the Covenant in rejecting *Isaac*. and the grace of Christ in him, and so was cast out of the family of *Abraham*, and out of the Communion of the body of the faithful.

For *Paul* speaketh not there (as some of your way would have it) of a dispensation of the Covenant of *Abraham*, in the old Testament, and in the new: as if it were dispensed in the old Testament unto him and to his carnal seed: and now in the New, to him, and to his seed in Christ; no, no such matter. But he speaketh of the Covenant as it was dispensed unto *Abraham* and to his seed of old. And his seed of old, was meant Christ, and all in Christ, then, as well as now. And therefore, if then *Ishmael* was received to the Covenant, and to the seal of the Covenant, as the seed of *Abraham*, and yet no seed of *Abraham*, was accounted in the Covenant, but the seed in Christ, it is evident that *Ishmael* was

it first accounted to be in Christ, though not as elect in Christ, nor as united to Christ by his own faith; yet as abiding like a branch in the stock of *Abraham*, in the body of the faithful, in the adoption of God, and in the communion of *Abraham's* family, till by perfecting *Isaac*, and by mocking at the grace, of Christ in him, he was cut off from that vine, and cast out of the Covenant. Whence it followeth, that if the blessing of *Abraham* be come upon us Gentiles, and this blessing of *Abraham* be the promises and Covenant made to him and his seed, and if the seed of *Abraham* be accounted all that are in Christ, and all are accounted to be in Christ, (In respect of the outward dispensation of the Covenant) not only which are elect, and which are faithful, but also which are of the seed of the faithful, and live in communion with them, (till they come to reject Christ, and the faith in him) then it standeth undeniably firm and certain that the Covenant of *Abraham* is made with believers now, and and with our seed too, even in these days of the New Testament.

The same truth is witnessd unto by the Apostle *Peter* also in *Acts* 2:39. as hath been opened above. The promise (saith he) is made to you and to your children; where by promise is meant (is appeareth by the former verse) the promise of remission of sins, and of receiving the holy Ghost; which are of the principal sort of the sure mercies of the Covenant of grace.

It will be a vain shift to distinguish between the promise and the Covenant here. For every promise of God, is a promise of one Covenant or other. Now in the Covenant of works there is no free promise of remission of sins, or of the holy Ghost: but all the promises are given to workers, Do this, and thou shalt live: do it not, and die and be accursed. In the New Testament therefore there is a Covenant of grace to believers and to their children, as was to *Abraham* and to his seed. If it be said, this Promise and Covenant was to the Jews, and to their children, but not to the Gentiles and theirs.

The answer is plain and case, it is a promise of the New Testament; and in the new Testament, the Jew hath no privilege above the Gentile. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, there is no difference of any Nation in the spiritual privileges of the New Testament: but all are alike in Christ Jesus. If it be said again, the promise is to them, and to their repenting and believing children, and not else.

This exception hath been refuted above. To which let me add, that the promise was not only to the repenting and believing Israelites, nor only to their children repenting and believing; but God had promised also to pour his Spirit upon their children that they might repent and believe; when *Jacob* is thirsty, and like the dry ground, God promiseth he will not only pour out his Spirit like water upon him thus dry and thirsty, but also I will pour (saith he) my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine off-spring, *Isa.* 44:3. For it is the same water of the blood and spirit of Christ, of which God speaketh, when he promiseth to pour clean water upon them, and therewith to take away their hard and stony hearts, which must be removed by the spirit given them, before they can come to repent and believe, *Ezek.* 16:25.

It is to the same purpose that upon the repentance and faith of *Zachaeus*, the Lord pronounceth salvation to be unto his house, *Luke* 19:9. This day (saith he) salvation is come to this house, forasmuch as he also is the son of *Abraham* which is not only in respect of the Religious care, which *Zachaeus* would take to teach his household the way of salvation, but also in respect of the Covenant, by which not only *Zachaeus* was bound to teach his household, but the Lord also had bound himself to bless the means of salvation to his household, as it is written, The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God, &c. *Deut.* 30:6. And again, those that dwell under his shadow shall return, *Hos.* 14:7. The like promise of grace doth *Paul* and *Silas* preach to the Jailor, that upon his faith, salvation should redound to his household; Believe (say they) on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved and thine house, *Acts* 16:31. which also was done and took effect the same night, afore that the Gaoler could take any great pains for the institution of them, *verse* 34. All which do plainly argue, that the faith of the parent doth bring the children and household of a Christian, even now in the days of the new Testament, under a Covenant of salvation, as well as the faith of *Abraham* brought his household of old under the same covenant. Whence also it is, that *Paul* proveth the conversion of the Jews (after the fulness of the Gentiles be come in) from the Covenant of God made with their fathers *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*. For (saith he) when the fulness of the Gentiles is come in, all Israel shall be saved, as it is written. There shall come out of

Zion a Redeemer, and shall turn away ungodliness from *Jacob*. For this is my Covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins: As concerning the Gospel they are enemies for your sake, but as touching the election, they, are beloved for the Father's sake, *Rom.* 11:25, 26, 27, 28. which plainly argueth, that for the Covenant sake made with *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, the Lord will convert and call home the Jews in the latter days, although for the present they be rejected for their unbelief. Therefore the Covenant of grace (the Covenant of *Abraham*) is of like force and extent now (now in the days of the New Testament) unto the faithful and their seed, as it was in the days of the Old Testament.

If it be said, that this proveth no more, then this, that when the Jews shall turn unto Christ by faith in their Redeemer, then they shall inherit the Covenant of *Abraham*, as all believers do.

Answ. Yes, it proveth not that only, but this more, that before their faith in Christ, whilst they are yet enemies, the Lord will turn unto them, and give them faith and repentance to turn up him, and that out of his Covenant, even for the love that he beareth to them for their godly father's sake. Howbeit, we willingly grant that those Jews who shall be converted in the latter days, are no otherwise under the Covenant of grace, then in respect of God's election, as the Apostle speaketh, *Rom.* 11:28. But otherwise in respect of the actual enjoyment of the privileges of the Gospel (such as Church-communion, and the seals of that Communion be) they are rejected as enemies, not for their privative want of faith, but for their positive rejection of the faith, and of the righteousness of faith, and of Christ himself. But when they shall turn unto the Lord, then the Covenant shall run along to them and to their seed, as it did of old unto *Abraham* and to his seed. For so *Esay* prophesieth of those times. This is my Covenant to them that turn from transgression in *Jacob*, 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 put out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, from henceforth and for ever, *Esa.* 59:20, 21.

Finally, that known place in *1 Cor.* 7:14. though it have been much wrested and racked to look and speak another way, yet it cannot but bear witness to the truth in hand, that by the faith of either Parent, the children are received into a state of holiness, and

so are accounted amongst God's holy people, which is by fellowship in the Covenant. By the text and context it appeareth, that in the church of *Corinth*, sometimes the wife had been converted to Christianity, when the husband still remained an infidel (or as it is translated, an unbeliever;) and sometimes the husband had been converted, when the wife remained an infidel; whereupon it grew a just and weighty doubt, whether the believer were not bound in conscience to put away the unbelieving yoke-fellow. And the doubt seemed to have just ground from that which might seem to be a like case in the old Testament, in the days of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*; where such as had married strange wives, were commanded of God, and covenanted among themselves, to put away both their strange wives, and the children begotten of them, *Ezra* 10:2, 3. *Nehem.* 13:23, 24, 25. For resolving this doubt (as well as of some others) the *Corinthians* by letter consulted with the Apostle, *1 Cor.* 7:1. &c. And to this doubt the Apostle answereth, that the believer should not put away the unbelieving yoke-fellow. And for this he giveth a double reason.

First, from the sanctification of the unbelieving yoke-fellow to the believer, *verse* 14.

Secondly, from the hope, or possibility at least, which the believer hath of converting the unbelieving yokefellow to the faith, *verse* 16. Now the former of these reasons (taken from the sanctification of the unbelieving yoke-fellow to the believer) the Apostle proveth it by the state of their children; Else were your children unclean (saith he) but now they are holy.

The force of this Reason standeth thus,

If the unbelieving yoke-fellow were not Sanctified in the believer, and to the believer (that is, if the believer had not a sanctified use of his marriage communion with his unbelieving yokefellow) then were your children unclean.

But your children are not unclean, but now they are holy:

Therefore the unbelieving yoke-fellow is sanctified in the believer, and to him.

Where, in the assumption, the Apostle putteth a manifest difference between the estate of the children now in the days of the New Testament, and their estate in the Old, as in *Ezra* and *Nehemiah's* time. In the Old Testament, as the unbelieving yoke-fellow was unclean to the Israelites, so were their children unclean also: And therefore both wives and children to be put away. Why

so? Because then there was a partition wall between Jew and Gentile, the Gentiles were then strangers from the Covenants of promise (*Ephes. 2:12.*) and all communion with them was accursed, *Nehem. 13:25.* more fear, then, that the infidel should pervert the Israelite, then hope that the Israelite should convert the infidel. But now, (to wit, now in the New Testament, now that the partition wall is broken down between Jew and Gentile, now that the Covenant is extended to every believer in each Nation, and to his seed) now God is a God to the seed of every believer as to himself, God hath promised to be a Father to his children; and so they are holy by the holiness of his Covenant? And if the children be holy, then the marriage fellowship of the Parents is sanctified to the believer, though the other yokefellow remain an infidel. And if the marriage fellowship be sanctified, then the married Parents may lawfully cohabit together, though the one a believer, the other an infidel. This is the plain meaning and scope of the Apostles words, and discourse. Which plainly and strongly holdeth forth, that the grace of the Covenant is extended to the children of believing Parents in the new Testament, as much as in the Old, yea and more too. For in the Old Testament the Covenant reached not to the children, in case an Israelite had children by a Pagan wife, (whether *Moabite*, *Ammonite*, or *Canaanite*) but now if either of the Parents be believers, and so in Covenant, let the other Pagan Parent be of what Nation soever, yet the children are in the Covenant, and so holy also.

Silvanus. These Scriptures which you have brought to prove that God hath made a Covenant of grace with believers and their seed, now in the days of the New Testament, I have heard sundry exceptions made against them. "As first touching the place in *Gal. 3:16.* It "is said, that if the place be well considered, it will help forward "the truth against the receiving of children non-elect into the "Covenant: For the Apostle here speaketh of the Covenant, as "comprehending Christ, and the seed in him elect, unto everlasting life. In which sense, the Covenant of grace was not made "to *Abraham*, and to all his seed without exception: for then all "his seed must either be saved, (which no man will say) or if they "perish, then must they fall out of the Covenant of grace. And "if neither, then there were some of the seed of *Abraham* comprehended in the Covenant in one sense, and admitted to the seal "thereof, whom God excepted against in another sense; some

“of which were *Ishmael* and *Esau*, who in *Abraham’s* generation signified a fleshly seed, as well as *Isaac* and *Jacob* a spiritual. Between which seeds God ever held forth a distinction in all generations, from *Abraham* until *Christ*, who put an end to the type and “the flesh, to all privileges of that nature thereunto belonging “2 *Cor.* 5:16. *Phil.* 3:3, 4, 5. So that now all is laid up in *Christ* only for such as believe.

Silvanus. It is a taking away from the Text, I mean a straitening of the sense of it, to say that *Paul* in *Gal.* 1:16. speaketh of the seed elect in *Christ* unto eternal life. For he speaketh of all the seed in *Christ*: now there are a seed in *Christ*, which are not elect in *Christ*, for *Christ* himself speaketh of branches in him (the true vine, the fat olive tree) which yet bare no fruit in him, and so are cut off from him, cast out and wither, *John* 15:2, 6. And such branches though they were in *Christ* by the fellowship of the Church, and by the Spirit conveying from *Christ* common graces to them, yet they were never elect in him to everlasting life, nor united to him by a lively faith. For if they had been so in him, they had never been cut off from him.

It is true, the Covenant of grace was not to all the seed of *Abraham* without exception; that is, to such of the seed as rejected the Covenant, or the faith of it, as *Ishmael* and *Esau* did in riper years. But the Covenant was to all the infant seed of *Abraham* without exception, and to all the infants of his believing seed. And the seal of the Covenant was in like sort dispensed to them all without exception, to *Ishmael* as well as to *Isaac*, to *Esau*, as well as to *Jacob*.

Yet nevertheless, it will not therefore follow, that some of the “seed of *Abraham* were comprehended in the Covenant, and admitted to the seal thereof in one sense, whom God excepted, against in another sense. For he excepted not against the infant seed of *Abraham*, or his family in any sense: but only against the seed apostate in elder years. In respect of which Apostacy (which God fore-knoweth, all the non-elect seed of *Abraham* will fall into) though God receive all the infant-seed of *Abraham’s* family (that is, of the Church) into the fellowship of the Covenant, and of the seal thereof, yet he giveth a peculiar blessing to the elect seed, even the sure mercies of his Covenant *Esa.* 55:2. And though you say, that between these two seeds, God ever held forth a distinction in all generations from *Adam* to *Christ*; yet that distinction was on-

ly this; the seed of all the flesh, and the seed of the promise, *Rom.* 9:8. But he excluded neither of them in their infancy from the Covenant, or from the seal of it: Indeed the children of the promise, being the elect of God, God hath not only given his Covenant to them and the seal thereof, but hath also established it unto them for ever. But the seed of the flesh, though the Lord gave his Covenant even unto them also, and the seal thereof; yet he hath not established it unto them forever; whence afterward it cometh to pass that they reject the Covenant and the faith of it. But “when you further say, that Christ hath put an end to the type, “and to the flesh, and to all privileges thereunto belonging; so “that now all is laid up in Christ only for such as believe, and for “that end quote *2 Cor.* 5:15. *Phil.* 3:3, 4, 5.

It is readily granted you, that Christ hath put an end to all types and to fleshly Ordinances, and to the purifying of the flesh, by the Ceremonies of the Law (*Heb.* 7:16. & 9:13.) But that Christ hath put an end to all privileges either of the Covenant, or of the seal of the Covenant to the seed of believers, there is no word in the New Testament that teacheth us any such doctrine; the places alleged (opened above by me) prove the contrary; and those alleged by you will not make good what you say, for the place in *2 Cor.* 5:16. that a man regenerate knoweth no man after the flesh, argueth only thus much, that a man in Christ resteth in no outward privileges, no not in seeing and knowing Christ in the flesh, nor in eating and drinking in his presence, nor in hearing him preach in their streets, but in the spiritual and lively fellowship of his death and resurrection, which maketh him whosoever knoweth Christ, a new Creature. And so say we too; and so it was with the faithful in the Old Testament as well as in the New. It was not the outward participation of the Covenant, nor of the seal of it, that a sincere Israelite could rest in, but in the grace of the Covenant, and Circumcision of the heart in the Spirit, not in the Letter. But this doth not at all argue, that the children of the faithful, who are yet in the flesh, are not partakers of the Covenant of grace, nor of the seal of it, now in the New Testament, at well as they were in the Old. But only argueth, that though before regeneration, men are apt to rest and boast in the outward Letter of privileges and Ordinances: yet after regeneration they do not acknowledge such things as their comfort and confidence. *John Baptist* endeavoured to beat off the Jews from resting in such outward

privileges, *Matth.* 3:9. And so did the Prophets before Christ, *Jerem.* 9:25, 26. as well as *Paul* after him, both in this place of the Corinthians, and that other which you quote out of *Phil.* 3:3, 4, 5.

“When you say, that now all is laid up in Christ only for such “as believe.

If you mean all spiritual blessings of life and salvation, you say true, but nothing to the question: For so it was in the Old Testament, as well as now. But as it was then, the seed of believers partaked of the outward dispensation of the Covenant, and of the seal of it; so is it still, unless, you could shew us some Scripture whereby they are more excluded now than in the old Testament.

Silvester. “Now first in Christ by faith, and then to the Covenant and “privileges thereof, *Gal.* 3:29. None by the Gospel are approved “to be the seed of *Abraham*, but only such as walk in the steps “of his faith. For as none invisibly before God are by him approved at all to have right to any privileges of grace, but only “as he looketh upon them in his Son: no more are there any “before man visibly to be approved of, so as to have right to the “same, but as they appear to be in Christ, by some effect of faith “declaring the same. And so much the more, in that God “excludeth all from his holy Covenant, so as to have right “in the outward dispensation thereof, but only such as believe, *Rom.* 11:20. *Heb.* 3:18. & 4:1, 2, 3. & 11:5, 6. *Rom.* 9:7, 8. *Gal.* “3:22, 26, 29.

Silvanus. Surely in the old Testament, the children of believers had first Christ by Covenant, and then faith also to receive him. For in the Covenant with *Abraham*, when God gave himself to be a God to him and his seed, the Father gave himself to be their Father, the Son to be their Redeemer, the holy Ghost to be their Sanctifier, when yet the children were unborn, without life, and therefore without faith. And surely in the New Testament God hath not changed this order of his blessings. For in rehearsing the Covenant (which continueth in the New Testament) he giveth the writing of the law in their hearts by Covenant, *Heb.* 8:10. Amongst which laws, surely the law of faith is one, and indeed the chief of all other laws. And therefore it is not as you say, first faith, and then to the Covenant; but first the Covenant, and then faith written and wrought in their hearts by his Spirit to fulfil his Co-

venant. The place which you quote in *Gal.* 3:29. doth not prove that none are the seed of *Abraham*, save those that be in Christ by faith. But that those who be in Christ by faith, they are that seed of *Abraham*, who partake in the sure mercies of the Covenant: who are therefore called heirs according to promise. The faithful seed of *Abraham*, they only partake in the sure mercies of the Covenant: so it is now in the New Testament, and so it was, and no otherwise in the Old; But that doth not at all hinder, but that all the seed of *Abraham*, though yet destitute of faith in their own persons, have right to the outward dispensation of the Covenant and to the seal of it.

“When you say, none are approved by the Gospel to be the seed of *Abraham*, but only such as walk in the steps of his faith; “the place whereto you allude, is in *Rom.* 4:12. which only holdeth forth, that such as walk in the steps of the faith of *Abraham*, they are the seed of *Abraham*, who are justified in the sight of God: for *Abraham* himself was so justified. And thus it is in the new Testament, and thus also it was in the Old: And yet *Abraham* then hid, and so have the faithful now, other seed who are partakers of the covenant, and of the seal of the covenanted yet are not justified for want of faith.

“You say, none invisibly before God, are by him approved at “all to have right to any privilege of grace, but only as he looketh upon them in his Son: no more are there any before men “visibly to be approved of, so as to have right to the same.

This saying (that none have right to any privilege of grace before God, but as he looketh upon them in his Son) it is true, rightly understood, but nothing availing to your purpose. If you mean by grace, saving grace, it is true; none have right to any privilege of living grace, but as God looketh at them in his Son, either by faith, or by election unto faith. If you mean by grace, the outward dispensation of the covenant of grace, and of the seal thereof, it is true, none have right to any privilege of the covenant, or of the seal of it, but as they are in Christ either by faith, or by election unto faith, or by their fellowship with the church, whereof Christ is the head. In which respect all the members of the church, and their seed are in Christ, as branches in the vine, or olive, and may be cut off from him for want of faith to make them fruitful in him. But what availeth this to your purpose? Thus it is in the new Testament, and thus it was in the Old.

“But when you say, none have right to the same, but as they “appear to be in Christ, by same effect of faith declaring the “same.

This you cannot make good from Scripture light. For though you say, that God excludeth all from his holy covenant, so as to have right in the outward dispensation thereof but only such as believe.

And to prove that, you allege many Scriptures; yet none of them bear witness to any such matter. All the Scriptures which you allege will easily prove one of these two things, (both which we willingly grant) First, that some branches in Christ were broken off from Christ, though not through want of faith, but yet through infidelity, rejecting the faith of Christ, either in themselves or in their parents. Secondly, that through faith we receive the spiritual saving blessings of the covenant, and through want of faith fall short of them; both which are everlasting truths, as well before *Christ* as since.

To run over all your places briefly, that you may see how your Leaders mis-lead both themselves and you. In *Rom.* 11:20. it is said, the Jews were broken off through unbelief: So the word is translated; but the true sense of it is, through infidelity: and so the same word is translated, *2 Cor.* 6:15. What part hath a believer with an infidel? The meaning of that place in the *Romans* is, the Jews were broken off from *Christ*, and from their church-estate and Covenant in him, by their professed infidelity, their open rejection of *Christ* and his righteousness, and that not out of ignorance, but out of wilfull obstinacy against the light of the gospel revealed to them. For the Apostles still kept communion with them, as with a church, a people in covenant with God, notwithstanding their want of faith in *Christ*; yea, notwithstanding their crucifying of *Christ*, until they wilfully & obstinately rejected and persecuted the Gospel of grace, and the righteousness of it, *Acts* 13:45, 46. And persisting therein, then indeed they were broken off; but yet this argueth that they were in Christ before; or else how could they now be broken off? Your next place is quoted out of *Heb.* 3:18. where the Israelites are said to fall short of their entrance into *Canaan* because of their unbelief; the word is as before, because of their infidelity. For it is not likely that all the Israelites who wanted saving faith, were kept out of *Canaan*: *Achan* who troubled Israel, doth not appeare to be a true believer. But

the body of them who were kept out of *Canaan*, had carried themselves like infidels, they thought scorn of the land of promise, and preferred Pagan *Egypt* before it. And therefore for resisting the promise and the faith of it, were justly rejected from entering into *Canaan*. But what maketh this to the purpose in hand? how doth this prove, that in the Gospel God excludeth all from his holy Covenant, and from right in the outward dispensation of it, save only such as believe? For all these were in the Covenant, and had been circumcised in *Egypt* and so had the privilege of the outward dispensation therof, though they believed not: Besides, this concerned the times of the Old Testament; of which yourself and your leaders confess, that the outward dispensation of the Covenant, and of the seals of it pertained, not only to the spiritual & believing seed, but to the carnal also. Your next place in *Heb.* 4. 1, 2, 3. proveth only, that such as do not mix the word with faith, will fall short of entering into God's rest. So it was in the Old Testament, as well as in the New. And the Apostle himself doth so express it; The Word (saith he) which was preached to them, (to wit, the Israelites in the old Testament) did not profit them, because it was not mixed with faith in them that heard it: From whence he also argueth, that neither will the Word, preached to us now, profit us, if it be not mixed with Faith. But what maketh this to prove that God excludeth all from the outward dispensation of his holy Covenant, but only such as believe? Is it all one to partake in the outward dispensation of God's Covenant, and to enter into God's rest? or to profit by the Word? your Leaders should make more conscience of alleging and applying God's holy Word impertinently, impertinently I say, both to God's meaning, and to their own: which is one kind (but too frequent) of taking God's holy name in vain.

The next place which you quote out of *Heb.* 11:5, 6. shewed us, that without faith it is impossible to please God; which argueth indeed, that no man either in his person, or in his work can be acceptable to God without faith: but doth not prove that God cannot receive any into the outward fellowship of the Covenant without faith; much less doth it prove, that the New Testament doth exclude all unbelievers from the Covenant, more then did the Old Testament, for those words in *Hebrews* 11:5, 6. were spoken of *Enoch*, who (I need not tell you) lived in the days of the Old testament.

Your next place in *Rom.* 9:7, 8. sheweth indeed, that all the children of the flesh of *Abraham*, are not the elect seed of *Abraham*, (which we willingly grant) but doth not shew, that the children of *Abraham's* flesh, were not the seed of *Abraham's* Covenant. Many were called and received into his Covenant, who yet were not chosen to partake in the sure mercies and everlasting blessings of the Covenant.

Your next place out of *Gal.* 3:22, 26, 29. argueth the same that the former places have done, that believers are partakers of Christ by faith, and of adoption by Christ; that they are the justified seed of *Abraham*, and heirs according to promise. So was it in the Old Testament, and so is it still to this day. But this doth not “prove now, no more then it did then, that all are excluded from “the outward dispensation of the Covenant but believers only. “But notwithstanding all this, though the Covenant which “God made with *Abraham* before *Christ*, and this under *Christ*, “be in some respect in substance the same, yet in the outward dispensation and profession of them, the difference will appear “to be very great, both in respect of persons and things, where— “in our dissent chiefly lieth. 1. That Covenant admitted of a “fleshly seed, this only of a spiritual, *Gen.* 17. *Rom.* 9. 2. That “in the flesh, this in the heart, *Gen.* 17:13. with *Jer.* 3:5, 6. *Rom.* “2:28, 29. 3. The seal and ordinances of that Covenant confirmed faith in things to come; this, in things already done. “4. That Covenant was National, and admitted all of the Nation to the seals thereof: but this personal, and admitteth none “but such as believe. 5. That Covenant begot children after “the flesh, as all *Abraham's* natural posterity: But this only be— “gets children after the Spirit, and only approveth of such as “are begotten and born from above, in whose hearts God writeth his Law, *Jer.* 31. *Ezek.* 36. *Heb.* 8. *John* 3:5, 6. That “Covenant with *Abraham* and his posterity, comprehended “a civil state, and worldly government, with the like carnal subjects for the service of the same: But this Covenant now under *Christ* comprehendeth only a spiritual state, and an heavenly government, with the like spiritual subjects for the service of this also. 7. That Covenant held forth *Christ* in the “flesh to the heart veiled; this holdeth him forth after the Spirit “to a face open, 2 *Cor.* 3. In all I understand the visible profession “of the Covenant, and the outward dispensation of the privileges thereof.

Silvanus. There is indeed some difference between the Covenant made not only with *Abraham* in the Old Testament, and with us in the New; but also in the Old Testament, between that made with *Abraham*, and that with his posterity. And yet the Covenant both in the old Testament, and in the New, both to *Abraham* and his posterity: yea, and to us also, one and the same for substance, to wit, God to be a God to believers and to their seed. To *Abraham* some blessings were given by this Covenant, which were not given to all his posterity, as to be the Father of Christ, to be the Father of many Nations. To some of his posterity, and not to all; it was given to enjoy the land of *Canaan* for an inheritance: which in the Letter belongeth not unto us, though in the spiritual Antitype we also in the New Testament partake therein, in that it is given to believers and our seed to enjoy the inheritance of the church whereof *Canaan* was a type. Besides that Covenant made with the seed of *Abraham* by *Jacob*, admitted the holding forth of Christ in sundry veils and shadows which were not given to *Abraham*; and from us in the New Testament they are taken away.

But nevertheless, the differences which you put between the Covenant with *Abraham* and with us, so far as they are brought to exclude the seed of believers from the fellowship of the Covenant, they will not stand nor abide trial by the Scriptures.

Seven differences you put, let us weigh them in the balance of the Sanctuary, and see if they be not too light.

“First, say you, that Covenant admitted of a fleshly seed; this only of a spiritual, *Gen. 17.* with *Rom. 9.*

Answ. The place in the Romans speaketh of the seed of promise to be the seed of *Abraham*, and to be accounted not only in the New Testament, but in the Old also. For the Oracle (in *Isaac* shall thy seed be called, *Rom. 9:7.*) was given to *Abraham* in the Old Testament, *Gen. 21:12.* And that after *Ishmael* was cast out of the Covenant for his mocking and persecuting of *Isaac*. So that this Scripture in *Rom. 9:15.* it three ways wrested and wronged in this Quotation.

First, in that it is brought to prove, that the Covenant of grace in the days of the new Testament admitteth only of a spiritual seed, whereas *Paul* speaketh not of the Covenant of grace, but of the election of grace.

Secondly, in that the place is brought to shew what it now the

seed in the New Testament different from that of the Old; whereas *Paul* speaketh of the same seed both in the Old and New Testament alike.

Thirdly, in that *Ishmael* is accounted by you as a fleshly seed, and so as rejected out of the Covenant from the womb; whereas he was not cast out of the Covenant till himself cast off the Covenant by mocking and persecuting *Isaac*.

“The second difference you put is, that that Covenant in the old Testament was in the flesh; this in the heart, *Gen. 17:13** with *Jer. 31:33. Rom. 2:28, 29.*

Answ. This difference is put by you, but not by the Spirit of God in Scripture. For as that Covenant (that is, the sign of the Covenant) was in the flesh: so is Baptism (the sign of the Covenant now) upon the flesh.

Secondly, as our Baptism signifieth and sealeth the washing away of the filth of flesh and spirit; so did their circumcision of the flesh signify and seal the circumcision of the heart, *Deut. 30.6.*

Thirdly, as in our Baptism the Lord doth not regard nor esteem the outward washing of the flesh, (*1 Pet. 3:21.*) So neither was the circumcision of the flesh without circumcision of the heart of any account before God, either before Christ, or since. It was not only so adjudged in *Paul's* time in the New Testament, that Circumcision of the flesh, was nothing without Circumcision of the heart, but also in *Jeremiah's* time in the Old Testament. For *Jeremiah* threatened that God will punish the circumcised with the uncircumcised, *Egypt, Edom, Ammon, and Moab* with *Judah*: for all these Nations are uncircumcised; & all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart, *Jer. 9:25, 26.* It hath been said of old, shall a man make Gods to himself, and they are no Gods? So may it be said in some proportion, shall a man make differences to himself to turn him off from the way of God, and they are no differences?

To the third, there is as little difference in that as in the former: for as the seal of that Covenant confirmed faith in things to come, but the seal of this confirms faith in things already done: so the seal of that Covenant confirmed the faith of *Abraham* in the righteousness of faith, which he had already received; and the faith of those that were in *Canaan* of the possession of it: And our Baptism sealeth up to us mortification of sin, deliverance out of affliction, resurrection of the body, whereof some are yet to come

in part, some wholly. The like may be said of the other Ordinances of the Covenant. But what is it to the purpose? what if sundry ordinances of the Covenant, as it was dispensed in the old Testament) confirmed faith in things to come? and what if the Ordinances of the New Testament confirmed faith in things past? yet what is this to argue that children of believing parents are excluded from the Covenant of grace in the new testament, though not in the Old?

“To the fourth, when you say, that Covenant was National, “and admitted all of the Nation to the seals thereof: But this “personal, and admitteth of none but such as believe.

This difference is founded in an untruth: for it is untrue, that the Covenant given to *Abraham* was National, it was rather domestic at first: and did not comprehend the whole Nation of any of *Abraham's* seed, till *Jacob's* time. And *Jacob* speaketh of his blessing (which was a proper adjunct, and peculiar privilege of the Covenant.) that it did exceed the blessing, and to the Covenant) of his progenitors, &c. 49:26. For whereas in *Abraham's* house, though *Isaac* was received to the blessing of continuance in the Covenant, yet *Ishmael* and the seed of *Keturah* were excluded: and in *Isaac's* house, though *Jacob* inherited the blessing, yet *Esau* was excluded, yet in *Jacob's* family all his sons were received to the blessing of continuance under the outward dispensation of the Covenant, and not themselves only, but all their posterity, the whole twelve Tribes, which proceeded from them, Now it is not said in Scripture, that the blessing of *Jacob* is come upon the Gentiles, (for then none of our post might cut themselves off from the outward dispensation of the Covenant, and then our Covenant would be National, and admit all of the Nation to the seals thereof) but the Scripture saith, that the blessing of *Abraham* and so the Covenant of *Abraham*) is come upon the Gentiles, *Gal.* 3:14. that is, upon the believing Gentiles, and their seed, whereby it cometh to pass, that believing Gentiles, and their Infant-seed are admitted to the Covenant, and to the seal of the Covenant, as *Abraham* and his Infant seed were: But if when they be grown up to years, they shall grow to mock and sleight the Covenant, as *Ishmael* and *Esau* did, then they and their seed are cast out of the Covenant, and that keepeth the Covenant from being national. And so it was in *Abraham's* time, & so it is now.

“When you say, this Covenant with us is personal and admitteth only of such as believe.

It hath been, refuted above, and this truth cleared, that upon the faith of the Parents, the grace of the Covenant is promised also unto their seed. And if the Covenant did admit only of such as believe, then the faith whereby we believe, were not given to any by Covenant. Whereas it hath been shown above, that faith, and the saving knowledge of God by faith, and the writing of the Law of faith (as well as of love) in our hearts is given by Covenant, *Jer.* 31:33, 34.

Your fifth difference is like the rest, devised in your own imagination, not founded in Scripture. “That Covenant (say you) “begot children after the flesh; but this only begets children after the Spirit, and only approveth of such as are begotten and “born from above, &c.

Ans. Do you any where read in Scripture, that the Covenant of *Abraham* approved of any then, more then now, but such as are begotten from above? Did not *Abraham* and *Israel* of old renounce the owning and acknowledgement of such children of theirs, as were degenerate from their faith and obedience? *Esay* 63:16.

When you say that that Covenant begot children after the flesh, do you not mean, that men under that Covenant begot children after the flesh? And if that be your meaning, do you think it is not so now, that men under the Covenant of grace, now in the days of the New Testament, as well as in the Old, do beget children after the flesh? It is true, those believing Parents who do beget children by believing the Promise and Covenant of grace to them and to their children they do bring forth, and bring up spiritual children, or as you call it, children after the Spirit. But so did *Abraham* and other faithful parents in the Old Testament, as well as now.

The places which you quote out of *Jer.* 31. *Ezek.* 36. *Heb.* 8. *Joh.* 3:5, 6. do neither prove your assertion, nor disprove ours, but rather approve it. For in *Jer.* 31. the Law of faith and saving knowledge is written in our hearts by the Covenant: so it is now in the New Testament, and so it was in the Old.

In *Ezek.* 36. God takes away the heart of stone, and gives an heart of flesh, and a new spirit; so he doth now to his chosen; and so he did then, *Numb.* 14:24. The place in the *Heb.* 8. is the same with that in *Jeremiah* 31. That in *John* 3:5, 6. argueth that none born of flesh can enter into the kingdom of heaven, but are

carnal and fleshly. But thus it was in the Old Testament, as well as in the New; there is no difference in this point.

“Your sixth difference is, that that Covenant with *Abraham* “and his posterity before Christ, comprehended a civil state, and “a worldly government, with the like carnal subjects for the ser- “vice of the same: But this Covenant now under Christ com- “prehendeth only a spiritual state, and an heavenly govern- “ment, with the like spirittiall subjects of this also.

Answ. 1. The Civil State and worldly government was not expressed in the Covenant given to *Abraham*, but in the Covenant, and blessing of *Jacob*. It was *Jacob* that blessed his son *Judah* with a scepter, *Gen.* 49:10. But to *Abraham* it was foretold, that his seed should be a stranger and a servant, and in an afflicted estate 400 years. And though the Lord did not deny them civil government, yet neither did he expretly promise it to his seed. And (as was said above) it is the blessing of *Abraham* that is come upon up, and not of *Jacob*, so far as that of *Jacob*, exceeded the blessing of his progenitors.

Answ. 2. It is more then can be proved, that the Covenant of *Abraham*, and his posterity after Christ, doth not comprehend a civil State: for the prophecy of *Daniel* promiseth, that after the “destruction of the four Monarchies, the Kingdom and the Domi- “nion, and the greatness of the Kingdom under the whole hea- “ven shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, &c. “*Dan.* 7:27.

Answ. 3. Civil State and Government is but an accessary to the Covenant; And though the people of God in the new Testa- ment should never enjoy it, (which is not to be granted:) yet what is this to the main promise of the Covenant, That God will be a God to his people, and to their seed, throughout all generati- ons?

The seventh and last difference which you put is as little pertinent “to the cause, as all the former. For what if that Covenant held “forth Christ in the flesh to an heart veiled? And this holdeth him “forth in the Spirit to a face open, *2 Cor.* 3.

Yet this argueth only a different dispensation of the Covenant by *Moses* and by *Christ*; But the Covenant of *Abraham* which was given 430 years before the Covenant of *Moses* did not so veil, nor darken the face of Christ, but that *Abraham* saw Christ though a far off, yet, clearly, and rejoiced, *John* 8:56. And so did all his

spiritual seed after him, more or less, as well as we. But what if the dispensation of the Covenant had been more veiled in all the times of the Old Testament to all the seed, then indeed it was? yet what is this to the main promise of the Covenant, that God will be a God to a believer and his seed, throughout all generations?

Silvester. “But let the differences of the Covenant before or since *Christ*, “stand or fall as they may: yet it is no good consequence from “the Covenant, that as infants were in that Covenant then, and “circumcised, so infants are in the Covenant now, and to be baptized. For let these four things be well considered, and they “will clear the contrary.

“1. What the Covenant is?

“2. What is that which admits into the Covenant?

“3. Who are the true approved subjects of the Covenant?

“4. Whether all have not one and the same way of entrance into this Covenant?

Silvanus. What do you take the Covenant to be?

Silvester. The Covenant it self is a Covenant of grace and salvation, “by which God of his grace takes a person or a people to himself “above all others, to be their God, and to manifest upon them the “riches of his grace and glory.

“And the manner of this is in effect, God’s calling of a man to “an agreement with himself in his Son, wherein he promiseth to “be his God, and to give him life and happiness, and all things “in Christ; and that he shall believe and rest upon his faithfulness and truth, and so take him for his God, &c. So that the “Covenant consisteth of 3. Essentials: 1. The persons (two “or more disposed) to agree. 2. Something to agree upon. “3. Their mutual consent, which is the agreement it self.

Silvanus. As the heavens are higher then the earth, so are the ways of God higher then our ways, (*Esa.* 55:9.) and in special the ways of his grace, and of the Covenant thereof, with men indeed mutual agreement and content is necessary to a Covenant, but with God, God’s appointment maketh a Covenant, whether the creature consent to an agreement or no. God sometimes made a Covenant, and established it, not only with *Noah* and his seed, but also with the Fowls and Beasts, and every living creature, that he would never send a flood to destroy them from off the face of the earth, *Gen.* 9:9, 10, 11. And this Covenant was only an appointment of God,

it did not require any consent or agreement of man, much less of other creatures, to make it a Covenant. It is therefore a manifest error, to make the agreement or consent on man's part essential to a Covenant between God and man.

It is a second error, that in describing the Covenant of grace, you omit the seed of believers, & exclude them from the fellowship of the Covenant, as being unable to express their consent and agreement to the Covenant. Let it be considered in the fear of God, whether ever God made any Covenant with any man or people, which did not comprehend their posterity also? God made a Covenant with *Noah* did it not reach his posterity also? *Gen. 9.* God made a Covenant with *Abraham*, *Gen. 17.* did it not reach his posterity also? God made a Covenant with the people of Israel, *Exod. 19.* did it not reach their posterity also? God made a Covenant with *Phineas*, *Numb. 25.* did it not reach to his posterity also? God made a Covenant with *David*, *Psal. 89:28.* did it not reach to his posterity also? If then the Scripture never hold forth any Covenants which ever God made with any of the sons of men, but it did reach and comprehend his posterity also; why should the Covenant of grace be conceived to run a different course from all the rest of God's covenants, namely, to reach unto believers, but not to their posterity? We are shallow and narrow our selves, and so we measure the grace of God, and the Covenant thereof, according to our own scantling, our narrow capacity. Proceed then to declare, what is "the second thing you wished it might be well considered: to wit, "what is that which admits into the Covenant?

Silvester. "That which admits any into the Covenant, and giveth right "to enter thereinto, is the promise of God in Christ, and faith in "the same, as *Nehem. 8.* The Covenant hath these essential parts and visible branches. 1. Grace in the agent, God. 2. Faith in the subject, Man. 3. An uniting or closing of these together: which "that mutual consent and agreement, by faith in the same grace "revealed by the gospel, which is the word of reconciliation. So "that it is the blessed word of life and faith in the same, that gi- "veth right and admitteth into Covenant with God.

Silvanus. We deny not that faith in the subject doth admit into the Covenant rightly understood; to wit, faith in Christ, and in the word of reconciliation, admitteth not only the faithful person, but his seed also (though yet wanting faith) into the Covenant. The text which you quote against it, (as it usually falleth out) maketh

“strongly for it: the words are plain, thou foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a Covenant with him, to give to his seed the land of the *Canaanites*. And your self with your Leaders do easily acknowledge that in the old Testament, the Covenant of *Abraham* admitted his carnal seed into the fellowship of it. And doubtless *Nehemiah* speaketh of *Abraham*, and of his faithful heart, and holy Covenant, as it stood in the days of the Old Testament. How cometh it then to pass, that his faithful heart, whereby he received the Covenant to himself and his seed, should be alledged to prove, that the faith of *Abraham* admitted him into the Covenant, but not his seed? But proceed to your third thing which you would have to be well considered, and consider (I pray you) how far off it is from concluding your purpose.

Silvester. “The third thing to be considered, is, who are the approved subjects of this Covenant; and they are only such as believe. “For God in his Word approveth of none in Covenant with him “out of Christ, nor of any in Christ without faith. Nay, God “denieth his approving of any in fellowship with him, that do “not believe, as *John* 3:5, 6, 36. *Heb.* 11:6. Nor doth he approve “of any subjects of his gracious Covenant, but only such as he “hath elected and chosen in Christ, and so appearing by some “fruits and effects of the same, as these Scriptures (with many other) witness, *Rom.* 8. 9:20, 30. *Rom.* 11:7. *Ephes.* 1:4, 5, 6. 2 *Thes.* 2:13, 14. 1 *Pet.* 1:2. *Acts* 2:47. & 13:48.

Silvanus. There is a broad difference between these two; who are the true approved subjects of this Covenant; and who are approved to be the true subjects of this Covenant. For it is certain (and your self admitted it above) that God approved all the seed of *Abraham* (even his carnal seed) to be admitted as subjects of the covenant and of the seal thereof. But it is certain, that God never approved such true subjects of the Covenant, whom himself never elected, nor themselves ever received the gift of faith, without which it is impossible to please God. Many are truly called to the fellowship of the Covenant, and of the seal thereof, who were never elected nor approved in their spiritual estate as heirs of salvation. It is in the same sense, that *Paul* speaketh (*Rom.* 2:28, 29.) He is not a Jew, which is one without, neither is that Circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and Circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit,

whose praise (or which shall one, whose approbation) is not of men, but of God. But dare any man therefore infer, that God did not approve it, that any should be admitted unto the Covenant of *Abraham*, or unto the seal thereof (Circumcision:) unless he were a Jew, or Israelite within, and circumcised with the circumcision of the heart? To what purpose then are all the texts of Scripture alleged by you? which prove no more then we acknowledge, that by natural generation all men are carnal; that without faith it is impossible to please God; that whom God electeth he calleth; that the election obtaineth what they seek for; that the elect are chosen to be holy, and partaker; of the sprinkling of the blood of Christ; that the elect are brought onto faith. But what is all this to prove that such as are carnal by natural generation, cannot be holy by the grace of the covenant? or that it may not please God to admit them to the outward dispensation of his Covenant, whose inward spiritual estate he is not pleased with.

Surely all the Israelites in the wilderness were sometimes admitted into Covenant with God: yet with many of them God was not pleased, *1 Cor.* 10:5. What though most whom God electeth he calleth (to wit, by an effectual calling, according to his purpose:) yet may he not, yea, doth he not call many to place in his vineyard, (the Church) yea, so office also whom he hath not chosen? *Matth.* 20:16. What though the elect obtain (what they seek for) the sure mercies of the Covenant, and the rest come to be hardened? May not therefore the non-elect partake in the outward dispensation of the Covenant, and yet afterwards be hardened in hypocrisy? What though the elect only come on to believe, though not with a justifying faith, yet with an historical and temporary faith? May they not be holy by Covenant who yet are not holy by the Spirit of Regeneration? May they not be sprinkled with the blood of sprinkling unto the common graces of the Spirit (*Heb.* 10:29.) who yet are not sprinkled therewith to the remission of their sins? Finally, what though it be said, the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved, *Acts* 2:47? were not *Ananias* and *Sapphira* added also, and *Simon Magus* too, who yet (for ought that appeareth) were not of them saved?

Proceed we then to the fourth thing, which you wish might be well considered, and see if there be any more weight in that.

Silvester. "The fourth and last is, whether that all persons now in the

“Gospel, have not one and the same way of entrance into the covenant? let the holy Word of God be judge, and I find the Gospel of Christ to approve of none in the Lord’s holy Covenant of grace, but such as believe: nor any approved of to be in the way of life, but such as are in Christ by Faith. And therefore no other way of coming into the Covenant of grace and salvation, but only by Jesus Christ; for in him are all the promises confirmed, and made over only unto such as do believe, as *2 Corinth. 1:20. Rom. 10:4. 1 John 5:11, 12. Rom. 8:9.*

You now labour again of the same fallacy, which was noted in you before. It is readily granted you, that the Gospel of Christ approveth of none in the Lord’s Covenant, but such as believe.

Neither did the Old Testament approve any in the Lord’s Covenant, but such as believed. But as hath been said, it is one thing to approve them in the Covenant, another thing to approve them to be in the Covenant. See it in a similitude, God did never approve either *Saul* or *Jehu* in the Kingdom of Israel; yet he did approve it that both of them should be admitted to the kingdom. So is it here, God did never approve *Ishmael* in *Abraham’s* home, nor *Esau* in *Isaac’s*. And yet he approved it, that they should be in their Father’s houses, and also be admitted to the Covenant of their Fathers, and to the seal thereof, till their own profaneness cast them out.

“And therefore what though there be no other way of coming into the Covenant of grace, but only by Jesus Christ? And what though in Christ all the promises are confirmed, and made over only which as believe? Yet nevertheless Christ hath opened a way for the coming of the Covenant and promises through him self, not only to such as believe, but also (for their sakes) to their children and households. In the Old Testament God prospered *Ishmael* for *Abraham’s* sake, *Gen. 21:13, 17, 18, 19, 20.* In the New Testament God visited with grace and salvation, the Families of *Zacheus*, and of the Jailor for the householders sake, *Luke 19:9. Acts 16:31.*

Silvester. “The holy Covenant consisteth of three essentials for entrance thereinto. First, the word of God to reveal the same. Secondly, Christ to open the way, and to enright the party therein. Thirdly, faith, without which none can enter thereinto, for as none can come unto God, or into Covenant with him,

“but by Christ; so none can come unto Christ, but by faith, *Joh.* 14:6. with *John* 6:44, 45. *Heb.* 11:6. Let all this be well considered, and then see how infants can be discovered to be in the Covenant, and what way of entrance hath God by his word appointed for them to come in, and denied the same onto other.

Silvanus. I will not strain at your word Essentials; though all things that are necessary to the entrance or being of a thing, are not straightway essential to it. God’s providence is necessary to the being and entrance of sin, but it is not essential to it. But I willingly admit of your three necessary ingredients for entrance into the Covenant, and find none of them wanting to enstate and interest the Infants of believing Parents into the Covenant.

First, the Word of God revealeth such a Covenant of grace, wherein God giveth himself to be a God to the faithful Parent, and to his seed. So he gave himself to faithful *Abraham* and to his seed, *Gen.* 17:7. This Covenant of *Abraham*, the Scripture revealeth to be come upon the believing Gentiles and their seed, as hath been shewed above.

Secondly, Christ himself hath opened the way to enright the children of believing Parents into the Covenant, by redeeming us (Gentiles, as well as Jews) from the curse of the Law, that the blessing of *Abraham* might come upon the Gentiles, *Gal.* 3:13, 14. And the blessing of *Abraham* is to a believer and his seed, *Gal.* 3:16. And this hath been further cleared above.

Thirdly, faith is not wanting, to enstate the seed of believing Parents into the Covenant, seeing God hath promised upon the faith of the Parent, salvation to his household, *Acts* 10:31. *Luke* 19:9.

“It is a vain exception to say, that if infants be entered into the Covenant by the faith of their Parents, that then they who be not naturally begotten and born in the Covenant, are denied the same way of entrance into the Covenant which is granted to infants.

For first, we do not say, that any man is naturally begotten and born in the Covenant: For the children of believing parents are naturally the children of wrath, as well as others, *Ephes.* 2:3. But yet nevertheless, though naturally they be the children of wrath, yet by virtue and grace of the Covenant, they are holy, 1 *Cor.* 7:14.

Secondly, though they who are not begotten and borne of faithful Parents, cannot plead right in the Covenant, by the faith of their Parents: yet they may claim it by their own faith, if God grant it to them. If not, it is no marvel to a Christian heart, that the faith of believing Parents conveyeth a greater blessing to their children, then unbelieving Parents can expect to themselves, or theirs. Doth not obedience to the Law convey a far greater blessing unto a godly man and his seed, even to a thousand generations, then a wicked carnal parent can expect to him and his? *Exod.* 20:5, 6. And if so, then doubtless the obedience of such may expect a far greater blessing to a believer and his seed, then an infidel or unbeliever can hope for in his natural and carnal estate and course to himself or his.

Silvester. “If infants be in the Covenant of grace by virtue of their birth from believing parents, then such infants are born in a saving state of grace, and were never out of the same. Which doctrine maketh void many heavenly and divine truths, which speak to the contrary: which lay all under sin and curse, till Christ by his blood redeem them, and by his heavenly voice call them, and by his Spirit beget them unto a lively hope: who are therefore said to be born again from above. For none can be under grace, and under wrath and curse at one and the same time, in the outward dispensation of the same.

Silvanus. It doth not follow that if infants be in the Covenant of grace by virtue of their birth from believing parents, then such infants are born in a saving state of grace. For the Covenant of grace doth not give saving grace to all that are in the Covenant, but only to the elect: Nor doth it give saving grace to them always in their birth, but in the season wherein the Lord in his purpose of election had fore-appointed to give it to the children whom God hath not elected. The Covenant of grace doth not give them saving grace at all, but only offereth it, and sealeth what it offereth.

Neither doth this make void any heavenly and divine truth at all. For though all be under sin and wrath and curse till Christ by his blood redeem them, and by his heavenly voice call them, by his Spirit beget them: yet Christ was a Lamb slain (in respect of the virtue and efficacy of his death) from the beginning of the world. And though elect vessels may be under the curse till they be called and regenerated from above, yet are they at one and the

same time under grace, but in diverse respects: Under the curse and wrath by nature under grace by the election of God, and the Covenant of their fathers. At one and the same time *Abiathar* was a man of death by desert, and yet by the King's favour a man of life, 1 *Kings* 2:26. The Israelites at one and the same time were enemies for our sakes, and yet beloved for their fathers sake, *Rom.* 11:28. And in very truth, if the elect children of God were not under grace before Christ call them by his heavenly voice, or before he regenerate them by his Spirit, how is it possible they should be effectually called, or regenerate at all? For in the fear of God consider, is not effectual calling a regeneration, a work of God's grace in Jesus Christ? is it not a fruit of God's electing and redeeming grace in Christ? The one wrought for us before the world was made, the other before we were born? And can the sin of our nature which followed after, extinguish or make void the grace of Christ, which was before all causes in us? If effectual calling and regeneration be the work of God's grace, then it is the effect of God's grace; and if it be the effect of God's grace, then the grace of Christ is the efficient cause of our effectual calling and regeneration; and the efficient cause is always in nature, and ordinarily in time before the effect. And therefore it cannot be, but that the elect children of God are under grace before their effectual calling and regeneration. It is not our Doctrine therefore but yours, that maketh void many heavenly and divine truths, even the fundamental truths of the free grace of Christ, which your predecessors in this way did plainly discern; and therefore "they thought it best not to contradict themselves as you do, To say, that children are not under grace, nor under a Covenant of grace, till they be called by Christ's heavenly voice, and by his Spirit begotten from above, and yet withal to grant election and regeneration to be of grace.

But they seeing plainly these could not stand together, the utterly denied election to be of grace, but of foreseen faith or works. And they denied regeneration to be of God's free grace, but of man's free will: which whether it make void many heavenly and divine truths of grace, let the word and Spirit of grace judge. Well, thus at large we have examined the exceptions, which you wish to be considered against some of those proofs from Scripture, which were alleged to confirm, that as in the Old Testament God made a Covenant with *Abraham* and his seed, so now

in the New Testament, the faithful inherit the same Covenant with us and our seed. But you said above, you had heard sundry exceptions against the rest of the proofs from Scripture, which were alleged to the same purpose. If you please, then let us now consider of those other exceptions, if there be any more weight in them then the former.

Silvester. It is true, I remember you alleged above, that speech of Christ to *Zacheus*, *Luke* 19:9. to prove, that when *Zacheus* was converted his household was received unto a Covenant of grace and salvation: Because Christ said, This day is salvation to this house, in as much as he also is the son of *Abraham*; you alleged also *Rom.* 11:27, 28. to prove that the Jews (the posterity of *Abraham*) will be converted to the faith, out of respect to the Covenant of their Fathers. And likewise you alleged the Apostles speech (in *1 Cor.* 7:14.) to prove that the faith of either Parent did bring their children under the holiness of the Covenant. And I said no more but truth; that I have heard some exceptions against all these proofs.

Silvanus. Let us hear and consider of them: And first what have you heard alleged against that proof from *Luke* 19:9?

Silvester. I cannot say that I have read the exception in any printed Book, but in conference I have heard it interpreted thus, This day is salvation come to this house, that is, Christ (who is salvation,) came into *Zacheus* his house, to dine with him, because *Zacheus* was now become a penitent and faithful child of *Abraham*.

Silvanus. This gloss if it had been printed, had been never a whit the more authentic interpretation, but only the more notorious corruption of the Text.

For 1. it is not said in the original, this day is salvation come to this house (though it be so translated) but this day salvation is to this house, which argueth, Christ spake not of his coming to dine in *Zacheus* his house; but of his salvation resting upon the family.

2. The reason which Christ giveth, why salvation is to the house, will not stand with the glosses for (saith he) salvation is to this house, inasmuch as he also is the son of *Abraham*. Now if *Zacheus* his becoming the son of *Abraham*, had been the reason of Christ his coming into his house to dinner, it would have argued that unless he had been a penitent convert, Christ would not have come into his house to dine. But the same evangelist

telleth us the contrary, That Christ went into the House of one of the Pharisees to dine with him, whom yet he sharply reproveth, as one whose inside was fall of ravening and wickednes, *Luke* 11:37, 38, 39.

But what exception have you heard or read against the conversion of the Jews, put of respect to the Covenant of their Fathers, according to *Rom.* 11:26, 27, 28?

Silvester. “I have read that there be divers difficulties that will not be granted about the Jews coming in; I shall therefore let that stand by until that time cometh, or till it be revealed from some Scripture how the same shall be.

Silvanus. The Books in which you read of divers difficulties about the Jews coming in; they speak not without cause, there be difficulties indeed about the same: And I may tell you more, they are difficulties impossible to be assoiled, according to the Tenents and Principles of those Books. For grant that for truth which the Apostle expressly teacheth for a Mystery, That after the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, (to wit, come in from their Antichristian Apostasy) that then all Israel shall be saved, (upon whom in the mean time blindness lieth, *Rom.* 11:25, 26.) And grant this also for a truth, (which the Apostle likewise expressly addeth, Verse 27, 28.) that this shall be out of respect of God’s love Covenanted with their Fathers, then this will prove a difficulty inexplicable, how God in the New Testament shall convert the posterity of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* out of his love to their Fathers, and yet no man is partaker of grace by the Covenant of his Fathers, till himself doth actually believe. For can men actually believe till they be converted? And is not conversion it self made a fruit and effect of God’s love? (his Covenanted love) unto their Fathers, and for the Fathers’ sake unto their seed?

Besides, this will be another difficulty (and as hard to be resolved as the former) how the Apostle can call the Jews the natural branches of the good Olive tree, and make their conversion much more kindly, and as it were, more easy and natural, then the conversion of the Gentiles was; and yet hold (as your Books do) that in the New Testament, God hath not respect in his Covenant to the natural seed or branches at all. It is easily acknowledged and justly bewailed by the fall of our first Parents, corruption of nature is alike in all men: Conversion unto grace is

as much above and against the corrupt nature of the Jews, as of the Gentiles. But yet presuppose a covenant of grace with the believing Ancestors of the Jews to continue in the days of the New Testament to their natural posterity. And then it will be easy to conceive how the Jews though by corrupt nature they are as averse to be grafted into Christ as the Gentiles be, yet by nature of the Covenant, they are much more easily grafted in then the Gentiles. More easily (I say) not in respect of their own εὐφύια (the goodness of their own nature, or natural disposition, and propension to grace, for they are naturally as stiffnecked as any people) but in respect of the nature and kind of the Covenant of grace given to their Ancestors, and to their seed: According to which God is more readily inclined to pour out the Spirit of his grace upon the seed and off-spring of his covenanted people, then upon strangers and aliens. But take away the Covenant of grace from believing parents to their children; and truly this difficulty of the more easy conversion of natural branches will prove (as the former did) inexplicable.

Moreover, there will yet be another difficulty (and a hard as both the former) how to make good sense of the Apostles Argument, whereby he proveth the conversion and holiness of the Jews in future ages, from the holiness of their godly Ancestors in times past: and yet deny (as your Books do) the continuance of the Covenant of grace, from believing Parents to their natural children now in the days of the New Testament. The Apostle in *Rom.* 11:11. and so forward, declaring the ends of the rejection of the Jews, he made this to be one, the reconciliati-
on and salvation of the Gentiles, to be a means to provoke the Jews to emulation, that at length they also might come on to salvation by the example of the Gentiles; which he further declar-
eth will be a great advantage to the Gentiles. And that he proveth *verse* 15. by an argument from the less to the greater: if the casting away of the Jews was the reconciling of the world, what (saith he) shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead? And that there shall be such a receiving of them; he proveth, from the holiness, which by the institution of God is derived from the first fruits to the whole lump; and by the Covenant of God from the root to the branches, *ver.* 16. For (saith he) if the first fruits he holy, so is the whole lump; and if the root be holy, so are the branches.

The force of this Argument dependeth upon the force of the Covenant of grace, and the continuance thereof from parents to their natural children, even now to the days of the New Testament, as well as of the Old. For by the tenor of the Covenant God is a God to holy Fathers, and to their seed after them. And if God be a God to their seed, it reacheth forth a twofold blessing to their seed, that all their seed are holy by God's adoption (Rom. 9:4) and so by their appropriation and relation unto God, till themselves do reject him.

Secondly, that some or other of them God will ever reserve (to wit, all the elect seed) to be called effectually to the fellowship of his holiness, and to the holiness of their holy Ancestors. And these blessings being presupposed and granted by Covenant, the Apostle's argument is plain and strong: That if the Patriarchs *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* be holy, (who were the first fruits, and the root of the house of Israel) then, as all the house of Israel were an holy people till they obstinately rejected the Lord Jesus. So will God reserve an elect seed of them to be called and received he fellowship of his holiness, and the holiness of their Ancestors in his due time. But if you abrogate the continuance of the Covenant of grace from holy Parents to their natural children now in the days of the New Testament, it will be a difficulty (in my weak judgement) past all resolution, how the Apostle's argument can be of any force to prove the conversion of the Jews unto holiness from the holiness of their Ancestors, seeing their Ancestors are no first fruits and root unto them, till they come to be converted, and being converted, do believe as well as their Ancestors. And whether ever they will come to be converted or no, is as uncertain (for all their relation to their holy Ancestors, and for all their Ancestors' Covenant with God) as is the conversion of any other Infidels.

Silvester. "The Gospel holdeth forth *Abraham* for a root of Jews and "Gentiles: and that is only in respect of his faith and faithful-
"nesses and so is he the pattern and Father of the faithful, that
"resemble him in the same. So that Jews and Gentiles are *A-*
"*braham's* branches, only as they spring out of the same root
"by faith, which declares them to be his true natural branches,
"so far only as they appear to be of the same faith as he
"was. But now for the Jews, that they were broken off, it was
"only for want of their actual believing the Gospel, (as *Rom.*

“11.) and opposing the same, *Acts* 15:46. And so were the “Gentiles received in, only upon their actual believing and receiving the same. For as the Word condemneth none, but “with respect to actual sin; no more doth the Word justify “any, (Jews or Gentiles) but with respect to actual Faith. And “as every one’s own faith inrighteth to life; so everyone’s own faith “inrighteth to the privileges of life.

Silvanus. It is true, the Gospel holdeth forth *Abraham* for a Father, and so for a root both to Jews and Gentiles that believe, *Rom.* 4:11, 12. But in *Rom.* 11:16. the Apostle holdeth forth *Abraham* as the root of the Jews who were his natural branches, not by faith, as you would have it, but by natural generation through grace born under his Covenant, in opposition to the Gentiles, yea, to the believing Gentiles. For he maketh the rejection of the Jews, a means of the conversion of the Gentiles: and the conversion of the Gentiles a means of the conversion of the Jews at last: and the conversion of the Jews a means of awakening and reviving of the Gentiles, *verse* 15. And this he proveth from the holiness of their root *Abraham*: and thereupon inferreth the calling on of the Jews unto holiness, *verse* 16. And though for the present the Jews be as branches broken off through their infidelity? and the Gentiles by faith received into their place, *verse* 17. yet he exhorteth them not to boast against the Jews, *verse* 18. nor to be high minded in themselves, *verse* 20. For if the Gentiles, which had been branches of the olive tree wild by nature, were contrary to nature grafted into the good olive tree; then much more shall the Jews, which are the natural branches, be grafted into their own Olive tree, *verse* 34. which argueth evidently, that he speaketh of the Jews as the natural branches of *Abraham*, and that not by faith (for then why were they broken off? as it is said God spared not the natural branches, *verse* 21.) but by natural generation born (through grace) both of the loins and Covenant of *Abraham*; and so their conversion is inferred to proceed more kindly and naturally, then did the conversion of the *Romans* and other Gentiles. For they were not cut off from the wild olive, as the Gentiles were: but only broken off from the good olive for a season, that they might much more readily and freely be grafted into their own olive again; to wit, with much more liberty and free passage of grace, in the channel of the Covenant.

“Again it is not true, that you say, that the Jews were broken off “only for their want of actual believing the Gospel, and for “their opposing of the same simply. For *Stephan* beareth witness against them, they had resisted the holy Ghost from the days of their Fathers. And that there was none of the Prophets, but whom their Fathers had persecuted, as themselves had also betrayed and murdered the Lord Jesus, *Acts* 7:51, 52. But yet after all this actual unbelief in Christ and their opposition against *Christ*, the Apostles still kept communion with them as the Church and people of God (as hath been shewed above) *Acts* 3:1. & 13:15, 26, until they did not only not believe, and actually oppose the Gospel, but wilfully and obstinately, malignantly and blasphemously resist and persecute the clear light of the Gospel, *Act.* 13: 45, 46. And as upon the Parents actual malicious persecution of the Gospel, not only themselves, but their children also were cast out of the Covenant, who had yet no hand in their parents blasphemy and persecution; so the Gentiles upon their actual believing and profession of the faith, they were received into Covenant, and by like proportion their children also, who did not express their actual faith for receiving in, who more then the children of the Jews did express their actual unbelief for their casting off.

Again, it is not true that you say, the Word condemneth none but for actual sin. For by the offence of one (to wit, of the first *Adam*) judgement or guilt came upon all men to condemnation, *Rom.* 5:18. And by that one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, even upon them that had not sinned, after the similitude of *Adam* transgression, (to wit, actually, and of their own accord, as *Adam* did) *Rom.* 5:12, 14.

“And whereas you say, the Word doth not justify any, but with “respect to actual faith:

There is an ambiguity in your word, actual faith; for actual faith may be meant, either faith actually indwelling in the heart; or faith actually expressing it (else in some acts or fruits of profession. If you mean actual faith in the former sense, it is true what you say, but nothing to the purpose. For though God doth not justify any but with respect to actual faith; yet many are within the Covenant whom God doth not justify; else all the house of Israel, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, and with whom

God was not pleased, had been all of them justified, for they were all in the Covenant. If you mean actual faith in the latter sense, your speech is untrue. For God doth justify many, whose faith doth not actually express itself in fruits of profession. For they who are filled with the holy Ghost from the womb (as *John Baptist*, and *Jeremiah* were) they are sanctified: And they who are sanctified, are also justified: And yet their faith did not at that age express it self actually in fruits of profession.

“Neither is it a commodious or true speech, that as every “man’s own faith in Christ enrichts him to life; so every “man’s own faith in Christ enrichts him to the privileges of “life.

For faith it self is the life of the soul (the just man liveth by his faith:) and is it a convenient speech, yea, is it not absurd to say, faith enrichts to it self? But what is it that enrichts to faith, and and so to life by faith? Is it not the Covenant of grace, by which God hath promised to write his Law (even the Law of faith, as well as of all holiness) in the hearts of the chosen children of his Covenant? *Jer. 31:33*.

As for the privileges of life, if you mean justification, glorification, and the saving mercies of the Covenant, your speech is true, every man’s own faith enrichts him to them; but that is nothing to the purpose. For many have had right in the Covenant, who yet have fallen short of the sure mercies of the Covenant. But if you mean by the privileges of life, the Covenant, and the seal of it, it is not true, that every man’s faith, (and none else) enrichts him to such privileges of life. For the faith of *Abraham* enrichted *Ishmael*, and the faith of *Isaac* enrichted *E-sau* to the Covenant, and to the seal thereof (Circumcision) and not their own faith, which they never had.

Silvester. “The general scope of the Apostles discourse in this 11 Chapter “to the *Romans*, is concerning the breaking off of the Jews, and “the occasion thereof, as also their calling by the Gospel. Now “the Jews were the people of God in a twofold consideration.

“First, as a National people descending from the loins of “*Abraham* by natural generation after the flesh.

“Secondly, some of them God owned in a more special “manner, with reference to his gracious Covenant made with “*Abraham*, and established with *Isaac*, and his seed after him for “an everlasting Covenant: which cannot be the estate of the

“whole Nation; for then all of them had been in a true saving
 “estate of grace; and so all saved: or else fallen from grace: But
 “in this whole body there was a Church consisting of an holy
 “Assembly of Worship and Worship is, a spiritual state; all
 “the whole body with these held communion together, because
 “God took into one body, that whole Nation for his own peo-
 “ple. And all these springing out of *Abraham’s* loins, did
 “assume to themselves an equal right and privilege in God’s
 “gracious Covenant made with *Abraham* and his seed, supposing
 “God had bound his Covenant generally upon him and his seed,
 “in his natural generation after the flesh. But God respected
 “in the same only his chosen in Christ with whom he confir-
 “med his Covenant with *Isaac* in reference to Christ, *Gen. 17.*
 “*Gal. 3.*

“Whom in God’s own time he calleth to the faith; and these
 “the Apostle ever defends against the general rejection of that
 “Nation. For though such were rejected as were not elected,
 “yet this made not the promise of God of none effect to those
 “who stood firm in the Covenant by grace in Christ Jesus, as
 “branches in their root, which grace the rest opposed, and were
 “cast off for their unbelief, And when the fulness of God’s time
 “is come to call them to belief, they shall be received again into
 “their former estate, as alive from the dead, as *Rom. 11:23, 24.*
 “*Luke 15:24.* Therefore the Apostle after he hath proved the
 “rejection of the Jews, he labours to make good the faithful-
 “ness of God in his promise of grace, and the effectual power
 “of the Gospel in the saving, effects thereof, in such as believe
 “through grace, though the Jews in their National respect
 “were rejected, and few of them gained to the truth. And he
 “giveth a reason of it thus: Though the Jews were all of them
 “under an outward form of profession of God’s name and truth,
 “yet there was but a remnant whom he approved of in the Co-
 “venant according to his election of grace, unto whom the pro-
 “mise of life did belong, *Rom. 11:5, 7.* Now to these God’s spe-
 “cial care; is to perform his Covenant, and all that he promised
 “to them in their father *Abraham*, with reference to Christ, in
 “whom, as the root, God established his Covenant for these his
 “holy branches, *Rom. 11:12. & verse 26.*

“Now the lump generally considered comprehends all, both the
 “first fruits and the latter: For except the first fruits were part of

“the lump, it could not give testimony that the lump was holy; which lump is God’s elect in Christ, with reference to their believing in him, and so the approved subjects of God’s gracious Covenant, and heirs apparent to the Kingdom of Christ, as were *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, believing, the first fruits of that lump. They first appearing in the Covenant of grace in a visible way by faith, they were holy. And so that remnant which God had still among them, was holy, with reference to the same estate the first fruits were in. The same consideration is to be had of the lump, with reference to that estate which God in his time shall call them unto by his Gospel, and so are holy also: for this must respect a visible holiness suitable to that in the first fruits, otherwise it maketh nothing to the thing in hand.

“Now a word or two also of the root and branches; the root here, is that from which the Jews were cut off, and the Gentiles grafted in. And that is not only believing Parents, (and so the same with the first fruits) but Christ mystically considered, with reference to the rules of Order, Ordinances, and Government laid down in the New Testament, for all such to believe and submit unto, whom God approveth true subjects of the same. In which respect Christ is called a vine, a root, and the foundation, *Joh. 15:1, Rom. 15:12. Rev. 5:5, 22, 16. Isa. 28:16. 1 Cor. 3:11. Ephes. 2:20.*

“That the root is meant Christ as aforesaid, appeareth,

“First, in that he is the root or olive tree out of which the Jews are cast, and the Gentiles grafted in, *Rom. 1:17, 19, 23, 24.*

“Secondly, in that the Apostle chargeth the Gentiles, that if they boast themselves against the Jews, they bear not the root, but the root them, *vers. 18.* That is, thou appearest not to have the truth of grace, and so not the true nature of the truth and life of Christ in thy heart, but only an outward form of the profession of him, as *John 15:2.*

“Thirdly, from the consideration of that which the Jews refused, and the Gentiles received, which was Christ aforesaid. Therefore it is Christ in his mystical Order and Government amongst his Saints, that is here the root and olive tree with his Spirit in his Ordinances issuing forth sap, and fatness of life

“and comfort into every believing heart, as a branch of the
“same.

“This will yet more clearly appear, if we consider what was
“the Jews own natural root and olive tree, whereof they were
“natural branches only by faith, as the Apostle so declares
“them. Vers. 20, 21, 24. which was union and communion only
“with God in all his Divine Ordinances and Worship, which in
“the Old Testament was Mosaical and typical, in which respect
“the Jews were the first that ever God took in communion
“with himself in such an holy way of Worship, and therefore
“called the first fruits of his love, and natural branches, which
“order and manner of Worship (but not the matter) was chan-
“ged at the coming of Christ in the flesh, and a new form
“and order set up by him, called the Gospel or New Testament;
“which order the Jews opposed, and were rejected: Christ the
“sure foundation laid in *Zion*, becoming a stumbling stone,
“and rock of offence to the Jews, the Kingdom of God was
“taken from them; that is, they were cast out of fellowship and
“communion with God, in respect of his Worship, for their un-
“belief: and the Gentiles that did submit to the Gospel, were
“taken in by faith in Christ, to be his worshippers and heirs
“both of grace and glory. And when God pleaseth to call the
“Jews by the Gospel believe in his Son, and to submit to him,
“as he is the Mediator of the New Testament, then shall they be
“received in again, into their old fellowship and communion
“with God according to the order of *Moses*. And thus the A-
“postle proves their first estate to be holy, as the first fruits of that
“holy and blessed relation wherein they stood towards God by
“faith. From which they for their unbelief are cut off; and the
“Gentiles by faith admitted in, of mere grace, and not to boast.
“And yet there is a remnant of them to be called as the Lump,
“and a second fruit, which are also holy in reference to the same
“holy root as aforesaid. And as the root is holy, so shall these
“branches be when they come to be grafted in again to their
“own root and olive tree, as at the first, which is union and
“communion with God in his holy way of Worship. And so
“much of the root or olive tree, which must be understood of
“Christ mystically considered; and not of believing Parents, as
“aforesaid. Now a word of the branches, which being holy, are
“believers only in the Apostles sense.

“First, they are branches only, as they subsist and grow in the root or vine, and so bear the true nature of the same, by which they appear to be holy by the fruits thereof. Christ being the root or vine as aforesaid, the branches can no way be said to subsist and grow in him as their root but only by faith, and he in them by his Spirit, without which there is no holiness in the Apostle’s sense, who speaketh of such an holiness as is produced in the branch by the holy root, in which ingrows, and so partakes of the nature of the root, by virtue of union and communion which it hath with the same. All which is by faith, at the word revealeth.

“Secondly, there is no branch that is alive in the vine, but partakes of the sap and life of the same: by virtue of which the branch, though never so young and small, is discovered to be alive, and enabled to bring forth (in its season) such fruit, as whereby the same may be discerned. So it is hereby the spiritual branches, they cannot properly be called branches in the Apostle’s sense, but as they partake of the life and grace of Christ, (their true vine and olive tree) by which they appear (at the least) to be alive in him by faith, and enabled by the same to bring forth such fruits as may discover them to be in Covenant of grace, and so to be admitted unto the privileges thereof as, *John 15:1, 7*. Nature it self teacheth as much; for no man will admit of dead plants to be set in his vineyard, or grafted into a stock, but only such as are capable to comply with the same in the sap, and nourishment thereof, to the end it may grow and bring forth, fruit; and so it is with Christ, who cometh not short of nature. And therefore he admits not of any dead plants to be set in his spiritual vineyard, nor dead members to be joined in his mystical body, but only such as are capable by faith to comply with the head. Neither took he for himself a compound body, consisting both of living and dead members, which all are that have not a living principle of grace and faith in him, which unbelievers have not, no nor all the Infants of believers, nor any at all, until they are born again of the Spirit, *Joh. 3:5, 6*. The Church of God, which is the mystical body of Christ, is not a mixed company, but only one substantial and royal substance suitable to her head and matter, by which she was produced, being the immortal seed of the Word. And therefore one holy, spiritual, uniform, compared body, both for nature and

“form, *Cant.* 6:9. *Mal.* 2:15. *Ephes.* 2:14. to 22. *Joh.* 4:23. “All which considered, proves the body of Christ, or Church “of God under the New Testament not to consist of unbelievers, nor of Infants, neither in whole nor in part: and so the “branches aforesaid, not to be understood of unbelievers, or infants, but of believers only.

Silvanus. “That which you say, that the Jews were the people of God “in a twofold consideration. First, as a national people descended from the loins of *Abraham* by natural generation “according to the flesh. Secondly, some of them owned in a “more special manner with reference to his gracious Covenant, “made with *Abraham* and established with *Isaac*, &c. This is not rightly, spoken according to the tenor of Scripture language. For none of the Jews (much less the whole Nation) was the people of God as they descended from the loins of *Abraham* by Natural generation according to the flesh, but only with reference to his gracious Covenant made with *Abraham*, and with his seed after him. If you set aside the consideration of the Covenant, the seed of the most holy of God’s Saints are children of wrath, and not a people of God.

Neither let this seem to you of dangerous consequence, that if God accounted the whole Nation of the Jews to be his people with reference to his gracious Covenant, then all the whole Nation must have been in a true and saving estate of grace, and so all of them either saved, or fallen from a state of grace. For this consequence will not follow, as hath been shewed above. But it is true that you say, that God did in a special manner own *Isaac* and so all the elect seed, with whom he established his Covenant, not so with *Ishmael*. And yet it may not be denied, that God did establish his Covenant to all the seed of *Isaac* and *Jacob*, and that not only to the elect seed, but to the whole nation, till the ten Tribes rejected not only the house of *David*, and the Worship of God in the Temple, (where God had put his name:) but also the Ministry of the Prophets whom God sent to reclaim them, as afterwards the two tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin* (commonly called the Jews) rejected *David’s* Lord, the Lord Jesus and his righteousness, and the Ministry of the Apostles. But before that rejection evident it is, that in the wilderness God did by his gracious Covenant even establish the whole National posterity of *Jacob* to be a people to himself, *Deut.* 29:10, 11, 12, 13. And

the Word used in the original for the establishing of the whole Nation to become God's people (*ver.* 13.) is the very same which God used when he promised to establish his Covenant with *Isaac*, *Gen.* 17:19. And therefore it is not true which you say, That in "the natural children of *Abraham*, God only respected hit chosen in Christ, with whom he confirmed his Covenant with *Isaac* in reference to Christ. For the words of the Text do plainly express; that God by Covenant did confirm or establish the whole house of *Jacob* to be a people to himself, according to the Covenant which he had sworn to *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, *Deut.* 29:13. whence it was that (as the Apostle saith) to the Israelites (one and other) pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the Covenants, and the law, and the service of God, and the promises, &c. *Rom.* 9:4. where he speaketh of such Israelites, as for whom he had great heaviness, and continual sorrow in his heart in respect of their unbelief, *vers.* 2.

Nevertheless, this I willingly grant you; that God had a special respect to the elect and faithful seed, as to whom he reserved the effectual application of the spiritual and sure mercies of the Covenant, though the external dispensation of the Covenant, and of the seals of the Covenant, and of all the Ordinances of God's worship was generally granted to all the seed, whether elect or non-elect, faithful or hypocrites. But to pass by your general discourse of the state of the people of the Jews in the Old Testament, let us attend to that which cometh nearer to the argument in hand, to wit, to the general scope of the Apostles discourse in the 11. Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans; which "you say is, concerning the breaking off of the Jews, and the "occasion thereof, as also their calling by the Gospel wherein "you tell me, the Apostle ever defends the faithful seed of the "Jews against the general rejection of that Nation.

And it is true, he doth so in the former part of the chapter from *ver.* 1. to 10. but that is not his general scope throughout, the whole Chapter. For his general scope is to declare three things touching the rejection of the Jews.

First, that it is not universal, *ver.* 1. to 10. Secondly, that it is not unprofitable, *ver.* 11. Thirdly, that it is not irrecoverable, which he prophesieth, proveth, and amplifieth *v.* 12. to the end of the Chapter. For the 1. That their rejection was not universal, he proveth, first from his own example, who was an Israe-

lite, *ver.* 1. 2. From God's fore knowledge which is immutable, *ver.* 2, 3. From the like reservation, which God made of a remnant, in the days of *Elijah*, *ver.* 3, 4, 5, 6. And this reserving of a remnant he amplifieth by the cause, the election of grace, *ver.* 5, 6. and by the contrary, the rejection of the rest, which he proveth by the testimony of *Isay.* 7:8. also of *David*, *ver.* 9, 10. And thus far he defendeth the faithful seed of the Jews against the general rejection of that Nation.

2. He proveth that their rejection is not unprofitable, by giving an instance, in an unspeakable blessing, which thereby redounded unto the Gentiles, to wit, the salvation of the Gentiles. *ver.* 11.

3. That their rejection is not irrecoverable or small, but on the contrary, that their restoring and conversion is to be expected,

He proveth first, from the great benefit which he prophesyeth shall thereby redound to the Gentile-churches, which will be our riches and fulness, and as it were our life from the dead. And that he proveth by an argument from the less, *ver.* 12, 15.

Secondly, he proveth their conversion is to be expected by the end of his own ministry, which he professeth to be to save the Gentiles, for this end, that so he may provoke the Jews to the emulation of the Gentiles in receiving the Gospel, and by that manner save some of them, *ver.* 13, 14. and thereby also being on a greater increase of light and life to the Gentiles, *ver.* 15.

Thirdly, he proveth their conversion from the holiness of their Ancestors, which deriveth in like sort holiness to them, as the first fruits being holy, derive holiness (by God's institution) to the whole lump; and the root being holy, deriveth holiness (by God's Covenant) to the branches, *ver.* 16.

Whereupon, by the way he inserteth a grave admonition to the Church of *Rome*, to beware of boasting, either against the Jews for their Apostasy, or within themselves for their own stability in the faith. For the Holy Ghost did foresee that the Church of *Rome*, (above all the Churches of the Gentiles) would be most forward to boast of their infallibility and stability in the faith, by reason of the promise pretended to be made to *Peter's* Chair, above all the promises made to *Jerusalem* of old; which boasting, the Apostle represseth. 1. By calling them to consider their former state, they were branches of the olive tree wild by nature, *vers.* 17. 2. By putting them in mind they received the Gospel

from the Jews, not the Jews from them, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee, *v.* 18:3. the greater danger or possibility of apostasy and rejection of the Romans, then of the Jews: for if God spared not the natural branches (to wit, the Jews) take heed lest he also spare not thee, *v.* 19. to 22. 4. He both together represseth the Arrogancy of the Romans, and withall proveth that the Rejection, of the Jews is not irrecoverable, but their conversion more hopeful, then the conversion of the Romans was, by an Argument taken both from God's power, *v.* 33. and also from the natural estate of the branches, *v.* 24. which maketh their conversion more easy, If, thou Roman, wert cut off the Olive tree, which is wild by nature, and wert (by a power above nature) grafted contrary, to nature into a good Olive Tree: how much more shall these which be natural Branches, be grafted into their own Olive Tree? 5. He Represseth the same Arrogancy of the Romans, and with all proveth the conversion of the Jews, by a word of prophecy both by his own Testimony, *v.* 25. and by the Testimony of the Prophet *Isay*, *v.* 26, 27.

6. He prosecuteth the same conclusion of the conversion of the Jews, and demonstration, that their rejection is not small, and irrecoverable, by an argument taken from the, immutability of God's electing love to the children of such, whose fathers he hath given an effectual calling unto, in the fellowship of his Covenant of grace, *v.* 28, 29.

7. He proveth and amplifieth the same by an argument *à Pari*, from equals, thus, As you when you were unbelievers have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: so they now not believing shall obtain mercy, through your mercy, *v.* 30, 31, 32. Finally he concludeth all with an holy and Affectionate Admiration of the depth of the riches of the knowledge and wisdom of God in these his unsearchable Judgements and ways, *v.* 33. to 36.

I have the more fully opened to you the Analysis of this whole chapter, that you may the better discern both the true scope of the Apostle, and withal your own fallacy in perverting the Apostles scope to such a meaning as will not suit with his "words. For you so carry the Apostles scope, as if he wholly intended throughout, all this discourse to defend a remnant or to faithful Jews against the general Apostasy and rejection of

that Nation. And lest it might appear that the Apostle had a principal aim in the latter half of the chapter, to prove (as he evidently doth) the conversion and restoring of the Nation from the state of Apostasy and infidelity unto the Faith of Christ, and his Gospel, you would have the Apostle understood to speak of the Jews in a state of faith and holiness, and the whole lump of them to be holy by faith, as their first fruits *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*. And lest it should be thought that God will convert and restore the Jews (as some of the Apostle's Arguments carry it) out of respect to his Covenant with their holy Ancestors *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, (out of whom they descended as branches out of a root) you would have the root not to be taunt, their holy Ancestors, but Christ: and themselves to be holy not by virtue of any Covenant of God with their Ancestors, (for that you see would fetch in Infants, and others of their National seed within the bounds and benefit of the Covenant) but by virtue of their actual Union and Communion with Christ through faith in his Name. And lest it should be humbled at (as justly it might) why the Apostle should spend so many Arguments to prove the restoring and engrafting of the Jews into Christ after they have come to enjoy Union and Communion with Christ, you would have Christ to be understood not personally (as a Redeemer and (Saviour but mystically as he is the head of the Church and one body within, And so their restoring to be nothing else but receiving into Church-fellowship in the Order, and Worship and Government thereof. Such hard shifts the wits of men will make so seek any evasions to avoid the light and power of the truth of the word, when it will not stand with their own forestalled imaginations: But let us consider how you go about to make these imaginations of your own, to stand with "the Apostles words; The lump (say you) generally considered "comprehendeth all both the first fruits and the latter: for except "the first fruits were part of the lump, it could not give Testimony that the whole lump was holy, which lump so considered "is God's elect in Christ with reference to their believing on "him, and so the apparent Subjects of God's gracious Covenant, "a remnant according to God's election with reference to Faith, "appearing in *Abraham's, Isaac's, and Jacob's* believing, as the "first fruits of the same.

Where 1. It may be marvelled why you should make the holy

Ancestors of the Jews, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, the first fruits of the Jews: and yet not make them in like sort, the root also. For the Apostle putteth no difference between the first fruits and the Root, but speaketh of them as two similies to express one and the same thing: If the first fruits be holy, so is the whole lump. If the root be holy, so are the branches, *v.* 16. An as Christ is in some other places of Scripture called a Root, so is he also called the first fruits, *1 Cor.* 15:20, 23. And sure he hath the first preeminence in all relations of holiness and grace unto his people. But let your interpretation stand so far; let the first fruits of the lump of the Jews be the holy Ancestors of the Jews, that is indeed the true meaning of the Apostle here; only consider if you can see any cause why you should not as well take them in like sort for the root also.

2. Why should you make the first fruits part of the lump, more then the root part of the branches? As the first fruits be not the lump; so is the root to the branches. The root is not part of the branches, though they be both part of the tree: No more are the first fruits part of the lump, though they be both parts of the fruits of the field: The first fruits are ripe before the rest of the fruits of the field: and being first reaped and presented in the Lord, and accepted as holy unto him, they make the whole lump left in the field holy also.

Object. But (say you) except the first fruits were part of “the lump, they could not give testimony that the lump was “holy.

Ans. Both parts of this reason are unsound; for neither do the first fruit give testimony that the lump is holy; nor is it necessary, that that which giveth testimony of the holiness of another, should be part of the same. *Paul* gave testimony of the holiness of such children, of whom either Parent was holy, yet he was no part of them himself.

Besides, the first fruits did not give testimony that the lump was holy, (their hallowing of the lump was not by way of testimony, or as one part of an Homogeneous body giveth testimony of the whole, as one cup of good wine out of a vessel giveth testimony, that all the wine in that vessel is good) but by way of a moral instrumental efficient cause: God accepting the first fruits of the field, given to himself as holy; he therefore alloweth to the owner an holy use of the whole lump of the fruits of his field.

3. Take that for granted (which is in it self not much material) that the first fruit were part of the lump: what will follow thereupon? “Why then (saith the Author) as those first “fruits of that blessed crop in God’s holy Covenant were holy “by faith, and so appeared: so is the lump out of which these “first fruits appeared by faith, as part of the same, holy also in “the same consideration. For this must respect a visible holiness “suitable to that of the first fruits: otherwise it maketh nothing “to the thing in hand.

But how can this collection arise out of this companion of the first fruits? The first fruits of the field were visibly presented to the Lord in his Sanctuary, and being visibly accepted, appeared visibly to be holy. But as for the lump of the fruits of the field, there was no visible appearance, either of their presentation in the Sanctuary before the Lord, or of the Lord’s visible acceptance of them, but only in their first fruits. And so indeed it is here, the first fruits of God a holy Covenant, *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, being holy by faith, and accepted of God as holy to himself, they visibly appeared so to be. And through their holiness, and God’s acceptance of them, and of their seed in his holy Covenant, the lump of their posterity from their infancy upward, were holy also though they did not appear in visible holiness, till in fullness of time they came to be presented before the Lord in his Temple. And neither then did they appear visibly holy by their own faith, but by the faith of their Parents presenting them to the Lord.”

“But (say you) if there be not a visible holiness in the lump “suitable to that in the first fruits, it maketh nothing for the thing “hand.

I willingly grant you that the Apostles intendment here, is to prove the conversion of the Jews not only to a relative holiness suitable to the holiness that was in the first fruits their Ancestors of old, which was visible in their Fathers, and credible in their Infants by virtue of the Covenant, and visible seal of it. But herein you commit a double prevarication in your plea: 1. That you will not allow such an holiness to be found in the Jews after they shall come to be converted, as is suitable unto the holiness of their Ancestors. For their holiness reached from parents to their infant seed. But you would wholly exclude their infants in the New Testament. Again, whereas the Apostle argueth the

conversion of the Jews unto holiness from the holy Covenant of their Ancestors, and so would make the holiness of their Ancestors a means to derive holiness to them, you would utterly make void the force of that argument. For the Apostle's argument proceedeth from the virtue of the first fruits by God's institution to sanctify the whole lump; but you will admit no such virtue or efficacy by Gods institution in the holy Covenant of their Ancestors, as to derive holiness to their posterity, which is to make the Apostles argument and companion of none effect.

4. This let me further add, that whereas you in this discourse of the first fruits and lump speak of the Jews to be converted, as but a remnant: The Apostle declareth himself to the contrary, that then all Israel shall be saved, *Rom. 11:26*. Yea, not only a body of the Jews, but of the ten Tribes also, all *Israel*, according to what *Ezekiel* had prophesied of old, *Ezek. 37:16 to 32*. And indeed, when the Apostle calleth the conversion of *Israel* a mystery, (*Rom. 11:25*.) he giveth us to expect a more general conversion of them, then of a remnant. The Apostle in like sort called the conversion of the Gentiles a mystery, *Ephes. 3:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6*. And a mystery (and hidden secret) indeed it was to the Jews of old; and yet it was never a mystery to them the conversion of a remnant, or of a sprinkling of the Gentiles, but the coming in of such a great body and multitude of the Gentiles, that was indeed a mystery to them. And this the conversion of the Jews a mystery now unto the Gentiles, not the conversion of a remnant, but of so great a multitude and body of the home of *Israel*, as have been scattered like dry dead bones (*Ezek. 37*.) that indeed seemeth to be a mystery like the resurrection from the dead, whereto the Apostle resembleth it.

To proceed to the other companion of the Apostle which was taken from the holiness of the root conveying holiness to the branches, to prove the conversion of the Jews to holiness from the holiness of their Ancestors.

“Whereto your Author answereth. By root it meant not only believing Parents, and so the same with first fruits, but Christ “mystically considered with reference to rules of Order, Ordinances, and Government of his Church laid down in the “New Testament. In which respect he is called a vine, a root, and “foundation.

Answ. I know no reason why the root in this Text should be meant not only their believing parents (their holy Ancestors) but Christ also, as hath been touched afore. Only it seemeth you were afraid, that if believing Parents, or holy Ancestors were brought in, as any means of the conversion of their posterity unto faith and holiness, it would establish the virtue and continuance of the Covenant of grace from Parents to children, now in the days of the New Testament; the which you carefully shun. And therefore though you cannot but see, that the first fruits, and the root are used and applied in one and the same sense, and to the same purpose, and so are forced to confess, that as by the first fruits, so by the root is meant believing Parents; yet you will have the not to be meant, not only believing Parents, but Christ: and indeed you bring such arguments for Christ, as do seem to restrain it wholly to Christ, and (in a manner) to exclude believing Parents. But all in vain; for neither will your Arguments evince, Christ to be here expressly intended by the Apostle, (but only by conference) neither will we deny that Christ, and fellowship with Christ is intended in their fellowship with the root, though by the root be here expressly meant their holy Ancestors.

It is true, Christ is called in Scripture phrase, the vine, the root, the foundation, and so indeed he is primarily and eminently. But nevertheless, the Church also is called a vine, *Esa.* 5:1. *Psal.* 80:8. And *Abraham* called a root, *Mat.* 3:10. and the rock out which the house of Israel was hewed, *Esa.* 51:1. And the Apostles are called foundations, *Ephes.* 2:20. *Rev.* 21:14. yea, every righteous man is called an everlasting foundation, *Prov.* 10:25. And therefore it is not the name of a root, that will cast the root to be here meant of Christ, and not of *Abraham*.

“Yes, (say you) for first, Christ is here the root or olive tree, out of which the Jews are cast, and the Gentiles grafted in, *Rom.* 11:17, 19, 21, 24.

Answ. The Church is called an olive tree (as well as a vine) yea; and the branches of it are said to be broken off, *Jer.* 11:16. And when the Axe is said by *John Baptist* to be laid to the root of the trees, *Mat.* 3:10. It is his meaning to threaten the Jews, that God is about to cut them off from the Covenant of their father *Abraham*, of whom they were the off-spring and the branches. And thereby, he confirmeth his admonition to them in the former verse,

(*vers.* 9.) think not (saith he) to say with your selves, we have *Abraham* to our Father, for God is able even of these stones (and so of stony hearted Gentiles) to raise up children unto *Abraham*. And lest they might object, that themselves were the children of *Abraham*, rooted in him not only by natural generation, but of an everlasting Covenant, he strengtheneth his admonition with this threatening, *verse* 10. Now is the Axe laid to the root of the trees, (to wit, to cut off barren branches from the Covenant of *Abraham*;) every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. And therefore it is proper enough (according to Scripture phrase) to interpret the root to be meant of *Abraham*; and surely as fitly in this place of *Paul*, as in that of *Matthew*; but whether more proper, we shall see anon.

Secondly, say you, it appeareth, Christ here to be meant the “root in that the Apostle chargeth the Gentiles, that if they “boast in themselves against the Jews; Thou bearest not the “root, but the root thee, v. 18. that is, say you, thou appeared “not to have the truth of grace, and so not to have the true nature of the root and life of Christ in thy heart, but only an “outward form of the profession of him, *Job.* 15. a.

Ans. This interpretation the words of the Text will not bear; for it this were the meaning of the Apostle’s words, Thou bearest “not the root, but the root thee; that is, thou appearest not to “have the truth of grace, and to not the true nature of the root, “and life of Christ in thine heart: Then it will follow, that if the Gentiles did not boast, but had indeed the truth of grace, and life of Christ in their hearts, then it might be said to the Gentile, the root beareth not thee, but thou bearest the root: which is indeed contrary to the truth of Religion, yea, to the principles of grace. The absurdity of this interpretation may give good light to shew, that indeed Christ is not properly meant to be the root here spoken of. For if Christ were here intended to be the Root, the Apostle would not apply this as a check to the arrogance of the boasting Gentile, the root beareth thee. For it is no check, but a comfort, yea, the greatest comfort and safety of a true and humble believer, not so much that he beareth Christ, as that Christ beareth him. But take the Apostle to mean *Abraham* to be the root of the Jews (as the context carrieth it) and then his admonition is grave and weighty against the arrogance of the

boasting Gentile. If some of the branches be broken off, and though being a wild olive tree, wer't grafted in among them (that is, among the Jews) boast not thy self against the branches. But if thou boast, (take this for a check) thou bearest not the root. Thou art not the stock or root into which they were engrafted, but theirs is the root, into which thou art engrafted. For Salvation is of At Jews (*John 4:22.*) thou receivedst it from them, not they from thee: *Jerusalem* as a mother bare *Rome*, not *Rome*, *Jerusalem*. *Abraham* as a father by his faith, begot thee; as a root by his Covenant, he beareth thee, not thou him, nor the Church of his Covenant.

“But thirdly, you argue from the consideration of that which “the Jews refused, and the Gentiles received, that it is Christ in “his mystical Order and Government amongst his Saints, that “is here the root and olive tree, who by his Spirit in his Ordinanances issueth forth sap and fatness of life and comfort into every believing heart, as a branch of the same.

Ans. The weakness and fallacy of this Argument will easily appear, if you cast it into the form of an argument, thus it proceedeth.

“That which the Jews refused, and the Gentiles received, that “is the root here spoken of, to wit, that root which being holy, “the branches also are so too.

“But Christ mystically considered, is that which the Jews refused, and the Gentiles received.

“And therefore Christ mystically considered, is the root here “spoken of, which being holy, the branches are also so too.

But here the Major or former Proportion is justly denied. For though Christ himself be a root which the Jews refused, and the Gentiles received, yet he is not that root here intended, whose holiness inferreth and concludeth the conversion of the Jews to himself. But the Apostle here speaketh of such a root, who being holy, argueth that his branches, (though now broken off) will come on again to holiness; which cannot be argued from the holiness of Christ. For take Christ for the root, and will the Apostles Argument then follow; If Christ be holy, then the Jews (though now broken off) are, or shall be holy also? Is there any soundness in such an inference? If you say, Nay, but all that you would infer from thence, is this, that if Christ the root be holy, then the Jews, when they shall come to be grafted into

him again, they will be also holy: That is true indeed, and needs no proof. But that is not the Apostles scope, to shew that they shall be holy, when they are engrafted into Christ, but to prove that they shall be engrafted into Christ, and become holy because their root is holy; which will indeed strongly follow, by virtue of the Covenant with *Abraham* and his stead, if *Abraham* be here taken for the root, but not so, if Christ: What then will you say? is *Abraham* better then *Christ*? Not so neither; but *Christ* doth more delight to communicate his grace, rather in the way of the Covenant of his grace, then out of it.

Neither will it appear (though you say it will) that *Christ* is here meant by the Apostle to be the root of the Jews, if we consider what was the Jews own natural root and olive tree, whereof they were natural branches only by faith; at the Apostle so declareth them, *ver.* 20, 21, 24. which was union and communion with God in all his Divine Ordinances of Worship, the manner and form whereof was Mosaical and typical in the Old Testament, which is now changed in the New, but not the matter, &c. as above.

Ans. It is utterly untrue which you say, that the Jews were the natural branches of their own natural root, only by faith, and that the Apostle so declareth them, *v.* 20, 21, 22. For it is evident the Apostle expressly declareth the natural branches not to be spared of God, but to be broken off for their unbelief, *v.* 19, 20, 21. And therefore unbelief was found in the natural branches; and then they were not natural branches only by faith; for then no natural branches could have been broken off. Neither could the natural branches be said to be grafted in again, much more readily then the *Romans*, *v.* 24. for the *Romans* standing by faith, had equally as ready accede unto union and communion with *Christ* in his Ordinances, which you take to be the root, as the Jews when they shall be converted to the faith.

“It is readily granted, and needed no proof, that the Jews of old enjoyed union and communion with *Christ* in the Mosaical Ordinances of the Old Testament (whereof some were typical, and some moral.) And it is a confessed truth also, that God changed the Order and manner of that Worship (but not the matter) in the New Testament, But that the Jews were broken off for their opposing and rejecting that new or-

der, is not safely spoken. For they were broken off for resisting and opposing the righteousness of faith in Christ Jesus. *Rom.* 10: 3. which was no new order brought in by Christ in the New Testament, but was the principal matter of all their Typical and Mosaical Worship, which yourself confess was not changed. Besides it cannot be denied, That the faithful and their seed was the subject matter of the Church, and so part of the Order of the Worship in the Old Testament. And this was neither Mosaical nor Typical, but before both. And if the matter of the worship be not changed (though the manner be) then as the faithful and their (seed whether Jews or proselyte Gentiles) were the subject matter of the Church, and a Moral part of church order of old, then are they so still, and neither of them to be excluded.

It was wholly needless and impertinent to prove that the “Jews were cast off from Communion with God in his worship for their unbelief, and that the Gentiles who submitted “to the Gospel of Jesus Christ are taken in, and do stand in “relation to God by Faith in him: And that the Jews when “God shall please to call them by the Gospel to believe in his “Son, they shall be received in again to fellowship and Communion, with God in his service as worship, as of old.

But take all this for granted, and yet it reacheth not near the Apostle’s Words and discourse in this chapter who proveth that the Jews shall be called in again to Faith and Holiness, by reason of their relation as branches to their root. Which though they be broken off from it by their enmity against the the Gospel; yet they still belong to it, according to the Election of God, and according to his love which by his everlasting Covenant he bare and promised to bear to their Fathers and to their seed after them throughout all Generations.

To proceed then. As your discourse of the root hath not hitherto proved Christ to be the root: So neither will your discourse of the Branches prove either Christ to be the root, or the Branches, to be such, and can be no other then such as do subsist and grow in Christ only by Faith. For 1. It hath been (as I conceive) cleared already, that Christ is not the root here mean thy the Apostle: 2. If the branches be such, and can be no other but such, as do subsist and grow in Christ only by Faith, how then came it to pass, that the branches were

broken off? can such as do subsist in Christ (as in a root) only by Faith, can they be broken off? What is then become of Christ's prayer for all that do, or shall believe on him? *Joh. 17: 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.*

But (say you) the Apostle speaketh of such branches as are in "him by faith and he in them by his spirit, without which (Faith and Spirit) there is no holiness in the Apostle's sense.

Answer. It is true, the Apostle speaketh of such an Holiness in the branches (*ver. 16.*) as proceedeth from the Spirit and Faith: But that is an holiness which is not found in all Branches (for then no branches should be cut off, but which shall be found in the Jews at their conversion, as the Apostle proveth by reason of their relation to *Abraham* as their root, through the grace of his Covenant. But will not prove, that there is no way for the branches to submit in the root, but only by Faith and Spirit. For, these branches who shall be converted to holiness, were in *Abraham* before by Natural Generation, and did pertain to *Abraham's* Covenant by the grace of Election: by virtue of both which (both of the Election of grace, and of the Covenant of grace) they shall come at last to be converted to the fellowship of the Spirit, and of the faith of *Abraham*.

"But 2. Say you, There is no branch that is alive in Christ, "but partaketh of the sap and life of Christ, and bringeth forth "such fruit, be they never so young and small, whereby the "same may be discerned. So it is here by these spiritual "branches, they cannot properly be called branches in the "Apostle's sense but as they partake of the life and Grace of "Christ.

Answer. It is true, There is no branch alive in Christ, but partakes of the Sap and Life of Christ. But it is not true, "that every such living branch in Christ (be it never so young "and small) bringeth forth such fruits whereby the same may be "discerned.

For what discernible fruit of the life of Christ, did *Jeremy* shew forth, when he was sanctified from his mother's womb? *Jer. 1: 5.* Yea, Christ himself who was full of the spirit of life from his Mother's womb, what discernible fruits thereof did he bring forth? Doth the Gospel and story of his life express any? or can yourself imagine any?

Neither is it true that you say, that the spiritual branches can

“not properly be called branches in the Apostles sense, but as they partake of the life and grace of Christ.

For the Apostle doth not call them spiritual Branches, nor are they all such, unless by spiritual, you mean Metaphorical. But he expressly calleth them natural branches, and such as God did not spare, but cut them off, *v.* 21. And therefore they did not all of them partake of the grace and life of Christ, but some of them were indeed dead and fruitless.

“But (say you) nature it self teacheth, no man will admit of dead plants to be set in his vineyard, or Grafted into a stock, &c. And so it is with Christ, who cometh not more of Nature: And therefore he admits not of any dead plants to be set in his Vineyard, nor dead members to be joined in his mystical Body. Neither took he to himself a compounded body, consisting of living and dead members: And all unbelievers be dead, and all the infants of believers, till they be born again of the Spirit, *Joh.* 3:5, 6. Neither is the Church of God (which is the mystical body of Christ) a mixed company, but suitable to her head, & to the matter of which he was produced, the immortal seed of the word, one holy spiritual body. *Cant.* 6:9. *Mal.* 2:15, 22. *Ephes.* 2:14. to *Joh.* 4:23. All which proveth the Church of God under the New Testament not to consist of unbelievers neither in whole, nor in part.

Answer. Nature it self sheweth that in a Vine many dead branches found: “and many that have some kind of life, and yet not fruitful: And therefore the husbandman in time cutteth them off: and so is it in the spiritual Vine; and therefore such dead and fruitless branches, the Father (who is the Husbandman) cutteth them off, *Joh.* 15:1, 2. though for a time he may spare them, as he did the Barren Fig-tree, four years, *Luke* 13: 7, 8, 9. And though no man will admit of dead plants to be set in his Vineyard, or grafted into a stock; yet many plants set and grafted may prove dead; Men indeed would not willingly admit dead plants to be set, or grafted, because they know not what to do with them when they are dead. But if dead plants being set or grafted would grow either to be fruitful, and if not fruitful, yet to be good fire-wood, it would be no bad husbandry to set or graft dead plants. And so is there, God thinks it no bad husbandry in him, to admit dead plants to be set and grow in his Vineyard, and yet they grow fruitful, well, if not, to tolerate them there, till they grow up to fulfil their iniquity (as he did the Jews,

Mat. 23:32.) because then he knows how to illustrate the glory of his justice in casting them into the fire of Hell, *John* 15:6. *Mat.* 3:10.

It is true, which you say, Christ cometh not short of Nature: but in this, he exceedeth Nature. Nature cannot make a dead plant set in a Vineyard, or grafted in a stock, to grow: But Christ can make a dead plant set in his Church to grow living and fruitful. For else how came *John Baptist's* Ministry to turn the hearts of so many Publicans, soldiers, and other people to bring forth fruits meet for repentance? *Luke* 3:10.. to 14. But otherwise, if Christ make not dead plants set in his Church to grow living and fruitful, he can make them grow up to yield more sewell to the fire of his wrath, and to grow ripe for greater damnation. *Mat.* 23:14. It is utterly therefore untrue which you say, that Christ “admits not of any dead plants to be set in his Vineyard: or “that he taketh not to himself a compounded body of living and “dead members: or that the Church of God is not a mixed company &c. For who called *Judas* to the Apostleship? did not the Lord Jesus himself? Did not he plant him in his Vineyard? And doth he not hire and send forth many labourers into his Vineyard, who yet afterwards many of them prove murmurers? *Mat.* 20:1 to 16. The Church of Christ is often in the Gospel called the Kingdom of Heaven, and in *Mat.* 25:1. The Kingdom of heaven is given for the style of such Churches, as are most pure, such as they will be after the destruction of Antichrist, and the calling of the Jews prophesied of in chapter 24. wherein all the members are virgins (none defiled with Antichristian Whoredom:) All servants, none enemies: all as clean beasts, whether sheep or goats, the goats themselves being clean for meat (as chewing the Cud, and dividing the hoof,) and clean also for sacrifice. And yet are there not to be found amongst these Virgin-members of the Church, some wise, some foolish? amongst these servants, some thriving, some unprofitable? amongst these clean beasts some sheep, some goats, who shall “stand accursed at the left hand of Christ? Is it true, the Church “which is the mystical body of Christ, ought to be suitable unto “Christ her head, and to the immortal seed of the word, of which she is begotten, and many times so she is: but not always every member: yea, very seldom, every member, if at any time. I cannot tell if at any time, the King that made a Marriage for his son shall come in, and not find one guest at

least, that hath not on a Wedding garment, *Mat.* 22:11. The place which you allege to the contrary will not prove it, as that in *Cant.* 6:9. proveth indeed that whereas Christ hath many Queens (Churches married to him by Covenant, and invested with Royal Authority, and more concubines (that enter not by Covenant, nor are endued with authority in the house of God) yet one, or some few are chaste and harmless and undefiled, but so a Church may be when the Doctrine, and Worship, and Government thereof is received and administered according to the pattern, although some members have a name to live, but are dead, and have not (as you speak) a living Principle of grace and faith in them. Christ himself acknowledgeth one Church to be all Fair, and to have no spot in her, *Cant.* 4:7. and that is interpreted by some Expositors, and (as I take it) most fitly of the Primitive Apostolic Church at Jerusalem described, *Acts* 3. and *Acts* 4. towards the end of both chapters. And yet even in that Church were found *Ananias* and *Saphira*, who were but dead members, and neither suitable to their head Christ, nor to the immortal seed of the word, of which that Church was begotten. The place in *Mal.* 2:15. speaketh less to the purpose: for what though God sought a godly seed: doth he always find what he is said to seek? God sought for one to stand in the gap, but he found none, *Ezek.* 20:30. Besides the godly seed there spoken of, is in the Original the seed of God: which it not meant of every Church-member (for what is the marriage of one man with one woman) in our first Parents unto that, Seeing it is a pattern that bindeth Pagans as well at Christians) but it is meant of Christ Jesus.

The place in *Ephes.* 2:14. to 20. sheweth what the Church of God's Redeemed be, and all the spiritual members thereof: but neither proverb that all the members of the Church are such, or that the Infants of believers are not such. The Church of God in *Zion* was built upon the foundation of the Prophets: and it was an habitation to the Lord. *Psal.* 102:13. yet infants were members of it. The place in *John* 4:23. sheweth (as I said before) what God seeketh: not that he findeth all such in every Church: much less that he excludeth Infants out of the Church, till they can make it appear by open profession of their faith, that they do worship him in Spirit and truth. It hath been proved above, that of Infants is the Kingdom of God (*Mar.* 10:14.)

that is, the Church: and yet they cannot profess and declare any such worship in their own Persons: though indeed the Aits of their godly parents in that case are there accepted of Christ, as the Acts of the Infants. For Christ accepted their Parents bringing of them to him, as if they had come to him in their own persons. Suffer (saith he) little children to come unto me: and yet they came not, but as they were brought.

Silvester. There is a large difference between the Jews and Gentiles in respect of outward Privileges. The Infants of the Jews had a special reason for their admittance into the fellowship of the Jewish Church, which doth not now continue in Christian Churches. Of the Jews came Christ, the Saviour of man; and therefore salvation is said to be of the Jews, *Rom. 9:5. John 4:22.* In respect of which there was a blessed promise passed upon the Jews for the bringing forth of the *Messiah*, and the promised seed, in whom all Nations should be blessed. And therefore all of that Nation were admitted to the outward Privileges, as figures of him whom that Nation was to bring forth. So that a fruitful womb was counted a great blessing among the Jews, as not knowing who might be so honourable, as to bring forth that blessed, and all blessing seed. And therefore God honoured the Natural birth with such outward blessings and privileges, which belong not to the Gentiles at all.

“The Gentiles now are to look for their bringing forth Christ according to the Spirit, as the Jews did then according to the flesh: and likewise their birth: and their seed and all things suitable to the same, as *Joh. 3:3, 5, 6. Joh. 1:12, 13.* And therefore we are said now to know no man after the flesh. 2: *Cor. 5:16.* And Circumcision was one Privilege of the flesh, *Phil. 3:4, 5.* Therefore though the Jews Infants were admitted to all those outward Privileges being a National people, and so a National body, with a natural birth, and the like seed in general: yet the Gentiles Infants cannot be admitted to their spiritual privileges, they being a personal People called by the word of Grace, and so a spiritual body with a spiritual birth, and the like seed.

Silvanus. It is true, there is some difference between the Jews and the Gentiles, in respect of outward Privileges, for (not to hover in generalities wherein lieth deceit) the Jews, or rather

the house of *Israel* being God's first born (*Exod.* 4:24.) and so our elder brother, they were the excellency of Dignity, and the excellency of power; glorious and mighty wonders, the Lord often wrought for them, they had the preheminance: of them was Christ, of them were the Fathers, (the Patriarch and the Prophets) and to then were committed the Oracles of God. And if you will so account it, a double portion to enjoy, both a Congregational Church, and a National, they enjoyed both a Congregational Church in their Synagogues, and a National Church at Jerusalem in their solemn feasts.

But two things let me here put you in mind of: first, that when the Elder brother, for his demerit is disinherited of his Birth-right (as *Reuben* sometime was) his preheminance of honour and double portion is divided amongst his younger brethren: no part of it is lost. So is it here, The Church of *Israel* being disinherited, all the spiritual privileges, all the honour and power which they enjoyed either in their Synagogue, or in their National Assemblies, is now set over to our Congregational Churches; and as for the outward Privileges, which the house of *Israel* enjoyed (as a wordly Kingdom and the power and glory thereof) they were no part of the privileges of their Church estate, but accessories and additaments thereunto. For in the Covenant of *Abraham* God spake nothing of a worldly kingdom, but of affliction for 400. years, *Gen.* 15:13. as therefore worldly power and glory, were cast in as accessory to the Church of the Old Testament, so they may be also in the New. If the Churches of the New Testament shall bind Kings in chains, as is prophesied *Psal.* 140:8. and execute upon them the judgement written, then surely Christian Churches shall have some Kings to be members of their body, else what have they to do to judge them that are without? the Apostle saith, Godliness hath the promises of this life as well as of that which is to come, 1 *Tim.* 4:8. What though Church power be not administered with worldly pomp? and what though all the children of the Church be equal in Church-Privileges? yet some or other of the children or the Church are capable of great preheminance even in outward Privileges: They may be Princes in all Lands, *Psal.* 42:16. which though some understand of spiritual power, yet not so properly: for spiritual power is not princely in the earth. Besides, if civil Magistracy be lawful amongst men (which you deny not) some of the

children of the Church may be as fitly employed in such a principality, as Pagans. And surely the time shall come when according to the prophecy of *Daniel* (chapt. 7:27.) the Kingdom and the Dominion and the greatness of the Kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the Saints of the most High.

A second thing which I would put you in mind of (which also hath been mentioned above) is that we do not stand upon National Jewish privileges, but upon the Covenant of *Abraham*, which was given with the Seal thereof to him and his seed before any of the Jews and Israelites were born, when *Abraham* and his seed were considered rather as a Domestical Church, then as national. And then the Covenant was given to him as walking before God in uprightness of heart, *Gen. 17:1, 7.* which cannot be without faith; and the sign of the Covenant was given him as a sign and seal of the righteousness of Faith, *Rom. 4:11.* and both Covenant and seal were given to his infant seed for his faith sake, *Gen. 17:7.* And in case his infant seed should grow up to riper years, and then not take hold of the Covenant of *Abraham*, but profanely reject, they were cast out of their Church Estate, as was *Ishmael*, and *Esau*. And so the seed of *Abraham* could never grow up to a National Church, unless when they grew up to years, they should continue in a visible Profession of the Faith of *Abraham*: or unless god should afterwards enlarge the wings of his Covenant to reach over the whole Nation, as he began to do in the Testament of *Jacob*, *Gen. 49:26.* and more fully and solemnly declared the same, *Exod. 19:3. to 8.* and *Deut. 29:10. to 13.* But it is not the Covenant of *Jacob* to him, and to all his Posterity, during their lives, that we plead for: But the Covenant and blessing of *Abraham*: which the Apostle saith is come upon us Gentiles, *Gal. 3:14.* which only admitteth the faithful and their infant seed, not during their lives, in case their lives should grow up to Apostasy, or open scandal: but during their infancy, and so long after as they shall continue in a viable profession of the Covenant, and faith, and the religion of their fathers; Otherwise if the children of the faithful grow up to Apostasy or to any open scandal, (as *Ishmael* and *Esau* did) as they were then, so such like now, are to be cast out of the fellowship of the Covenant, and of the seals thereof. But you willingly take no notice here of the Covenant of *Abraham* to him and to his seed. And

“because say you, the Jews had a promise for the bringing forth
 “the *Messiah* the promised seed in whom all Nations would be
 “blessed, therefore all of that Nation were admitted to the out-
 “ward Privileges, as figures of him whom that Nation was to
 “bring forth: which made a fruitful womb accounted so great a
 “blessing among the Jews, as not knowing who might be so far
 “honoured as to bring forth that blessed seed.

But Christ came of *Abraham*, and of *Isaac*, as well as of *Jacob*
 (the father of the Jews:) and yet that did not admit all the Nations
 which sprang of them to the outward Privileges, as you call them
 (though very absurdly (if you mean (as you seem to do) the Co-
 venant, and the seal thereof. For the Covenant whereby we
 and our seed have God for our God is not a mere outward Pri-
 vilege, but a spiritual and heavenly Privilege to such as know the
 worth of it.

Besides, many Tribes of *Israel* were admitted (they and their seed)
 to the Privilege of the Covenant, and to the seal thereof, of
 whom yet it was evident, that Christ was not to spring of any of
 of them. The Jews who descended all of them of *Judah*, they
 were but one tribe of twelve. And why should all the other
 eleven Tribes be circumcised as well as the Jews, in respect of
 their bringing forth their promised seed, when yet old *Jacob* had
 limited the bringing forth of the *Messiah* to the Tribe of *Judah*?
Gen. 49:10. Were all the children of the eleven Tribes figures
 of the *Messiah* as well as the children of the Jews? Besides, in *Da-*
vid's time, there was a promise given to him, that the *Messiah*
 should come out of his loins, *2 Sam. 7*. Why then should any
 other families of the Jews enjoy such a Privilege that all their in-
 fants should be circumcised with the Seal of the Covenant? Doth
 any word of Scripture make all the Infants of all the Jews, yea
 of all *Israel*, figures of the *Messiah*? And if no word of Scrip-
 ture so do, shall any man forge such an imagination of his own
 brain, and be guiltless? what though a fruitful womb was
 counted a great blessing among the *Jews*? So it was also among
 the other Tribes, who yet could not expect the *Messiah* to spring
 from them. It was a cause just though to account a fruitful
 womb a great blessing, not only because it was a blessing to the
 family, but also because it was an enlargement of the Church. In
 which respect the Elders and Peoples of Bethlehem blessed *Ruth*
 (*Chap. 4:11*.) and *Boaz* with her, the Lord make this young Wo-

man, which cometh into thine house, like *Rachel* and like *Leah*, which two did build the house *Israel*.

How will you make it appear, That God honoured the National birth among the Jews, with such outward blessings and Privileges that belongs not to the Gentiles at all?

You should have done well to have told us, what those outward blessings and Privileges were: and to have cleared it, that they belonged to the Jews and not to the Gentiles at all. Otherwise it will not be safe for you to take up doctrines of Religion upon trust of man's word.

"The Gentiles (say you) are now to look for our bringing forth of Christ according to the Spirit, as the Jews did then according to the flesh; and likewise their birth and seed, and all things suitable to the same, as *John* 3:3, 5, 6. *John* 1. 12, 13. And therefore we are said to know no man now, no not Christ himself after the flesh, *2 Cor.* 5:16. "And Circumcision was one Privilege of the flesh, *Phil.* 3:4, 5.

Answer. It is not true, that all the Jews did look to bring forth Christ according to the flesh. For in *David's* time, they knew, that Privilege was peculiar to his family, neither is it true, that the Gentiles are now to look for the bringing forth of Christ according to the Spirit, any more then the Jews were to look then. The Apostle *Peter* maketh us equal with the Jews, and them with us in this Privilege: We look (saith he) to be saved through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, even as they, *Act.* 15:11. It behoved them as well as us, to attain a spiritual birth and to be born of an immortal seed suitable to the same, as well as us; for it was not to a Gentile, but to *Nicodemus* a Jew, that Christ spake unto, *Joh.* 3:3, 5, 6. Except a man be born again of water, and the Holy Ghost, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh: that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit; Where it doth not appear that Christ spake to *Nicodemus* of entering into the visible Church, for Christ did not seek to gather a visible church separate from the Church of the Jews till after his ascension. But he spake to him of entrance into the Kingdom of Glory, and such a state of salvation in the Kingdom of Grace, as only regenerate persons did attain unto, whether Jews or Christians. Christ would never have called *Judas* to Office in his Church (which is the place of an eminent member) if none could enter into the visible Church, but regenerate persons. Your other place

in *John* 1:12, 13. doth not speak of the estate of the members of the visible Church in the days of the New Testament, but of the Adoption and Regeneration of the Elect members of the visible Church of the Old Testament. For all the words of the Evangelist *John*, from *v.* 1. to 14 are a description of Christ. 1. What he was from eternity, *v.* 1, 2. 2. What he was in the Creation, *v.* 3, 4. 3. What he did to me after the fall, *v.* 5. &c. 4. What he did to the World of Pagans by his works of Creation and Providence. *v.* 9, 10. 5. How he came to his own people of *Israel* in his Ordinances, *v.* 11. And yet how many of them received him not, to wit, by faith in sincerity and truth. *v.* 11. But those that did receive him; that is, believe in him; to them he gave power or privilege, not to be called, but to become his sons, *v.* 12. And these were born, to wit, born again, not by power of Nature, but by the grace of God, *v.* 13. Then it followeth, the Word became flesh, *v.* 14. So that it may appear plainly by the Context, that *John* speaketh not of the estate of the people of the New Testament, before they can enter into the visible Church, but of the spiritual estate of all the believing Saints of the Old Testament. The other place in *2 Cor.* 5:16. we have opened it above. We now know no man after the flesh, no not Christ himself now. In which words it is no part of the Apostles scope or meaning to set forth what qualifications are to be attended to in admitting members into the visible Church, but to direct Church-members and all Christians, not to esteem of themselves & others according to common gifts and carnal excellencies, and outward Privileges (wherein the false Apostles gloried, *v.* 12.) but to live as those who have fellowship with Christ in his death and resurrection, and therefore not to live unto our selves, or to this world, but unto Christ, *v.* 14, 15. And lest it should be objected, Why, time hath been when you (*Paul*) your self have gloried in carnal excellencies and Jewish Privileges, yea and have esteemed meanly of Christ himself for his poverty sake, and because he was rejected of the high Priests and Elders; *Paul* answereth, though we have known Christ after the flesh, that is, though we have esteemed meanly of him, according to his mean outside; yet now henceforth we neither know or acknowledge him, or any man else according to the flesh Where by knowing no man after the flesh, he doth not mean that he now knoweth no seed of the faithful to have any Privilege

or right unto Church-estate by their natural birth through the the Covenant of their Parents: but that whatsoever privilege themselves or their Parents, or any others have by their Church-estate, or Covenant, or seals of the Covenant, or gifts of knowledge and utterance, or the like, they should not acknowledge them, as things to be rested till they come to be new creatures in Christ Jesus.

And to the same purpose tendeth the other place which you quote, *Phil.* 3:4, 5. where *Paul* calleth all thes outward Privileges, flesh: and professeth though he might as well trust in them, and boast of them as any other man: yet he counted them all (if they be trusted in without Christ) as loss, and dross, and dung, in comparison of Christ. But if by this argument, you would exclude the Infant of believing Parents from Church-fellowship, and the seal thereof, you might as well reject Church-fellowship, and Church-Covenant, and the seals of the Covenant and all confessions of Faith, and subjection to the Ordinances, and fruitfulness in good works: for all these trusted in, are loss, and dross, and dung in comparison of Christ, nor doth our righteousness before God stand in them. And thus it was also in the Old Testament, as well as now. So that all this which you have alleged, proveth no difference at all between the Infants of the Jews and the Infants of the Gentiles in respect of spiritual Privileges; For all these places do as well concern men of years, as Infants, and Jews as well as Gentiles. And though you call us a personal people, and the Jews a National people: yet neither were they at first National, but Domestical, as hath been said: And for us, if you mean that every believer receiveth the Covenant of grace to his own Person, but not to his seed; It is utterly untrue, for the contrary hath been proved at large above, and your exceptions answered; that one promise of grace might stand for many, which *Paul* gave to the Jailor, Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved and thy house, *Act.* 16:31. As also that other testimony of his to the *Corinthians*, that the children of believing Parents (yea of either Parent believing) are holy 1 *Cor.* 7:14.

Silvester. “The holiness which the Apostle speaketh of in that place “to the *Corinthians*, is not the holiness, which proceedeth from “God’s holy Covenant of grace, but from God’s holy Ordinance of Marriage, For under the Gospel there is no holi-

“ness, that can inright to say Privilege of grace, but, either the holiness of Christ, in whom God looketh upon his children as holy in him, and through him giveth them right to all things both in grace and glory. *Ephes.* 1:4, 5, 6. Or that holy frame of God’s workmanship by the holy spirit of regeneration, appearing in the holy effects and fruits thereof, by which the person’s appear before men to have right to the aforesaid Privileges.

Silvanus. There is great difference in point of Holiness between the holy Covenant of grace; and the holy Ordinance of Marriage: The Covenant of grace is holy not only in regard of the efficient cause, because it was instituted by the holy God: but also because it giveth right to holy Privileges, and denominateth them to be holy (whether persons, families, or nations) whom God calleth into such Covenant with himself. For it separateth them from other people, and setteth them apart to the Lord, and his holy worship, *Deut.* 7:6, 7, 8, 9. But the Ordinance of Marriage is holy, only in regard of the efficient cause, because it was instituted by the holy God: but it neither giveth right to holy Privileges, nor denominateth them to be holy, whom God calleth unto that estate, God never called persons, or families, or Nations, an holy people, because they were married: nor their children holy, because they were bred of married Parents. Turks and Pagans, and all Infidel people are married as well as Christians: yet neither they nor their children are counted, or called holy in scripture language.

Silvester. Yes, in scripture language, as there is an uncleanness of the flesh, so there is opposite to the same an holiness of the flesh, which is produced by lawful Marriage. Compare these Scriptures together *Ezra*, 10:2, 3. *1 Sam.* 21:4, 5. *1 Cor.* 6:18. “and 7:1, 2. *1 Thess.* 4:3, 4.

Silvanus. There is indeed an holiness of the flesh, that is opposite to the uncleanness of the flesh: but there is no holiness of the flesh, that proceedeth from marriage; For though an unlawful marriage may pollute both flesh and Spirit, yet a lawful marriage doth not make either of them holy: In that place of *Ezra* the marriage of the Jews with strangers was an unclean and an unholy marriage, as polluting the Covenant of their God, *Mal.* 2:11. Yet the marriage of the Jews with their own Nation did not make them holy: much less did the marriage of strangers with stran-

gers make them holy, though their marriage was lawful. Though nothing that is holy it unclean: yet all things that are not unclean, are not forthwith holy. For notoriety that which it unholy is unclean, but also that which is unrighteous, or any way unlawful, is unclean also. Stolen goods are unclean; but yet goods well gotten, are not holy. The opposition therefore that is between uncleanness and holiness, is not that opposition which is between immediate contraries, that whatsoever is not unclean, the same should be holy: or as if it were enough to make a thing holy, because it is not unclean; Or as if because the marriage of the Jews with the strangers was unclean, and their seed unclean and accursed, therefore their marriage among themselves was holy. It is true, marriage is honourable amongst all, and in regard of Gods institution, holy: It is true also, that the seed which the Jews had in a way of lawful marriage were called an holy seed. *Ezra* 9:2. But yet that holiness of their seed, did not proceed from the holiness of their marriage: (for then to this day the children of married Jews were an holy seed still) but from the holiness of the Covenant between God & them.

The next place you refer me to is in *1 Sam.* 21:4, 5. where it is said that *David's* young men having been kept from women three days, their vessels were holy. But what would you infer from hence? That there is an holiness of the flesh opposite to the uncleanness of the flesh? who doubteth of that? but whence did this holiness flow? or wherein did it consist? did it flow from the lawful marriage of themselves, or their Parents? Or did it consist in their Legitimation? No verily; it rather sprung from their want of use of lawful marriage; in that they had not kept company with their wives of three days. For it is not to be thought that *David* would keep his men to keep company with Harlots. The holiness therefore which *David* here speaketh of is a Ceremonial holiness, whereby he and his men being kept from women, and likewise from effusion of seed (which did Ceremonially pollute) they were therefore holy in their vessels, and so meet to partake of holy bread; No holiness therefore here, but such as maketh capable of holy things. The next place which you refer me to in *1 Cor.* 6:18. doth, hold forth, that fornication is a sin against the body: which is out of question; if your meaning be that that sin brings uncleanness upon the flesh: which if it be compared with *1 Thes.* 4:3, 4. will argue

that there is a contrary holiness of the flesh, when a man possesseth his Vessel in Sanctification and honour, both these are truths, but nothing to your purpose. For this holiness of the flesh, is also an holiness of the spirit. Where by a man of obedience to the will of God, *v.* 3. doth mortify the lust and concupiscence *v.* 5. and posses his vessel in sanctification and honour, *v.* 4. And this holiness a part of that latter holiness, (whereof you spake before) to wit, that holy frame of God's workmanship in the heart by the holy spirit of regeneration, which giveth right to the Privileges. And therefore you will not allow this kind holiness to be meant in *1 Cor.* 7:14. for then by the lawfulness of the Parents marriage, children should be freed from the lust of Concupiscence, and inabled to possess their vessels in sanctification and honour.

That other place which you put in (*1 Cor.* 7:1, 2) I know not to what end you allege it, unless it be to prove, that marriage in times of persecution, is not expedient, which is the meaning of the first verse:) or that fornication is to be avoided by lawful marriage, which is the intent of the second verse: But what is either of these to the point in hand?

To return therefore to the point, from whence your objection diverted me, it still remaineth good, that the holiness of children spoken of *1 Cor.* 7:14. doth not proceed from the holy Ordinance of marriage, but from the holy Covenant of grace.

Which may further be confirmed from the very word of the Text. For the Apostle deriveth that holiness of Infants, not from the holy Ordinance of marriage, but from the faith of the believing Parent whereby both the unbelieving yoke-fellow is sanctified to the believer, and the children also of the believer are holy.

Silvester. I think both alike, the children are no otherwise holy by the faith of the believing Parent, then the unbelieving yoke-fellow is sanctified to the believer. That is to say, the believer hath a sanctified use of Cohabitation and Communion with them both. For to the pure all things are pure, but to the unbeliever nothing is pure. *Tit.* 1:15. So that whereas before both the yoke-fellows were unclean by Idolatry, and their children also: now by the conversion of one of the yoke-fellows to the faith, though he might scruple the lawfulness of his cohabitation and Communion, either with his yoke-fellow, or with his children: Yet the Apostle telleth him, he needeth not so to do. For by his

faith, both his yoke-fellow and children also are Sanctified to him, he hath an holy use to them both. In the same sense are the children said to be holy, and the unbelieving yoke-fellow sanctified. For I have learned it from some men skilful in the tongues, that it is the same word, or at least derived from the same root and theme, whereby the unbelcerer is said to be sanctified, and the children said to be holy.

Silvanus. It is true indeed, the one of the words is derived from the other: But yet the Apostle useth them herein such a different phrase, or manner of speech, as putteth a manifest difference in the sense, and signification of them. For when he saith, the unbelieving yoke-fellow is sanctified, he doth not leave it so without a limitation or restriction, but saith, he or she is sanctified in the believer, or to the believer, and that limiteth the sense, to the believer's use. But when he speaketh of children, he doth not speak with such limitation, they are holy to the believer, but positively, they are holy. Now the difference is manifest and great between these two, to be sanctified to a believer and to be holy: for example. It may truly be said, all afflictions and Persecution itself, are sanctified to a believer; but it cannot therefore be said, that affliction, yea persecution is holy, yea, we may be bold to say, that even the calls of God's children are sanctified unto them, I mean their falls into sin: yet we may not say; that their falls into sin, are holy. No scripture language alloweth any thing to be called holy, but that which is holy, either by imputation from Christ, or regeneration from the Spirit, or separation unto God, from uncleanness to his holy worship. Search the Scripture, you will not find it otherwise, neither is it otherwise in this place. For else the Apostle might as well have said thus; The children by the unbelieving wife, are sanctified in the believing husband: and the children by the unbelieving husband are sanctified in the believing wife, else were your unbelieving yoke-fellows unclean: but now they are holy. But do you think the holy Spirit of God would ever call infidels & Idolaters holy? But suppose (as some of your books would have it) that the Apostle did acknowledge unbelieving yoke-fellows to be holy, is there not then a two-fold holiness mentioned in the Text: the one, not in the thing it self, but to another's use; the other of the thing in it self: Is it not then sin to confound these two for all one which God hath distinguished?

Silvester. I deny not but this is true in a part, that there is twofold holiness here spoken of. For the holiness of the children is not only such a relative holiness, as to one another's use (at the "unbeliever to the believers use and no more:) but the holiness of children resteth in themselves as the subjects thereof by nature, being begotten and born in that lawful & honourable way of marriage by God's appointment, and so holy & clean in opposition to such as are begotten and brought forth "in a way of uncleanness, as adultery, fornication, and the like.

Silvanus. This kind of holiness which you speak of, resting in the children by being begotten and born in that lawful and honourable way of marriage, hath been refuted above. The Scripture acknowledgeth no such holiness, as proceedeth from lawful and honourable marriage. If there were such an holiness, the children of married infidels were holy as well, as the children of Christians. But the Apostle here speaketh of such an holiness, as would not be found in children, unless one of the Parents at least were a believer; to speak of holiness since the fall in children, whereof they are subjects by nature, is strange language in Christian ears; you might as well speak of profaneness of grace, as of holiness by nature. The holy Ghost is the proper subject of holiness: and the proper cause of all holiness in the creature; so that nothing ought to be called holy, but, what he either maketh, or calleth holy. But it will never be found, that the holy Ghost ever imparted either the nature or name of holiness to any, because they were begotten in lawful marriage, and not in whoredom. Besides if this were the meaning of the Apostle, to prove that believers might lawfully keep their unbelieving yoke-fellows, because the children which they had by them were begotten in lawful marriage, the Apostle had not thereby cleared nor removed the scruple of the *Corinthians*, but rather aggravated it. For they might as justly doubt of their lawful cohabitation with their children, as with their infidel wives. The same grounds which puts them to scruple the one, did as justly move them to scruple the other: so that to expound the Apostle this way, doth not clear the scruple but rather double it.

"It seemeth to me otherwise to expound the Apostle this way, is the only way for the clearing of the scruple of the *Corinthians*: which befell them by reason of an Epistle, which the "Apostle wrote to them before in 1 *Cori.* 5:9. where he to pressed

“them from hating any Communion or fellowship with any
“unclean person in the worship of God, that they understood
“him to condemn also civil commerce with the world, upon
“which they questioned the lawful retaining of their unbelieving
“husbands and wives, and to have communion with them
“in Society. And so much the more, at having an example
“of the like nature in the law, *Ezra* 10:7. About which thing, &
“that near relation of husband and wife in their civil commerce
“they wrote to the Apostle for information, *1 Cor.* 7:1. And
“questioned not their children. Whereby it appeareth,
“they held it lawful to retain their children. To which the Apostle
“answereth from a double ground thus.

“1. In that all things are said to be sanctified to such as believe,
“as *Tit.* 1:15. and so the unbelieving wife to the believing husband:
“you may lawfully therefore live together, in that comfortable estate,
“and society of marriage, which God hath ordained for man and wife to abide in.

“2. If you judge yourselves to live in such a way of uncleanness,
“upon which you must now part then your children so begotten
“are unclean, and to be put away also. But in that you hold it
“lawful to retain your children, and not to put them away,
“though you believe, and they do not: then much more the unbelieving
“parents (as aforesaid) who bare them. For if the effect be holy,
“then must the cause also be holy which produceth the same,
“which is God’s holy Ordinance of marriage, and not the holy
“Covenant of grace.

Silvester. Whether the scruple of the *Corinthians* about cohabitation
with their unbelieving yoke-fellowes, did arise from the Apostles
former letter, or not, it is not plainly expressed in the Text:
But of the two, it may be gathered from the Text, rather not,
then yet: For if their scruple had risen from the Apostles former
advice, not to keep company with Fornicators (whether bodily or
spiritual) he had fully answered that scruple before in the fifth
Chapter. For there he expoundeth himself not to speak of the
fornicators of the world, but of the Church *v.* 10, 11, and for
the fornicators of the Church, he doth forbid Communion with
them, not only in the worship of God (as you would have him
understood) but even in familiar civil converse, With such a one
as it a brother, and a fornicator or the like, I have written to
you, no not to eat with him, *v.* 11. where, not to eat is not meant

not to eat the Lord's Supper: for that is the highest degree of the highest, and holiest communion in the Church: but not to eat common bread at one another's table, for he speaketh of the least degree of familiar society with such a one, saying, With such a one, no not to eat, but that by the way, to clear your mistake in that point. But for the point in hand, the Apostle had sufficiently cleared both his own meaning and the *Corinthian's* scruple touching their civil society with their unbelieving yoke-fellows, in expounding himself, not to forbid them Communion with the fornicators or Idolaters of this world, but of the Church; whence it clearly appeared that their unbelieving yoke-fellows being not of the Church, but of the world, it was no part of the Apostles meaning in his former, or latter letter, to forbid them communion with their unbelieving yoke-fellows: So that if the Temple of the *Corinthians* had sprung from the mistake of the Apostle's former letter, the Apostle had there fully cleared his own meaning, and withal removed their scruple: there needed no more words of it again here. It seemeth therefore much more probable, that their scruple arose from that other place which you mention *Ezra* 4:10. where the people of God are charged to separate themselves from the people of the land, and from their strange wives: which charge they obeyed also and fulfilled. But if their scruple sprung from that place, then the *Corinthians* had as just occasion to scruple the keeping of their children (which they had by these wives) as the keeping of their wives. For the people of God in that Chapter of *Ezra*, made an holy Covenant with God, to put a way not only their strange wives, but their children also which were born of them *v.* 3.

Now then let us come to consider of the Apostles answer to these scruples as you expound him.

“The Apostle (say you) answereth from a double ground.

“1. In that all things are sanctified to such as believe, *Tit.* 1:15. “therefore believers may have a lawful use of their unbelieving “yoke-fellows. This conclusion is true and intended by the Apostle: but this ground of it the Apostle doth not here give, but you fetch it from another Epistle. It is true, the marriage of the *Corinthians* with their unbelieving yoke-fellows, when they were both infidels, being lawful by God's institution before, now when one of them came to be converted to the faith, the faith of the believer did not make his former marriage which was lawful before, now unlawful, but rather gave him a pure and sanctified

use, both of his marriage, and of his yoke-fellow. But the Apostle doth not here give for a ground thereof, the purity of all things to a believer, though he might have given it for a just ground thereof:) but the only ground which in this Text he giveth of it, is taken from the holiness of their children. Else (saith he) were your children unclean: but now they are holy, which argueth, that there is now in the days of the New Testament, such an holiness acknowledged by God to belong to the children from either parent believing, as is sufficient alone, (though there were no other ground of it) to ratify to the believing parent a sanctified use of his unbelieving yoke-fellow) which holiness can be no other, but the holiness which springeth from the Covenant of grace, wherein God promiseth to be a God to the believer and his seed. Whereas on the contrary if this holiness of the children, did only arise from the lawfulness of the marriage of their Parents, by the same ground upon which the *Corinthians* scrupled the lawfulness of their marriage with their unbelieving yoke-fellows, by the same they might justly scruple the lawfulness of their children, which they had by them, for in that place of *Ezra* (whence you conceive their scruple, either sprung or grew) as the marriage of the Jews with strangers was unclean; and therefore strange wives to be put away: so their children also were unclean, and to be put away also according to the counsel of God and the example of the people in that place. Let us then proceed to examine your second ground, which you say, the Apostle giveth to satisfy the scruple of the *Corinthians*, about the retaining of their unbelieving yoke-fellows.

“2. If you (*Corinthians*) judge your selves to live in such a way of uncleanness, upon which you must now part, then your children so begotten are unclean also, and to be put away. But in that you hold it lawful to retain your children, and not to put them away, though you believe, and they believe not, then much more the unbelieving Parents that bear them. For if the effect be holy, then must the cause be also holy that produceth the same: which is God’s holy Ordinance of marriage, and not the holy Covenant of grace.

This ground hath no ground at all, neither in the Apostle’s words, nor meaning: not in his words; for the Apostle doth not say, your children are holy in your judgement, or as you hold: but the Apostle delivereth his own Judgement, your chil-

dren are holy. Neither will it stand with the Apostles meanings nor with the divine wisdom & power of an Apostolic spirit, to prove an holy use of the parents' marriage, from the conceited holiness, which the Parents imagine to be in their children. For though in Disputation against an adversary, it may be of use to convince him out of his own conceits: yet in dealing with a scrupulous confidence, it giveth no satisfaction, to give him for grounds of lawful Practice, his own conceits.

Neither hath it any ground at all from the Apostles words, or meaning, to gather (as you do) from the holiness of children "an argument from the less to the greater, That if the children "be holy, and so, lawful to be retained, then much more the "unbelieving Parents that bare them (because if the effect be "holy, then must the cause also be holy:) for the unbelieving Parents are no cause at all of the holiness of their children: neither are they holy themselves by the holy Ordinance of marriage. For though marriage itself be holy in respect of the holy institution of it: yet not in respect of the holy efficacy in it, to make all them holy, that enter into marriage estate; yea as to believers all things are pure, so to the unbeliever nothing is pure, no not his marriage, nor his yoke-fellow, nor his children. Though the unbelieving yoke-fellow (*Paul* saith) be sanctified to the believer: yet *Paul* never said, that the believer is sanctified to the unbelieving yoke-fellow. Unbelievers are neither holy themselves, nor is any thing else sanctified to them, much less can they be the cause of producing sanctification and holiness in others. And therefore *Paul* doth infer the holiness of children, not from the holy Ordinance of marriage, but from the holy Covenant of grace.

Silvester. "It had bin in vain for the Apostle to have gone about to prove "the lawful retaining of the unbelieving yoke-fellow from the "holiness of their children being in the Covenant. For nothing "was more clear then this, that such children as are begotten in "uncleanness, were not approved of God's holy Covenant of life: "nor any way holy, either by law, or Gospel; How then could "this tend to remove the scruple of the *Corinthians*, to tell them, "that they might lawfully continue together, because their "children were in the Covenant of grace and life, and so were ho- "ly, when as their scruple lay in matter of uncleanness, upon "which they were to part? Now this must be cleared, whether

“they were so, or not in respect of themselves, before ever they could believe the holiness of their children, or any such to be in God’s gracious Covenant. For the children of adultery and fornication are debarred the holy Covenant, both in the Law and in the Gospel.

Silvanus. It were well if you did debar only the children of adultery and fornication from the holy Covenant now in the Gospel. But you debar all children while they are infants, whether they be the children of lawful marriage, or of adultery; whether children of believers or of infidels; all is one. But seeing God (who keepeth Covenant and mercy with thousands) admitteth believers and their children to the fellowship of his Covenant: who is man, or what is the son of man, that he should debar them?

But to come to your argument, many things are unfound in it. “1. When you say, that nothing is more clear then this “That children begotten in such uncleanness, are not in God’s holy Covenant or any way holy, either by Law or Gospel.

It is too vast an Hyperbole, there be many clear truths generally received of all that fear God: as the Trinity of Persons, the unity of the Godhead, Christ his two Natures and three Offices, and an hundred such like, which are indeed clear to all that fear God. But this (which you say is most clear to all) that children begotten in uncleanness are debarred the Covenant, is denied by *Tremelius* and *Junias*, and others moe, and doubted by many. There be many that conceive *Pharez* and *Zerab* were in the holy Covenant, though begotten in Incest; and *David’s* child though begotten in adultery. And what would you say of all the children, which the Patriarchs had by Concubines? They were not born in lawful marriage. If therefore they were begotten in uncleanness, were they excluded from the Covenant, and no way holy? What say you of *Jepthah* begotten of a strange woman, and therefore in uncleanness? Do you think God did not approve him to be in his Covenant, seeing he called him forth to be a Ruler of his people? If you say *Jepthah* was then faithful when God called him forth to office: What then? yet he was begotten in uncleanness. And then your assertion was too large, without any “limitation to say, That children begotten in uncleanness are “not in God’s holy Covenant, nor any way holy, either by law or Gospel, and that nothing is more clear then this.

As for the place upon which you ground (as I conceive) your assertion, taken out of *Deut.* 23:3. some understood it of coming in and out before the Congregation, to wit, in bearing public Office. Others understand it to speak of a Bastard begotten of a common Harlot; which I note to you, not to shew you my own interpretation of the place, but to wish you to forbear such excessive prodigal expressions; That nothing is more clear, then that which is dark and doubtful to many men, men of as clear, and it may be clearer discernings then your selves.

But for my part, I will not stick with you in this point altogether; let it be granted that children begotten in uncleanness (that "is, as you expound yourself) begotten in adultery and fornication, are not in God's holy Covenant, nor any way holy (for "ought we can discern, leaving God's election of them unto holiness, to himself) either by Law or Gospel; what then? Why "then say you, how could this tend to remove the Corinthians "scruple, to tell them they might lawfully continue together as "man and wife, because their children were in the Covenant of "grace and life, and so were holy; when as the scruple lay in "matter of uncleanness upon which they were to part; which "scruple must first be cleared in respect of themselves, before ever "they could believe the holiness of their children in Covenant; seeing the children of adultery and fornication are debarred the holy Covenant both in the Law and the Gospel.

But this is more unfound then the former, to conceive that the matter of uncleanness upon which they were to part, was the uncleanness of adultery and fornication. For if that were the uncleanness in which those Corinthian yoke-fellows lived before either of them were converted to the faith, surely the Apostle would never have given them advice, not to depart one from another, *ver.* 12, 13. Such as live in the uncleanness of adultery and fornication ought not to abide together, but speedily to depart one from another. Yet, methinks in case of adultery, the Corinthians would of themselves discern what was meet, to wit, speedily and utterly to abandon such wickedness, or at least have lurked in it secretly, and never have consulted with the Apostle about it in a public Church-letter. It if true, it was matter of uncleanness upon which they doubted they must part, and thereupon scrupled cohabitation. But the uncleanness which they suspected, was not adultery or fornication, but disparity of Reli-

gion, in regard of the Infidel yoke-fellow, who still lived in Idolatry. But this uncleanness of Idolatry lying not upon both yoke-fellows, but upon one only; it could not debar the free passage of the holy Covenant from the believing parent to the children. For the Covenant runneth not unto you and to your seed, as speaking of both the Parents, but to thee and to thy seed, as speaking of one of them, of either of them.

If you ask, why then did the Jews put away their strange wives and children, seeing the Covenant might pass to the children from either party?

I answer two things, 1. The Israelites were expressly forbidden to marry with those Nations, and their seed was excluded from entering into the congregation to the tenth generation, *Deut.* 23:3. *Neh.* 13:1. But Christians in the days of the Gospel, lie not under any such prohibition. There is no such partition wall now between Nation and Nation; nor any such severe rejection of the children of any Nation, in case either of the Parents be received into the Church.

2. The case of the Jews who married strange wives in *Ezra*, was not the like case with that of the Corinthians, though the Corinthians might conceive the case to be the same. For the Corinthians had married their Idolatrous yoke-fellows, when both of them were Pagans. But the Jews married their strange wives, when themselves were an holy people. Now though the Jews weir-therefore bound to put away their strange wives, when they had thus polluted the holy Covenant, and the holy seed: Yet even in the times of the Law, if a Gentile Proselyte (especially of a remote Country) were converted to the Jewish Religion, he was not bound to put away his children which he had by his Pagan wife (whom he had married in the days of his ignorance) but he was bound to circumcise them as well as himself, *Exod.* 12:48. And therefore he Was not bound to put them away, but to account them holy, and within the Covenant, and so capable of the seal of the Covenant. And since this believing Proselyte was holy, and his seed also holy, he might therefore have a sanctified use of his wife, though she still continued unbelieving. And therefore if she contented to dwell with him, he ought not (no not then; to have put her away, but to abide with her, which is ih every case of the Corinthians here: and the one of them doth fitly and fully illustrate the other.

And therefore further, it is not a sound speech, which you say, touching these Corinthian yoke-fellows (whereof one was a believer, the other an unbeliever) that this must first be cleared “whether they were unclean or not, in respect of themselves, before ever they could believe the holiness of their children, or any such to be in God’s gracious Covenant. For at it was with those Proselytes of old, so it was with the Corinthians then. The believing Corinthian had just ground (though he knew not so much) to believe himself to be in the Covenant of grace, as well as the believing Proselyte: and his fed to be holy, and in the Covenant, and to have right to the seal of the Covenant, as well as the seed of the believing Proselyte. And from both to conclude, to wit, both from his own faith, and from the holiness of his children, that he therefore hath a sanctified use of his yoke-fellow, though yet unclean in her self through her unbelief.

And therefore take notice further, that it is another unsound speech of yours to say, That it had been in vain for the Apostle, “To go about to prove the lawful retaining of the unbelieving yoke-fellow, from the holiness of the children being in Covenant.

For the Apostle doth go about to prove that very point from that very ground, and from none other, in that 14. *ver.*

Neither was it vain so to do, unless we charge vanity upon the holy Spirit of wisdom, and truth and power that guided him. And indeed the Argument is of eternal force both in the Church of Israel, and in Christian Churches, as hath been shewn above.

Silvester. “But this seemeth a very unsound point to me, (which I see you build much upon in this discourse) which I cannot pass, “that by virtue of a believer’s estate in grace, all his fruit is wholly, and partaketh in the same estate of grace with him: unless they do by some act of their own deprive themselves of it, “as did *Esau* and *Ishmael*. Against which I briefly oppose these Arguments.

“First, if this be a truth, then one may be saved by another man’s faith. For here by virtue of a believers state in grace all his fruit (that is, his children) partake of the same with him, and so far as he doth, only by virtue of his grace, or state in grace, which is the same; And so by the Father’s faith

“the Children share together with him in that Grace, which his faith inflates him in, which is salvation it self.

“Secondly, This Doctrine taketh away the being of Original sin; for here they are all holy, and partakers of Grace, until they commit some actual sin, which denieth any Original sin, for that would make them unholy, though they never committed actual sin in their own persons.

“Thirdly, it layeth a ground of falling out of an estate of grace, For by this Doctrine, *Esau* and *Ishmael*, and all the Children of Believers are holy, and partakers of the same grace, before they committed actual sin, as *Gen. 25:13.* with *Rom. 9:11, 12, 13.* And so *Gen. 17:20, 21.* and *21:9, 10, 12.* But as it tends to Popery, and Arminianism, so I shall leave it, as an old Creed, bare Error, not worth any further meddling with.

Silvanus. Your bare mistake of our Doctrine in this point, maketh your Arguments to fight against an error indeed, and bare enough: but not against any Article of our Creed, which we confess to be all old, even as old, as the ancient and everlasting Covenant: and yet never a whit the more old and bare, by Crediting, but the more new and warm by believing. For to the believer (as to the New Creature) all things become new, whereas in your despoiling and stripping the Infant Children of believers out of the bands (the swaddling bands) of the Covenant, you conspire with old *Adam* herein in their destruction: For as he killed them by his fall, so you bury them not in the Land of Promise, but in the pit of perdition, and land of oblivion and forgetfulness; as forgotten of God in his Election, forgotten of Christ in his Redemption, forgotten of the Holy Ghost in his Sanctification: and so quite out of the way of holiness and Grace; without Covenant, without Hope, without Christ, without God in the world.

But to come to your mistake of our Doctrine, which lieth not in this: That by virtue of a believers estate, we hold all his fruit to be holy. For we acknowledge, that (rightly understood, as you know we express our selves) that by virtue of a believers estate, together with the virtue of the Covenant of grace to him and his seed, all his fruit is holy. But when you add (and partake in the same estate of grace with him) there you quite mistake us. For though all the fruit of a believer be holy: yet all of them do not partake with him in the same estate of all kinds of holiness, which their believing Father enjoyeth: much less so

far as he doth. For whereas there be three sorts of holiness (as hath been touched above) 1. One by imputation from Christ. 2. Another by regeneration from the Spirit. 3. A third by reparation to God and to his Worship, and to participation of the Ordinances through the Covenant: The believing Parent enjoyeth all these; but not so all his seed. All of them indeed partake of the last: Of the first, only the elect; but not of the second, till they be regenerate. And against our Doctrine thus declared, your arguments fall like *Dagon* before the Ark of the Covenant.

For to the first, we readily answer; It followeth not that if our Doctrine be a truth, then one may be saved by another's faith. For we do not teach that all within the Covenant, or all that are holy by the Covenant are saved, or are in a state of salvation: But that by the Covenant they are either in a state of salvation, or under the means of salvation. Neither do we teach that all under the Covenant of grace, are in a state of grace, unless a state of grace be taken in a large sense for such a state, in which they receive the offer and means of grace, which to the elect seed do become "effectual; much less do we teach, that by virtue of a believers being in a state of grace, all his children do partake of the same "grace with him, and that so far as he doth. These things we neither believe nor profess; neither can they be gathered from our doctrine by any just confluence.

Secondly, to your second, the answer is as eay. For,

1. We do not say, that the children of believers are holy with that holiness which accompanieth regeneration, and mortifieth original corruption, but only with that holiness whereby they are admitted to the means of grace, with promise of efficacy to the elect seed, and offers thereof to the rest, so far as to leave them without excust.

2. Suppose we did hold (that which is far from us to conceive) that all infants in the Covenant were regenerate, and so holy as well as their believing Parents, and as far as they; Yet that would not take away the being or remaining of Original sin in them, but only the reigning of it. For do you think that the being of Original sin is taken away from regenerate believers? We for our part believe what we have cause to groan under, that Original sin remaineth in a believer; and though it be pardoned and in some measure mortified, yet it is not utterly destroyed till death.

“To your third, we deny that our doctrine is any ground of “falling away out of an estate of grace; if you speak of an estate of saving grace. For we do not say, that all within the Covenant, or under the seal of the Covenant, are in an estate of saving grace. Though in a large sense all the members of the Church, whether Infants or Professors of the faith, are in such a state of grace, as that they do partake of the common gifts of grace, and of the Ordinances of grace. Nevertheless they may fall away from such grace; which the Apostle feared in some of the *Galatians*, *Gal. 5:4*.

To your fourth and last we answer, it were a false slander, if you “should report that our Doctrine doth hold forth, that ever *Esau* “or *Ishmael* were subjects of a saving estate of saving grace: For though we say, they were born under the Covenant of grace, and were made partakers of the seal of the Covenant, yet we do not say they were ever subjects of God’s saving grace. It is a grace to partake in the means of grace, and in the enjoyment of many gifts of common grace, and in the offers of saving grace; and yet many have enjoyed all these, who nevertheless were never subjects of saving grace, neither of election, whereof your two former texts speak, nor of perseverance in the Covenant, whereof your two latter speak. And to fall from such an estate of grace, I leave it to you upon second thoughts to judge, whether it tend to Popery and Arminianism, or no.

To gather up then the sum of all this discourse about the Covenant of *Abraham* to an head: You have seen it now proved and maintained against all exceptions,

1. That God made a Covenant of grace with *Abraham* and his seed.

2. That God gave circumcision to be a state of the same Covenant to *Abraham* and to all his infant-seed.

3. That by the redemption of Christ, the Covenant and blessing of *Abraham* is come upon the believing Gentiles and our seed.

4. These things being already cleared, the fourth thing that remaineth to be cleared, is, that circumcision being now abolished, Baptism succeedeth in the room thereof, as a seal of the same Covenant to believers and our seed. Which, if it may appear, then it will appear also, that the same Covenant of grace, which gave a Commandment, or word, of institution for the Circumcision of faithful *Abraham* and his seed, doth also hold forth the

same commandment and word of institution, for the Baptism of faithful Gentiles and our seed.

Now that Baptism doth succeed Circumcision it is evident from the testimony of *Paul*, *Col. 2:11, 12.* where the Apostle having proved that we are complete in Christ, by the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him *v. 9, 10.* Lest it might be objected that we want circumcision, and consequently we want the spiritual benefit signified and sealed by it, which is the cutting off of the body of the sins of the flesh, the Apostle answereth, we are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, *v. 11.*

And lest it should have been objected again, that we want an outward sign and seal of this spiritual benefit, the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh. The Apostle answereth again; no neither do we want the outward sign and seal thereof, we being buried with him in Baptism, *v. 12.*

Silvester. “The Argument seemeth to me some what weak; and therefore a weak answer shall serve. What though Baptism succeed circumcision, must it needs follow, that as infants were circumcised, so they must of necessity be baptized? The new Testament succeedeth the Old; must it needs therefore follow, that the same Order be observed now as then?”

Silvanus. It is well that you acknowledge the weakness of your answer; for if you had not, the weakness of it bewrayeth it self; but we acknowledge no weakness of the Argument, unless it be the weakness of God, which (the Apostle saith) is stronger then men, *1 Cor. 1:25.* But you are, deceived, if you thinketh weak answer will serve a weak argument; a weak adversary despised, gathereth strength by contempt. The Gileadites being despised as fugitives, proved too hard for the Ephraimites, *Judg. 12:4.* The Jews being despised for a feeble company, strengthened themselves in God from the contempt of their despisers, *Nehem. 4:2, 3, 4.* yea, there is no sinful weakness of the Creature, no not any weak thought, but requireth weapons mighty through God, to subdue it, *2 Cor. 10:4, 5.* And therefore you are much mistaken, when you think a weak Answer will serve a weak Argument.

“But let us consider your answer, such as it is. What though (say you) Baptism succeedeth Circumcision? must it need fol-

“low, that as infants were circumcised, they must of necessity be “baptized?

Yes verily; or else Baptism doth not succeed Circumcision for what is succession, but the substitution of latter things for former things in the same subject? If the subject be changed, so far as there is a change of the subject, there is no succession. If *Belshazzar* die, and *Cyrus*, or *Darius* reign in *Persia*, here is no succession. But if *Belshazzar* King of the Chaldeans die, and *Darius* King of *Persia* succeed in the Kingdom of the Chaldees then there is a true succession; else not, especially in the case in hand it was requisite for the clearing of the Apostles doctrine, that Baptism should succeed upon all those persons on whom Circumcision proceeded: or else the weakness of your Argument will weaken the strength of the Apostle’s Argument. For the Apostle is to prove, that we are complete in Christ, not only in the inward Circumcision of the heart, which taketh away the sinful body of the flesh, but also in the sign and seal of it, even our Baptism, which doth confirm the same things onto us, and give thus as effectual fellowship in Christ’s death and burial, to the putting away of sin, as they had in circumcision. But take away the Baptism of infants, and the Apostle’s argument will fail. For it might be objected, that the Jews in their circumcision of themselves and their Infants, had a sign and seal, that God would circumcise not only their own hearts, but the hearts of their Infant-seed also; but we in our Baptism, though we have a sign and seal that God will wash and purify our hearts, yet not so the hearts of our Infants also. And therefore we are less complete in Christ in our Baptism, then the Jews were in their circumcision, which if it were admitted, would utterly evacuate the Apostle’s argument; who pleadeth our completeness in Christ, notwithstanding our want of circumcision, in that we enjoy the like fulness of benefit in our Baptism, as the Jews did in their circumcision. But admit the Baptism of our Infants, as well as of ourselves, to succeed in the place of circumcision to the Jews and their infants; and then the Apostles argument proceedeth fully, and concludeth invincibly; That we are as complete in *Christ* in our Baptism, as the Jews were in their circumcision.

Put us not off therefore with a difference of Order in the New Testament, and in the Old; The New Testament (say you) succeededeth the Old; must it needs therefore follow, that the same border be observed now, as then? For though the order may be

changed in succession, yet the extent and amplitude of the subjects is not changed, especially not straitened or diminished, but enlarged in a growing state. The order of *Solomon's* house (who succeeded *David*) was changed not a little in point of magnificence from the order of *David's* house: but yet the subjects were the same, or rather more abundant and numerous, none of *David's* subjects being excluded. It is true, in a declining and decaying state, the extent and amplitude of *Rehoboam's* subjects were not so large, as those of *Solomon's* whom he succeeded. But I hope you will not make *Rehoboam* a type of Christ, in his folly and decay of his Dominion, but rather look at *Solomon* as an intended type of Christ, even in the latitude of his Dominion, that above *David's*; from Sea to Sea, from the River unto the ends of the earth.

Silvester. "The Lord's Supper succeedeth the Passover; but though all "the whole household of every family (as well children as other) "were to eat the Passover, *Exod.* 12:3, 4, yet infants are not ap-"proved as fit communicants of the Lord's Supper, because they are "not capable subjects.

Silvanus. But how do you make it appear I pray you, that infants were to eat the Passover? a roasted Lamb with unleavened bread, and sour herbs, is no meat for Infants; neither doth it appear by the Chapter which you allege, *Exod.* 12:1. that children of more growth were admitted to partake of the Passover, till they were able to discern the spiritual nature and use of it. According to what is written, *v.* 26, 27. of that chapter

"When your children (saith *Moses*) shall say unto you, What "mean you by this service? ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the "Lord's Passover, who passed over our houses in *Egypt*, when he "smote the *Egyptians*.

It is true (that you say) children are not capable subjects of the Lord's Supper: For receiving whereof, the Apostle requireth we should examine and judge our selves. But Infants are as capable subjects of Baptism now in the days of the New Testament, as the Infants of the Jews were of Circumcision. For circumcision and baptism being both of them alike signs and seals, of our new birth (either wrought, or to be wrought,) and in our new birth, we being merely passive, children are as capable subjects passively to be wrought upon to a new birth, men of riper years. But the Lord's Supper being a sign and seal of our spiritual growth in Christ and dispensed not in milk, but in strong meat, bread and

wine, whereunto holy preparation was requisite, Infants are not capable subjects of this, though they be of the other.

Silvester. But why then are Faith and Repentance required unto Baptism, which was not of old time required unto Circumcision?

Silvanus. Faith and Repentance and the Profession of both, were of old required in men of years, not to make them capable subjects of Circumcision, but to receive them into the fellowship of the Covenant to themselves and their seed. Hence *Abraham* was found faithful, before God did receive him into this Covenant, *Nehem.* 9:8. And the like is to be thought of all the Gentile Proselytes; for the first in every kind is an example and pattern to all that follow after. And so the Lord describeth the estate of Proselytes, *Isa.* 56: 3. to 8.

Silvester. But why should then *John Baptist*, and *Philip*, and the Apostles require the profession of Faith and Repentance even of the Jews and Proselytes who were in Covenant before, before they would admit them (as capable subjects) unto Baptism?

Silvanus. Because the Messiah being then come (who was the chief blessing of the Covenant, yet, the very substance of the Covenant, and is therefore himself called the Covenant, *Isa.* 42:6. and 49:8.) He, I say, being come, it was necessary, that they who relied upon the Covenant of *Abraham*, (as all the Jews and Proselytes did) should hold forth also their reliance on Christ, in whom the Covenant and the promises thereof, were confirmed to them and their seed. For then was the Axe laid to the root of the Tree, even to the stock of *Abraham*, and to all the branches that grew upon it, and were ingrafted into it. So that now, if they did not bring forth this good fruit, to believe in Christ, who was then come, they and their Children were cut off from the Covenant of *Abraham*, and must say no more, We have *Abraham* to our Father. But if they did hold forth Repentance and Faith in Christ, then the Covenant and Promise which was made to them, and to their Children before, did still continue unto them, and to their Children. And that is the very ground and meaning of *Peter's* exhortation to the Jews and Proselytes, *Act.* 2:38, 39. Repent, saith he, and be Baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus, &c. For the Promise is to you, and to your Children, &c. as hath been opened above.

Silvester. To keep to the point in hand, we are here speaking of Infants, whom you make to be capable subjects of Baptism (as well as

the Jewish Infants were of Circumcision) and yet not capable of the Lord's Supper. "But this seemeth a double mystery to me, "how persons are fit and capable of union in a state, that are not "fit and capable of Communion in the Ordinances of the same "state. And yet more mystical, how one should be a capable sub- "ject of Baptism, and not of the Supper. I can see no rule for "such a practise in all the Book of God. And it is against the rule "of Nature, that when a Child is born, it should be kept from "food.

Silvanus. It troubleth me to hear you call such plain points both in Religion, and Nature, Mysteries, whereby you mean dark Riddles above your capacity. It was a sad speech of our Saviour concerning such as to whom it was not given to know the mysteries of God, *Matth.* 13:11. The Lord give you understanding in his heavenly Mysteries. "When you make it a mystery, how persons can "be fit and capable of union in a state, and yet not be fit and ca- "pable of Communion in the Ordinances of the same state: You know we esteem infants fit and capable Persons of the Covenant, and of the seal of it, Baptism. If you think otherwise, then you do expressly make Infants unfit and incapable of Union with Christ, or with his Church, and so incapable of the Kingdom of Heaven: Which sometime you disclaim. But if you speak of (all) Ordinances, you speak against common sense, and experience. Infants are members of the Common-wealth, and so are they also of the family: and accordingly fit and capable of Union with both estates. And yet they are neither capable of the Ordinance of Government, nor of the Ordinance or obedience to the Laws and orders in either state.

And why should it seem more mystical to you, that Infants should be capable of Baptism, and yet not be capable of the Lord's Supper? You have seen even now a reason of both, both in Religion and Nature. "And therefore do not say, you can see no "rule for it in all the Book of God: and it is against a rule in na- "ture, to keep a Child born from his food.

For Baptism holding forth the death and burial and Resurrection of Christ, if there be food in these (as there be food indeed; then children born, that want not these (as in Baptism they are administered to them) they want not food. Yea, children in the womb, before they be born to see the light, yet they want not food, but are fed by the Navel from the blood that is gather-

ed in the mothers' womb, before they come forth to suck the breasts. And so is it with the Infants in the Church, they are fed by the blood and Spirit of Christ in Baptism, before they can suck the sincere milk of the Word.

Silvester. The Church of the New Testament succeedeth the Old: but it will not follow, that the like subjects succeed each other also. For "no rejected *Ishmaelite* and *Esau*, are to be admitted either unto "Union or Communion in the Church, under the New Testament, by Christ's appointment, therefore though Baptism succeed Circumcision, yet the same subjects do not so.

Silvanus. The Church of the Old Testament consisted of no other subject matter, then such as professed the Faith of the God of *Israel*, and their seed: And the Church of the New Testament consisteth of the like; Grounds and proofs whereof we have given above. *Ishmael* and *Esau*, when they shewed themselves to be rejected of God, they were not admitted to any further Union or Communion with the Church in the Old Testament. No more were *Simon Magus*, *Ananias* and *Sapphira*: allowed any longer Union and Communion with the Church of the New Testament, after they once shewed themselves like *Esau* or *Ishmael*, to be rejected of God. But before that time *Simon Magus*, *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, were as well admitted into Union and Communion with the Church of the New Testament, as young *Ishmael* and *Esau* in the Old.

Silvester. Yea, but such were not admitted into the Church of the New Testament, by Christ's appointment.

Silvanus. What say you then to *Judas*, a man as bad or worse then any of them, either in Old or New Testament? Did not Christ himself appoint him to an Office, yea, to an high Office in the Church? And can you then say, he had no Union or Communion with the Church of the New Testament?

Silvester. "The two Testaments are as Wills containing certain Legacies, "given and bequeathed only to such, whose names are expressly "set down in the same, as *Rev.* 21:27. In the Old Testament, as "the first will, a male of eight days old, or a Proselyte, *Exod.* 12: "48, 49. *Gen.* 17:10, 14, 23, 25. *Joh.* 8. *Phil.* 3:3, 4, 5. In the New "Testament, as the last will of Christ, the Legacies therein contain- "ned, as the Privileges and blessings of *Abraham*, they are given "only to such as believe, and to none else, *Gal.* 3:14, 22, 25. "*Rom.* 8:17. and 4:11, 12. and 9:7, 8. *Gal.* 3:6, 7. These are such "as are begotten again, by the immortal seed of the Word, born

“of the Spirit, and so children of God, and the only true heirs
 “of the Kingdom of God, with the privileges thereof, as *Jam.*
 “1:18. *1 Pet.* 2:23. *Joh.* 1:12, 13. *Joh.* 3:5, 6. *1 Joh.* 3:9, 10. *Rom.*
 “8:17. These are the holy seed, which God so approves of in the
 “Scriptures, as Subjects of Grace, and Heirs of Life: and being
 “in Covenant, they only have right to the privileges thereof.
 “And their children and off-spring are such as succeed them in
 “the same Faith, and Truth, and so are called the Generation
 “of the Righteous, succeeding each other in the way of Righte-
 “ousness, and not their Infants or personal seed, proceeding from
 “their loins by carnal generation, as *Isa.* 43:5. and 44:3. and
 “54:3. and 59:21. and 66:22. and 61:9. and 65:23. Compare
 “*Rev.* 12:17. *Gal.* 4:26. to 31.

Silvanus. I willingly acknowledge that the two Testaments, are two Wills, containing such Legacies, as are bequeathed and given only to such, whose names are either expressly set down, or whole condition is plainly described in them; Otherwise, if you stand upon express names, are there any such names expressly set down, as *William* and *Rowland*, *Richard* and *Robert*, *Godfrey* and *Geoffrey*, or the like? And would you exclude all such whose names are not expressly set down, from any Legacies in either Testament? But I take your meaning to be, by names, to understand Natures, or Conditions: and by expressly set down, to understand plainly described. The place which you allege out of *Revel.* 21:27. is a part of the description of true pure Church of the Jews, after their last Conversion (the New *Jerusalem*) by the condition of such Proselytes, as from among the Nations shall enter into fellowship with them. They shall not be profane persons, defilers and corrupters of others, nor makers of images which are abominations and lies. And thus far the description agreeth to Infants, as well as to men of riper years. As for the other part of the description, that none shall enter but such as are written in the Lambs book of life; this I would say to it:

1. You cannot justly deny, but that God’s Testimony of the Infants of Believers, that they are holy (*1 Cor.* 7:14.) and that of such is the Kingdom of God, *Mark* 10:14. is as good an Evidence of their Election, as the Profession of Faith and Repentance, which men of years are wont to make, it an evidence of their election before the Church. Again,

2. It is one thing to speak of such as enter into the Church (for

that agreeth to such as were sometime without:) another thing, to speak of the Infants of believers, who were never out of the Church, and so cannot be said to enter into it. Besides,

3. It is one thing to enter into the Church as an abiding member; another thing so to enter, as for some notorious scandal to be cast out of it. Such shall be the purity of the Government of that new *Jerusalem*, as that no profane person shall enter into it, nor any hypocrite: or if any hypocrite should creeps in (as there did in the most pure and discerning times, even in the Apostles days) yet they will in time be discerned, and then call out: Otherwise there would be no use of excommunication in those pure Jewish Churches; which is not probable. Yea, infants themselves, though born in the Church; yet if when they grow up to years they shall degenerate into a profane or scandalous course, they shall not be tolerated to abide in the Church: yea, if they shall not take hold of the Covenant of their Fathers, but content themselves in an ignorant, or civil, or worldly course of life, they shall not be allowed to enter into holy communion with the sincere members of the Church at the Lord's Table.

4. It is one thing to prophecy of the transcendent glorious happiness of an exact pure Church in some age of it: another thing to command and foretell the perpetual continuance of it in the same degree of purity. Sure I am, that when Christ cometh to judgement, he shall find in those pure Churches of the Jews some foolish Virgins, as well as some wise. And the foolish Virgins shall be fruit out from the presence of *Christ* (*Mat.* 25:10, 11, 12.) And they that are shut out, were never written in the Lamb's book of life.

5. It is one thing to speak of the members of the Church universally; another thing to speak of them all indefinitely; all of them, (that is, the body of them, or the greater part of them) may be said to be written in the Lamb's book of life, to be all righteous, (*Isa.* 60:21.) to have their sins forgiven, and not to complain of any sickness, *Isa.* 33:21. But how can this be understood universally of all the members of the Church at all times?

6. It is one thing to speak of the condition, in which God approveth Church-members, another thing to speak of the condition, in which God approveth the receiving of Church-members, God never approved the condition of *Judas* in his A-

postleship, or in his Church-membership; and yet he approved the receiving of him into both.

But to proceed to the difference which you make of the subjects of the two Testaments, though that be a point scanned before, and needlessly repeated here: when you make the Old Testament to bequeath Legacies to a male of eight days old, or to a "Proselyte, and for that end quote *Gen. 17:10, 14, 23, 25.* with other Scriptures; and the New Testament to bestow Legacies (as "the Privileges and blessing of *Abraham*) only to such as believe, "and none else.

You speak not herein according to the language of the Scriptures. For the Scripture never calleth the Testament or Covenant which God made with *Abraham, Gen. 17.* the Old Testament: your mistake herein hath been a principal occasion of corrupting your judgement, both in this point in hand, and sundry other that have reference to it. I have shewed you above, that the Testament which the Scripture calleth the Old Testament, was that made with the Israelites on *Mount Sinai*, not that made with *Abraham, (Gen. 17.)* in the land of *Canaan*. It had been small comfort to us, that Christ by his death should procure us this privilege, that the blessing of *Abraham* might come upon believing Gentiles, if the blessing of *Abraham* were not better then the Old Testament, or Covenant: of which the Apostle said long ago (even in his time) it was ready to vanish away, *Heb. 8:13.* and was indeed soon after (with the Temple) wholly abolished.

It is true, the Covenant of *Abraham* bequeathed this Legacy to a male of eight days old, to be circumcised; but circumcision was only the seal of the Covenant. The chief Legacy bequeathed in that Covenant, was the promise that God would be a Father to *Abraham* and to his seed. And a God he was to them, whilst they were yet in the womb, or being born, were not yet come to be eight days of old. Else all the Infants of God's people that died in their first week, lived and died out of Covenant. And so the Covenant shall depend upon the seal, not the seal upon the Covenant: and the grace of the Covenant shall not know, nor acknowledge, nor own infants the first seven days, until the eight; and so the eternal Jehovah (to whom a thousand years is but as one day) shall limit the grace of his eternal Covenant, not to shine forth upon the Infants of believers, till the eighth day shine forth upon them. It remaineth therefore that the In-

fants of *Abraham* and of his seed were under the Covenant as soon as they were his seed, to wit, even from their conception, though none of them were circumcised, but the males only, nor the males neither, till the eighth day. The males only, partly because the Females had not such a foreskin of their flesh, as was to be circumcised; partly because God would have them trained up (both males and females) to expect all the blessing of their circumcision, from the circumcision of Christ Jesus, mentioned *Coloss. 2:11*. Neither were the males circumcised till the eighth day not because they were not subjects of *Abraham's* Covenant till the eighth day, but for some ceremonial respect, or for some other reason peculiar to that Rite. Circumcision being a cutting of the flesh, it was a work of mercy not to put infants the first week to the pain, till they were better able to bear it. Some have anciently thought the circumcision of the eighth day did prefigure the sanctification of the eighth day for a Sabbath in the days of the Messiah. Others have thought God would have Circumcision deferred till the eighth day, that a Sabbath might pass over the Parents, that he might solemnly renew his Covenant with God, before the seal of the Covenant should be applied to his Infant. Others have conceived, that as God would not have a Kid or Lamb sacrificed to him till it had sucked of the Dam seven days; so neither would he call forth the infant to be solemnly presented and offered to him in that seal of the Covenant, till the seven days were fulfilled. However it was, certain it is that the limitation of the eighth day, was not a moral appendant to the Covenant of grace. And therefore the Infants of believers, both in those former times, and in these now, partaked in the Legacies of the Covenant of grace, as well before eight days, as after.

“Nay (say you) in the New Testament, as the last Will of “Christ, the Legacies therein contained (as the Privileges and “blessing of *Abraham*) are given only to such as believe, and to “none else.

Two things let me here answer you.

1. It implieth a contradiction to say, the blessing of *Abraham* is given to believers, and only to believers, and to none else, intending thereby to exclude the infants of believers. For what is the blessing of *Abraham*? Is it not this promise of grace, that God will be a God to him and his seed? If this blessing then come up. on believers, then this promise is upon them; That God

will be a God to them and their seed. You must therefore either deny the blessing of *Abraham* to come upon believers; or else you must grant the promise of grace to come upon them and upon their "seed also. Yea, (say you) upon their believing seed, such as succeed them in the same faith and truth, not upon others. If that were the meaning of the promise, it could not be said with any congruity of speech, that the promise cometh upon the seed of believers at all. For when the children of believers come to be believers, the promise cometh not to them at all as the seed of believers, but as believers themselves. The children of Pagans when they come to believe, may as well claim the promise to belong unto them as may the children of believers, when themselves do believe. The second thing that I would answer you, is, that all the places which you allege to prove, that the privileges of the Kingdom of Christ do belong only unto believers, they only speak of saving privileges flowing from faith: All which we readily grant you, (as a point out of controversy) do all of them belong to believers, and not immediately to the children of believers, till they come on themselves to believe likewise. But this we further claim in the behalf of the children of believers (which we have proved before, though you are willing to take no notice of it) that the children of believers do come on themselves to believe, by reason of the Covenant of grace which God hath made with believers and their seed, for by that Covenant he hath promised to write the law of faith (as of all other saving graces) in their hearts, that they also may come in God's time and way to enjoy all the other saving privileges of the Covenant, at did their Fathers before them. To take a short survey of the places, which you quote, that Text in *Gal.* 3:22. holdeth forth that the promise (to wit, the promise of eternal life, of which he spake in the next verse before) is given by faith to them that believe. So is also the righteousness of faith given to them that believe, as the other places you quote, shew. *Rom.* 4:11, 12. *Gal.* 3:6, 7. So likewise the inheritance of glory is given to sons, even the regenerate sons of God, who have received the spirit of adoption, at your other place sheweth, *Rom.* 8:17. But what doth all this prove? That no Legacies of the New Testament, no privileges of the Covenant of grace, no blessing of *Abraham* belongeth to the children of believers. It proveth indeed that the righteousness of faith and eternal life and glory, do belong to believers, and to

such as are regenerate by the spirit of adoption. But what think you of faith it self, and the spirit of adoption? Are they not also Legacies of the New Testament? Are they not the Privileges of the Covenant of the blessing of *Abraham*? And these when they are first given, they are not given to believers, who have them already; but to such as have them not: And therefore the children of believers are capable of these Legacies and privileges, by the blessing of *Abraham* in the new Covenant. For this is a promise of the new Covenant, they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them, *Jer.* 31:54. And that knowledge is faith upon which sins are forgiven, *Isa.* 53:11. And this is another promise of the same Covenant, I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine off-spring, *Isa.* 44:3. If then the Spirit and Faith be given by the New Testament, (or which is all one, the new Covenant) then all the Legacies, and privileges, and blessings of the Covenant, are not given only to believers, but some also to the children of believers, that they may receive the spirit and faith also. It is therefore a slender evasion to allege “(as you do) that the children and off-spring of believers are such “only, as succeed them in the same faith and truth, and so are called the generation of the righteous. For they did not succeed them in the same faith, and truth, and righteousness, till it was given them; and given them it was by a legacy of the New Testament, when they were only the children of the faithful, and had neither faith, nor truth, nor righteousness in them. The other places which you quoted do shew, that men of years, (as well as children) are sometimes called the seed of the Church. And that the godly ones amongst them are begotten of the immortal seed of the word, and are regenerate by the spirit of grace, have a seed of God dwelling in them, are maligned by the carnal seed, are approved of God, and acknowledged as heirs of the Kingdom of glory. All which are truths out of question. But none of all the places do exclude the Infants of believers, nor their grown natural children from being subjects of this grace of the Covenant, to have the Spirit of grace and faith poured upon them by virtue of the Covenant. One only place of all the rest, might seem to look that way, which you quote out of *John* 3:5, 6. where it is said that the carnal seed, as being flesh, and destitute of the spirit, cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. And indeed if by the Kingdom of God, were meant the Church (as oftentimes it is)

the objection would be more difficult to resolve. But the truth is, in that place, by the Kingdom of God, it plainly meant, the Kingdom of Glory, not the Church. For *Nicodemus* did not scruple his Church estate, nor enquire how he might enter into the visible Church, but how he might be saved, and inherit the Kingdom of Glory. And therefore Christ directeth him to Regeneration, and to believe in his Name, that he might attain unto everlasting life. *Joh.* 3:5, 14, 15, 16. And though he speak of water, as co-working with the Spirit in Regeneration, (*ver.* 5.) yet by water may either be understood the Spirit it self (as washing the soul like water, in Regeneration:) or, if Baptism be understood, yet it is not there considered, as a necessary ingredient to Church-fellowship, but as a necessary instrument of the Spirit, unto the sealing up of Regeneration, the careless neglect and contempt whereof, would exclude from salvation, *Luke* 7:30.

Silvester. It would therefore seem a more reasonable matter, to administer Baptism to a person, when the spirit is in hand with his Regeneration. But to what end shall Baptism be administered to Infants, when we do not discern that the Spirit is about any such work as the Regeneration of them?

Silvanus. It is no unwonted thing with God, to give that for a sign or a thing, which shall not be accomplished of many days or years after. God gave the Rainbow for a sign, that he would no more destroy the world with water. The performance whereof remained still to be accomplished to the end of the world. God gave two sticks joined together in *Ezekiel's* hand, to be a sign of the joining together of *Judah* and *Joseph* in one state, *Ezek.* 37:16. to 22. which is not yet accomplished, nor will be till their last conversion. God gave Circumcision to the Israelites, as a sign that he would circumcise their hearts, and the hearts of their seed, *Deut.* 29:6. And yet sometimes their own hearts, sometimes the hearts of their seed were not circumcised of many years after. It is enough that as in Circumcision, so in Baptism, God sealeth up that promise and Covenant, which he hath made to believers to be a God to them and to their seed. For the present, according to Covenant God preserveth and nourisheth the seed of the faithful, by his Fatherly providence; God the Son as he undertook to the Israelites, so he hath already performed it to us, to shed his blood for us and our children; The holy Ghost (to whom it belongeth to work Regeneration) he may take his own good time, sooner

or later to perform that work in our Children, which he hath wrought in our selve's. God is as faithful in the New Testament, as in the Old: and Baptism which succeedeth Circumcision in sealing the same Covenant, will undoubtedly be accomplished in applying all the blessings of the Covenant to us and our seed, as ever Circumcision found accomplishment to the Israelites and their seed.

“Although Baptism succeedeth Circumcision, yet the difference
“is great, both in matter and manner, in persons and things,
“Circumcision sealeth to things temporal and carnal, as well as
“spiritual: and so were the subjects and things to come, as un-
“der types and shadows, and so in a cloud and darkness: where-
“as Baptism hath for its subjects, children of the light, in the
“clear evidence of the Spirit, with the face open, and confirms
“faith in things come and already done. For Baptism sealeth
“only to faith in Christ, and grace in the new Birth, which
“cannot be where there is not first a begetting by the immortal
“seed of the Word of Life; for which end God hath ordained in
“the Gospel, faith and believing to go before Baptizing, as *Mat.*
“28:19. with *Mark* 16:15, 16. And that way and order, which
“hath not God for its Author, and found in the Records of
“Christ, with his Image and superscription upon it, let us say,
“as sometimes he did, Give to *Cæsar*, that which is *Cæsar's*, and
“to God, that which is God's. So say I, give to Antichrist, his
“baptizing of Infants; and to Christ, his baptizing of Believers.
“What advantage will it be to Infants, to come before they be
“called? to have a name to live, and yet dead for ought any one
“knows? and to come to the Marriage Supper without a wedding
“garment? Shall the holy things of God be forced upon such,
“as neither believe, know, or once desire them? Will men set a
“seal to a blank? Are Children capable to receive meat before
“they be born? Except we make Baptism the womb of Rege-
“neration, as many do, who teach that Infants are regenerated
“and born again of the Spirit of Grace in Baptism: Whose
“Doctrine is of the same stamp and authority, as he that sent
“then so to Preach; What can be more natural then the begetting
“or bringing forth of the Infant, before seeding of it at the Mo-
“ther's breasts? Is it not sacrilege to press such upon the Wife of
“Christ, the Church, for her Paps, with whom she never travel-
“led, nor bare of her body? Christ will deny himself to be food

“and nourishment to any, where he hath not been first seed to
 “beget? Let men take heed how they impute such folly to the
 “wisdom of God, as to give the milk of his breasts unto any that
 “are still born; or to set dead twigs in his heavenly and divine
 “stock, or natural branches into his holy and spiritual Vine.
 “Let such beware, how they fight against the God of Order, lest
 “instead of finding the breasts to feed, before the womb to bear,
 “they meet with a curse upon the single emptiness of Christ, with
 “a double barrenness, that will admit of no conception, or spi-
 “ritual birth, to succeed the natural. Not that I intend in the
 “least, to deny salvation unto Infants; no, I am so far from this,
 “that I testify against all such Doctrine: nor yet affirm all Infants
 “to be saved: neither do I know among Infants which shall be
 “saved, and which not; Therefore I leave it as a secret thing to
 “God, until he make the same appear by some visible act of
 “Faith, which only giveth a visible right, unto any Ordinance
 “of the New Testament. And therefore I cannot see by the Go-
 “spel how Infants void of visible Faith, should have visible right
 “to the Privileges of Grace; neither ought they to be admitted
 “thereunto.

Silvanus. You have seen by the Gospel, that the blessing of *Abraham*, is
 come upon the believing Gentiles: and that the blessing of *Abra-*
ham was that Covenant (or Promise of Grace) that God would
 be a God to him and to his seed, and that his seed, was not on-
 ly spiritual Christians, for they are believers themselves, but the
 seed of believers: Now believers are one thing and the seed or
 believers is another, they are two distinct subjects of the Cove-
 nant. And seeing the Covenant of God hath distinguished them,
 who are you, that you should confound them? What if Infants
 be void, as you say, of visible Faith? yet their right to the Cove-
 nant and to the seal of the Covenant, is, or ought to be visible
 to all men. For it is visible they are the children of believers:
 and it is visible that the Covenant is given to believers, and to their
 seed; whether they shall be saved or no, it is not required that it
 should be visible: but let it be (as you say it is) a secret thing to
 God, yet God hath made it visibly (shall I say, or audibly?) to
 appear that he accounted them holy (1 *Cor.* 7:14.) and that of
 such is his Kingdom (*Mar.* 10:14.) whose divine testimony of
 them is as clear an evidence to us, that God giveth them right un-
 to the fellowship of the Church, and to the seal thereof, as the

testimony of men can give unto themselves or others, by their verbal profession, or any other visible effects of Faith. “Do not say, “that you are far from denying in the least measure, salvation “unto infants.

For if Infants die in their Infancy, you have apparently declared it above, that you do not acknowledge them to be subjects “capable either of election to grace and glory, or of Union with “Christ, or the Covenant of Grace. And then, how we should believe you (when you say you do not in the least measure deny salvation to Infants, and yet deny all such means of salvation, without which it is impossible, they should be saved) judge you.

But to come to the ground you work upon in denying to them Baptism, whereas Circumcision was granted to them of old, and in both a promise of salvation sealed up to them, until they came to reject it.

Though Baptism (you conceive) succeed Circumcision, yet you put a great difference between them, both in matter and manner, in persons and things.

And what might that great difference be in so many particulars?

“Circumcision (say you) sealed to things temporal and carnal, as well as to spiritual, and so were the subjects (carnal, “as well as spiritual:) Baptism only sealet to Faith in Christ, “and to Grace in the New Birth.

I pray you doth not Baptism seal to the Covenant of Grace, as well as Circumcision, in whose room it succeedeth? And doth not the Covenant of Grace contain promises of temporal, and carnal (or outward) blessings, as well as spiritual? *Hose.* 2:18. 21, 22, 23. Hath not godliness in the New Testament (as well as in the Old) the Promises of this life, as well as that which it to come? *1 Tim.* 4:8. Doth not Baptism expressly seal up unto us, our deliverance out of Affliction, as well as out of corruption? yea, to the raising up of our bodies out of death in the grave, as well as of our souls our of the death in sin? *1 Cor.* 15:29. It is therefore utterly untrue, that Baptism sealet only to Faith in Christ, and to grace in the New Birth; For it sealet to all the blessings of the Covenant, as well those of this life, as of that which is to come. That which sealet to this grand blessing of the. Covenant, that God will be a God to such or such, sealet

unto all other gifts of God also. God never giveth himself alone, but he giveth his Son and his Spirit also. And he that giveth us his own son (saith the Apostle) shall he not with him give us all things else also? *Rom.* 8:32. Yea, where Christ is given he giveth Repentance unto *Israel* and conversion (or turning) of the hearts of the Fathers to the Children, and of the Children to the Fathers, and both of them to the Lord. *Act.* 5:31. and *Luke* 1:16, 17. And Baptism is a seal of these promises, as of the whole Covenant. And therefore Baptism is not only (as you say) a seal to Faiths and to the Grace of the New Birth, as if it only confirmed our own Faith touching our own states, and our own New Birth: But it confirmeth also our Faith, that God will give Faith and Repentance to our Children, and turn their hearts both to the Lord and to us. And therefore he poureth the water of Baptism upon our Children, that he may confirm this promise of Grace, the pouring out of clean water, of his Spirit, and of his blessing, as well upon our seed and off-spring, as upon our selves,

“Another difference which you put, is, that Circumcision sealeth “to things to come, as under Types and shadows, and so to subjects in a cloud, and darkness: whereas Baptism confirmeth “Faith in things come, and already done: and hath for its subjects Children of the light, in the clear evidence of the Spirit, with face open: Suppose this difference were true: That Circumcision sealed to things to come: and Baptism to things come: Circumcision to things veiled, Baptism to things open: Yet this is but a circumstantial difference, in the manner of revealing the blessings promised: but this argueth no material difference at all in the persons, the subjects of the seal. It will only argue thus much, that whereas the same Christ, and the things of Christ were sealed up to them, and to their seed more darkly, they are sealed up to us and our seed, more clearly and plainly.

“Besides, it is not altogether true, that Circumcision sealed up “to them things to come. For both Baptism and Circumcision do seal to both things come, and things to come. Circumcision sealed to *Abraham*, God to be his God, and the righteousness of Faith: both which were already come to *Abraham* before he was circumcised. It sealed up also sundry things to come, to him, and his seed, as their deliverance but of Egypt, their inheritance of *Canaan*, and the coming of the Messiah. But when

the *Israelites* came to enjoy *Canaan*, Circumcision did not then seal to their deliverance out of *Egypt*, or to their inheritance of *Canaan*, as things to come, but as to things come, and already done. Circumcision sealed to the children of *Israel*, that God would circumcise their hearts, and the hearts of their seed, *Deut.* 30:6. which was a thing to come, to such of them as were unregenerate. But after they were Regenerate, the same Circumcision was a seal of that blessing, which God had already done for them So is it with Baptism: Now that Christ is come in the flesh Baptism sealeth that to us, as a thing already done, which to them was a thing to come. And yet the coming of Christ into our hearts, is a thing partly done in the Regenerate, and yet more fully to be done, even to us: and to many of our children it is a thing to come. To the children of God that walk in darkness, and see no light, (which is the case of many, and at some time or other, of all) the return of the Comforter, is a thing to come, and Baptism is a seal thereof: and yet it is a seal also of the first fruits of the Spirit, which are already come. Baptism is a seal of the Redemption of Christ, which is already wrought for us. And it is a seal of our deliverance from all afflictions and from all temptations and from all corruptions, and from all enemies, even from death itself, and many of these are yet to come. So that I can but wonder why such a difference as this should be alleged to prove a personal difference of the subjects of Baptism and the subjects of Circumcision.

If it be said (as you partly express, and partly imply) that “we who live under Baptism are the children of light, but they “that lived under Circumcision, were the children of darkness, “and therefore though their children being its darkness, in such “a dark lime, might be capable of Circumcision, yet in the light “of the Gospel our children are not capable of Baptism, till they become children of light. This is a carnal reasoning, not favouring of the Spirit of God, nor speaking the language of the Scripture. For though the Spirit of God in Scripture do call the children of God the children of light, in opposition to their former carnal estate, whether in their Paganry, or in their unregeneracy (1 *Thess.* 5:5. *Ephes.* 5:8.) yet God never called the children of God un the Old Testament, nor the children of his children, children of darkness: Neither doth he use such a phrase, as to call the children of the New Testament, children of the light, in oppo-

sition to the children of the Old Testament, as children of darkness, Neither is it altogether a true speech, that faith in Christ and grace in the new birth, cannot be where there is not first a begetting by the immortal seed of the word of life. For it hath been shewed above, that the grace of the new birth, and so faith were not wanting in *John Baptist, Jeremiah*, and others, in their mothers' womb, who yet had never heard the Word of life. Though the hearing of the Word of life be the ordinary instrument, which the Spirit of God is wont to use in begetting the grace of the new birth in men of understanding: yet the Spirit himself being a principal part of the immortal seed of the Word, he can beget the grace of the new birth without the Word, when yet the Word cannot do it without him. And yet I will not deny that in some sense (though not in yours) it may be granted, that the Spirit ordinarily never worketh the grace of the new birth in the children of the faithful, but by the immortal seed of the Word of life. For when the Spirit begetteth the grace of the new birth, it is by the Ministry of the Word of life to their Parents, one of them at least. For they hearing the Word of life promising grace and life to themselves, and to their seed, the Spirit co-working with that Word, begetteth faith in them to believe for themselves, and for their seed. And according to their faith, it is done. The Spirit begetteth the grace of life, as well in their seed, as in themselves. The greater is the danger of those Infants whose Parents (like you) do not believe the grace of Christ can reach unto your infants; and so it is no wonder, if your children be deprived of the grace of the new birth, for your unbelief's sake. Be it therefore granted which you take for granted in your next words; "That for this end (to wit, for begetting the grace of the new birth) God hath ordained in the Gospel preaching and believing "to go before baptizing, *Mat. 28:9.* with *Mar. 16. 15, 16.* yet this only proveth that the preaching of the Gospel, and the begetting of faith by the Gospel is requisite to enstate the hearer in the grace and blessing, or (which is all one) in the Covenant of the Gospel. But if the hearer be a Parent of children, and so do believe the Gospel and Covenant of grace to belong to him and to his seed, both he and they according to the order of the Gospel, and Covenant of grace, are rightly baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. All which persons do join together in making this Covenanted sealing to it, to be a

God to the believer and his seed. And if it were not so, the place which you quote out of *Mark*, (Chap. 16. v. 15, 16.) would utterly cut off the children of believers dying in their infancy, from all hope of salvation: which you said even now, you were far from. For if infants for want of hearing the Word in their own persons want faith, and for want of faith may not be baptized, then for want of faith they cannot be saved. For so run the words in *Mark*, He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned. If for unbelief they most not be baptized, for unbelief they must then be damned. But if by the Gospel we understand (as the Scriptures mean) the glad tidings of the Covenant of grace, and so of redemption and salvation by Chi lit preached and proclaimed to believers and their seed, then all such as do believe these glad tidings, to themselves and to their seed, they are commanded by the Order of the Gospel to be baptized themselves, and their children with them; for their children are by the faith of their Parents wrapped up in the Covenant, and so are become capable subjects both of the Covenant, and of the seal thereof. For though the infants themselves be not (it may be) then actually believers, when their Parents are baptized, and themselves with them; yet God who calleth things that are not, as though they were *Rom. 4:17*. He accepteth them into his Covenant by the faith of their Parents, and if they are no longer Pagans and infidels, but the children of the faithful and holy, in whom God hath covenanted to work faith, and the grace of the new birth in the elect seed, and to offer it, and the means thereof unto all the seed, till they utterly reject it: And requireth therefore of the Parents by his Covenant, to neglect no means of grace for the holy institution of their children. And for this end the seal of the Covenant is administered to the Infants to confirm the same to their children on both parts.

If therefore we delighted in returning reproaches for reproaches, “as you lay to us, give the baptizing of believers to Christ, and “the baptizing of infants unto Antichrist, so might we more truly and justly return it to you: Give the baptizing of believers and their seed unto Christ; (For the Covenant of Christ is to believers and their seed, and the seal of the Covenant is due, where the faith of either Parentis fit to receive it to their holy seed;) but give the denial of baptism of Infants to Infidels only, and outlaws from the Church, where neither of their Parents being belie-

vers, their children also are Infidels and outlaws like their Parents, neither believers, nor holy according to Covenant; You need not “therefore ask what advantage will it be to Infants to come before they be called? For Christ called for little children to come unto him, and was displeased with such as did forbid them, *Mark 10:14*. If calling for Infants to come, will suffice, they cannot be said to come before they be called. Suffer (saith he) little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God, And they being such, he put his hands upon them and blessed them. If you ask, why he did not baptize them too, for who can forbid Baptism to such as are blessed of Christ, and by imposition of hands set apart to a blessing, and to the Kingdom of God? I would answer, Jesus himself baptized none, *John 4:2*. If you ask again, but why did not he command his Disciples to baptize them? I answer, because it may be both they and their children were baptized before: Or because it doth not appear, that their Parents came to be baptized of him; or had themselves been baptized before, though out of a godly affection they brought their children to him that he might bless them. Now it was not meet, that the children should be baptized, when neither of the Parents of any of them were baptized, nor brought their children to such an end. Though we baptize children, yet we do not give them, (as you say) a name to live when they be dead. For they may be truly said to live in that sense, wherein the dead bodies of *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob* are said to live to him, *Luke 20:37, 38*. For though they were then dead in their graves, yet God being the God of *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* by Covenant; he will therefore raise up their dead bodies to life again. And so it is with the Infants of believers, though they were by nature dead in sin, yet God (the God of their Fathers) being a God to them by virtue of the Covenant, seeing God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, God will therefore according to his Covenant, raise them up to newness of life, that they may live in his sight; If any of them fall short of that life, it is because they make themselves twice dead, by casting off the Covenant of their fathers.

I marvel why you should call the baptism of Infants a coming to the marriage supper without a wedding Garment. If you mean by coming to the marriage Supper, partaking of the Lord’s Table; you are not ignorant, there is great difference in this case, between the Lord’s Supper and Baptism, such may be admit-

ted to Baptism, as may not be admitted to the Lord's Supper. We do not force (as you call it) the holy things of God upon such as neither believe, nor know, nor once desire them. For if Parents do not willingly offer their children to Baptism, we do not force them. And if they bring them, and present them to Christ, Christ accepteth the Parents bringing of them, as much as the childrens coming in their own person, *Mar.* 10:13, 14.

Why should you call the Baptism of infants the setting of a "seal unto a blank?

Is the Covenant of God to believing Parents and their seed become a blank? Is the promise of pouring out the Spirit of regeneration upon the seed and off-spring of believers a blank? *Isa.* 44:3. But it seemeth by your opinion, if our children be not full of themselves, all the promises of God are a blank and empty to them.

Though children be not capable to receive meat before they be born; yet their Parents who are born again, had need of some sign (the sign appointed of God) to seed and strengthen their faith in the Covenant, that God will be a God to them and their seed.

Besides, the Baptism which children receive before their regeneration is a seal and confirmation of the Covenant, and of all the promises thereof to them, after their regeneration. The Circumcision which *David* received in his infancy, did confirm his faith and confidence of victory against *Goliath* (the uncircumcised Philistine) after he was grown up to man's estate, *1 Sam.* 17:26. Signs given of God for future blessings are neither blanks, nor preposterous.

We do not make baptism (as you say) the womb? of regeneration, nor teach, that Infants are regenerated and born of the Spirit of grace in Baptism.

Nor do I find that it was their judgement, who compiled that book where such words are used; men may thankfully acknowledge a benefit as received, when they have only received a promise of it, and see it confirmed with a sign; when *Gideon* received a sign of the accomplishment of God's promised victory over the *Midianites*, though that sign was but a dream, and of a blessing to come, yet *Gideon* thankfully worshipped God for it, and accepted the Victory as already granted him. For so saith the Text, *Judg.* 7:15. When *Gideon* heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation of the dreamer he worshipped and retur-

ned into the Host of *Israel*, and said, Arise, for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the Host of *Midian*.

“It is to no purpose to ask m (as you do I what can be more “natural, then begetting and bringing forth of the Infant, before feeding of it at the Mother’s breasts? Is it not sacrilege to “press such upon the Paps of the Wife of Christ (his Church) “(with whom she never travelled, or bare of her body?

For we do not look at the Sacraments, neither doth the Scripture take them, as the breasts, or Paps of the Church; The wit of man can make an Image to it self, and then play before it, as the Israelites did before the golden Calf. Twice doth the Scripture mention the breasts of the Church, and never meaneth them for the Sacraments, but for the Ministers of the Church, full of the sincere milk of the Word, equal in Office (as the breasts in bigness) and such as do themselves seed among Lillies, *Cant.* 4:5. and 7:3. to 8:10. You must strain your wit far, to make the breasts of the Church agree to the Sacraments, Baptism is rather the Navel of the Church, whereby the Infant hath nourishment derived to it before it be born, *Cant.* 7:2. And as for the Lord’s Supper, if it be the other of the two breasts of the Church, the oldest and strongest Christians had still need to suck of that breast; and so must become again babes in Christ. Yea Baptism itself, though it be a seal of Regeneration whether past, or to come, yet it sealeth up also such deliverance from afflictions, and persecutions (1 *Pet.* 3:21.) and such sanctification, and cleansing from all sin, to present us to Christ without spot or wrinkle (*Ephes.* 5:26, 27.) that the strongest Christian will have need to feed upon his Baptism (as strong meat for strong men) even when he is to lay down his body in the dust, and to expect from his Baptism the resurrection of his body, 1 *Cor.* 15:29.

“But, say you, Christ will deny himself to be nourishment to “any, where he hath not been first seed to beget.

Answer. Though none can take any nourishment, till they be begotten. No Prince will deny to give a Charter to a Corporation of his Subject; (and a Charter sealed with a Great Seal) of such and such Lands, and inheritances, for the maintenance and nourishment of them, and their children, and their children’s children for ever, before any children be yet born to them.

Your exhortations therefore, for want of ground-work of Truth, do fall of themselves to the ground, like an house built upon the Sand.

“Let men take heed (say you) how they impute such folly to “the wisdom of God, as to give the milk of his breasts, to any that “are still-born.

For neither are all the Infants of the faithful Parents still-born (I mean, in respect of spiritual life,) and if they were, yet Baptism is not called in Scripture God’s milk: and if it were resembled to milk, yet it is not milk only, but it serveth for many other uses. It is a seal of that Covenant, whereby God promiseth both to be seed, and milk, and strong meat, and medicine, and all in all, unto believers and their children.

Your next exhortation, to take heed how we set dead twigs in his heavenly and divine flock, or natural branches in his holy and spiritual Vine, it hath received Answer above; you have heard before, that dead persons if in Covenant, are alive to God, *Luk.* 20:37, 38. And though a twig cannot receive life from the stock unless it bring life with it before it been grafted: yet Christ can give life to dead branches that are put to him, as well as the dead corps of *Elisha* could give life to the dead man cast into his grave, *2 King.* 13:21.

Your third exhortation hath as little ground as either of the former.

“Let men beware (say you) how they fight against the God of “Order, lest in stead of finding the breast to feed, before the womb “to bear, they meet with a curse upon the single emptiness of “Christ, with a double barrenness, that will admit of no spiri-
“tual birth to succeed the Natural.

If you will needs have Baptism to be the breast of the Church, I will not contend with you; for there is in it also some milk for babes, as well as there is much strong meat in it for men of riper years. But when we do bring Infants to Baptism, we do not first find the breast to feed them, before we find the womb to bear them. For the Apostle maketh the two Covenants the two Mothers, of which all the children of the Church are born, whether in the Old or New Testament, *Gal.* 4:22, 23, 24. If then we have found Infants to be in the Covenant, we have found a Mother, and in her, a womb to bear them. And if we bring none to Baptism, but such as are the children of the Covenant, then we do not find a breast to feed them, before a womb to breed and bear them. But we proceed Orderly (even according to the wisdom of God, and the ancient Order, which he hath set in his

Church) we first find a womb to breed and bear them, and then a breast to nourish and feed them. The curse therefore which you threaten, is causeless, and being causeless will not come, *Prov.* 26:2.

Thus by the help of Christ, our Arguments for the Baptism of Infants, have been at last cleared from your exceptions, from so many of them at least, as you have made against them hitherto. Now (if you please) let us inquire into your Arguments (if you have any) against the Baptism of Infants.

Silvester. Yes, I have divers Arguments (eight or nine) against the Baptism of Infants, besides many evil consequences, which I observe, will follow unavoidably upon the Baptism of Infants.

CHAP. IV.

Silvanus. WHAT may be your first Argument against the Baptism of Infants?

Silvester. “The first that I have met withal is that (whereto you have already spoken in part) because there is neither command, nor example in all the New Testament for the baptizing of Infants. And yet the Order and Government of the New Testament in the administration thereof, is no way inferior to the Old. But in the Old Testament there was an express Rule, by Commandment from God, what Communicants were to be admitted to Circumcision, and other Ordinances of that nature, and what not. But this Order is no where found in the New Testament for the baptizing of Infants, and therefore the same is not to be practised.

Silvanus. To this Argument you have received an Answer already: when in the beginning of our conference, I gave you three grounds for the Baptism of Infants: the two former from the Commandment of Christ, and of his Apostle in the New Testament: the third from the Old and New Testament together, gathered from the Analogy of Circumcision and Baptism. The Commandment of Christ was cleared from *Math.* 28:19, 20. The Commandment of the Apostle was opened from *Acts* 2:39. The Analogy of Circumcision and Baptism, was urged from *Gen.* 17. with *Col.* 2:11, 12.

Silvester. I have already acquainted you with the sum of those exceptions, which I have met withal, against all the Arguments which you have alleged for the grounding of the Baptism of Infants upon any word of Commandment or Institution from Christ and his Apostles. Only one exception further cometh to my mind against your third Argument, taken from the Analogy of Circumcision and Baptism.

“Suppose that the Covenant of God with *Abraham*, wherein “he promiseth to be a God to him and his seed do continue to “believers and our seed now in the days of the New Testament: “Suppose also that Baptism do succeed Circumcision: yet as it “was not the promise of God to *Abraham* that was a sufficient “ground of Circumcision, but God’s word of Commandment “(or else it would have been sin to *Abraham*, to have circumcised “his seed:) so neither is it the promise and Covenant of God to “believers, to be a God to us, and our seed, that can be a sufficient ground to us of baptizing our Infants.

Silvanus. I did make account, this exception had been prevented above as well as the rest. For we do not ground the Baptism of Infants merely upon the promise of grace, that God is a God to us and our seed: but upon the Commandment of God, that they to whom God is a God, by Covenant, they should receive the seal of the Covenant. Which Commandment was (as you know) expressly given to *Abraham*: and thereupon he circumcised himself and his seed, *Gen.* 17:10, 11. If then the same Covenant be now given to the faithful and our seed, and if Baptism be given to us in stead of Circumcision, then the same Commandment which required *Abraham* to be circumcised and his seed, requireth us to be baptized and our seed. And indeed upon this very ground the Apostle *Peter* urgeth every one of them who repented to be baptized, they and their seed, because the promise was given to them and their seed. The strength of which Commandment of his, lay in the Commandment of God to faithful *Abraham*, to be circumcised and his seed, and the substitution of Baptism now in the room of Circumcision. And verily there is the same moral equity, and reason of the Commandment, both to faithful Israelites, and faithful Christians. For as the Circumcision of *Abraham* and his seed, confirmed the faith of *Abraham*, that God would be a God to him and his seed: And also engaged *Abraham*, both himself to walk in the obedience of God’s will,

and to train: up his children to walk accordingly, so the faithful of the new Testament stand in the like seed to have their faith confirmed, that God will be a God to us and our seed: And we are in like sort engaged both to walk in God's ways our selves, and to bring up our children in the like holy instruction and information of the Lord.

Silvester. "But let it be examined a little, how the authority of the commandment of Circumcision can bear out the authority of baptizing infants. Circumcision it doth not; for all agree that we are now to baptize, not to circumcise. The Minister circumcising it doth not; then the Matter of the family was to circumcise, now one ordained by Christ in the Church to baptize. The same part of the body it doth not; that circumcised the foreskin, Baptism the whole man. The age it doth not; that the eighth day, this any day. The subject it doth not; that a male only, this both male and female. Now in that it doth not enjoin any of all these: wherein then can the authority of that commandment consist now in Baptism so as to enjoin Infants to be baptized? And whereas men cry out from that command, that Infants, Infants, Infants must be baptized, as they were commanded to be circumcised: Why, this commandment, if it should be so, serves for none but only males. So that if they will have the females to be baptized, they must look out another commandment for them, and so there must be two commandments in one Ordinance.

Silvanus. There is no inconvenience for two commandments to meet in one Ordinance. Circumcision was more then once commanded, (*Gen. 27. Lev. 12.*) So was the Passover, *Exod. 12. Numb. 9. Levit. 23: 5.* Neither is it another commandment that we allege for the baptizing females, but only an example, *Acts 8:12.* which yet being precedential, is of like force as a commandment; look wherein we vary in the administration of Baptism from the Rite and manner of Circumcision, we have just warrant for it in the New Testament. Else we should no more have varied from it, then did the Proselytes of the Old Testament. The rite of Circumcising, and of the foreskin, is expressly abolished, *Gal. 5:2.* And we are said now to be circumcised in being baptized, *Col. 2:11, 12.* The Minister of Circumcision, if it were not removed in the Old Testament from the family to the Synagogue, from the father of the family to the Levite; yet surely removed it was by Christ, to the Mini-

sters of the Gospel, *Mat.* 28:19. The age had something in it ceremonial, as hath been shewed above. The sex (or subject, as you call it) was enlarged by the example of *Philip*, *Acts* 8:12. So that we vary in nothing from the Commandment of circumcision, but by the like warrant whereby Circumcision was at first commanded. Shew us the like warrant for the rejecting of infants from Baptism, as we shew you for the changing of all the rest, and reason will require we should hearken to you.

“Tell us not, that *John Baptist* baptized such as professed their “faith and repentance; and *Philip* baptized the Eunuch upon the “profession of his faith.

For we do also now require the like from Proselytes or converts of grown years, whether Jews or Pagans. But shew us any ground from Scripture (either out of the Old or New Testament) whereby infants are excluded either from the Covenant, or from the seal of the Covenant, and then we shall plead no longer for the Baptism of infants from the Analogy of Circumcision.

Silvester. I will not press again, that which hath been alleged before. But there is something further that sticks with me, which may answer your demand, and give you a ground for the exclusion or Infants, alleged out of *Gal.* 4:22, 23, 24, 25. Where the two Mothers, *Hagar*, and *Sarah* type out the two Testaments; and their “two sons, *Ishmael*, and *Isaac*, type out the subjects of the same; “the one by the bond-woman, born after the flesh; but he of the “free-woman was by promise, *v.* 23. Now as *Hagar* the mother, “signified the old state in general; so *Ishmael* her son, signified “the children of the same state, born after the flesh, as he was. “For though he was the child of *Abraham*, yet he was no “child of promise. Now for *Sarah* she was the lawful wife of *A-rahah*, and so a free-woman, with whom the Apostle compareth “the estate of the Church of the New Testament, the true Spouse “and wife of Christ, who is free from all servitude and bondage, “and stands only in subjection to Christ her husband, as *Sarah* “did to *Abraham*, and *Isaac* her son, signifying the true, holy, “and blessed seed. Of this holy stock, according to the Spirit, and “so as *Isaac* was true heir according to promise. For the Gospel “approveth of none, as true heirs of the blessing, and so the right “seed, and truly in the Covenant, but only such as the promise “produceth and brings forth, as it did *Isaac*. For *Isaac* came not “by ordinary course of nature, but by virtue of the promise of

“God, and faith in the same, which raised nature above it self, to bring him forth. By this the wisdom of God holds forth as in a figure, who are *Abraham’s* seed approved of in the Gospel, and they are such as are brought forth by a power above nature, which is by the promise of God, and faith in the same, as *Isaac* was, &c.

Silvanus. Your whole gloss upon this text standeth like the Temple of *Dagon*, upon two main pillars, which being overthrown, the whole fabric will fall (like *Dagon* himself) before the Ark of the Covenant.

1. You conceive that *Hagar* and *Sarah* signify the several estate of the Churches of the Old and New Testament, *Hagar* the old state of the Church in the Old Testament: and *Sarah* the state of the Church of the New Testament.

2. You conceive that their two sons type out the different subjects of the same. But neither of both these will stand with the Apostles words, nor scope. His scope is to dispute not against infants to exclude them from being subjects of the Church: but to exclude legal Justiciaries (such as desired to be under the law) from being children of the Covenant of grace. The words of the Apostle are these: The two Mothers, are the two Covenants, *v.* 24. not the old state of the Church in the Old Testament, and the new state of the Church in the New Testament; *Hagar* is Mount *Sinai* in *Arabia*, (saith he) and answereth (or standeth in the same rank, as the word signifieth) to *Jerusalem* that now is, *v.* 25. Mark that I pray you, he saith, not to *Jerusalem* in her old estate, in the days of the godly Kings, and holy Priests, and Prophets, and people (the Saints of the Lord who looked to be saved by the grace of Christ, as well as we, *Acts* 15:11.) but to *Jerusalem* that now is, under the corrupt and degenerate Priests and Rulers, Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadduces, who renounced Christ, and the righteousness of faith in him, and seek to establish their own righteousness which is by the law. And though some of them received Christ, (as did the false Teachers in the Churches of *Galatia*) and did also acknowledge their freedom from the sacrifices and burnt offerings, and from many other Levitical Ceremonies of the Law, yet so long as they looked to be justified by the works of the moral law, and retained circumcision as still necessary by the law, they still pertained to *Jerusalem* that now is (as the Apostle calleth it) and all of them were children of the bond-woman, that is, of the

Covenant of the Law given on Mount *Sinai*. It is therefore a gross error, and withal a notorious injury to the godly Saints that lived in the days of the Old Testament, to account them the children of *Hagar*, and to make it a part of their bondage, that their Infants were received into the fellowship of the Church with themselves. No, no, whilst themselves believed in the promised seed for righteousness and salvation, and their children were circumcised into the grace of the Covenant (the righteousness of faith) they and their seed were accounted the children of the Covenant of grace, (the free-woman) till any of them rejected that grace, at *Ishmael* and *Esau* did.

By this which hath been said, may easily be understood, what is meant by *Sarah*: not the state of the Church of the New Testament, (as you confine it, rather then define it) but the Covenant of Grace, by which God (of his Grace) gave himself to be a God to believers and to their seed, both in the Old and New Testament, till any of them should afterwards grow up to renounce him, and the Grace of his Covenant, which if they do, then their Circumcision is made uncircumcision: and they renouncing the Covenant of Grace, fall under the Covenant of the Law, and come to be accursed by the Law.

But for the children of this Covenant (of whom *Isaac* was a type) they are not only such as are Regenerate, above the ordinary course of Nature, by virtue of the Covenant of Grace, and so do believe in the promise of Grace for righteousness and salvation; but also the children of such believing Parents, whom their Parents do beget in the Faith of the Covenant and Promise of Grace to themselves and their teed. For *Isaac* himself when he was an Infant born, he was not as then born anew of the promise and spirit of Grace, but his Father begot him in the Faith of the Promise. And his Mother *Sarah* by Faith received strength to conceive seed, because she judged him faithful who had promised, *Heb.* 11:11.

The second main pillar upon which your gloss on this Text, is “held up, is, that the two sons, *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, type out the different subjects of these two states of Churches: *Ishmael* being a “type of the estate in general of the Church of the old Testament, “and *Isaac* being a type of the state of the Churches of the New “Testament.

But neither will this gloss stand with the Apostles words. For

the Apostle maketh these two sons to be the children engendered for bred) of these two Mothers. Now children as they are engendered or bred of their Mothers, they are not properly the subjects of their Mothers (though they be subject to them; but their effects. The Mothers therefore being not the twofold state of the Churches of the Old and New Testament, but the two Covenants of the Law and of Grace, *Ishmael* the son of *Hagar* the bond-woman, is the type of all those Members in the Church, whether of the Old or New Testament, as who look for righteousness and salvation by the works of the Law, and do therefore lie under the bondage, and curse of the Law, such were those in *Micah* 6. who thought God would be pleased and appeased with thousands of Lambs and ten thousand Rivers of oil, *v.* 6, 7. Such also at that time was the whole body generally of the Priests and Rulers, and People of *Jerusalem* in the Apostle's days, which he calleth the *Jerusalem* that now is. And such were all the false Apostles and false Teachers, and their Disciples in the Church of *Galatian*, *Philiippi*, and *Colossæ*, who refused the righteousness of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and fought to establish their own righteousness by the works of the law, on the other side, *Isaac* being the son of *Sarah*, the free-woman, and *Sarah* representing the Covenant of Grace, he is the type of all those members in the Church, whether before Christ in the Old Testament, or since Christ in the New, as are begotten and bred of the promise and Covenant of grace, whereby God giveth himself to be a God to the believer and his seed: who therefore look for all their righteousness and salvation to themselves and their seed, not from the works of the Law, nor from all their outward privileges, but from the grace and righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. Only thus much further I will not stick to grant you. That as the two Covenants are the two mothers that are represented by *Hagar* and *Sarah*; so those Churches that are begotten and bred of either of these Covenants, (and so are themselves the children of the one, or of the ether of these Covenants) they may be said to be the mothers of those particular members, which by their Ministry are engendered and bred; whether of the carnal seed of the Covenant of the Law, or of the spiritual seed of the Covenant of Grace. For in the Hebrew language, any whole Society is called a mother, and the particular members thereof are called children, sons or daughters. And this may some-

what further help to clear the words and meaning of the Apostle in this place. For the Apostle here maketh the Covenant of the Law to answer to *Jerusalem* that now is, *v.* 25. as if so be the Covenant of the law, and the Church of the present *Jerusalem*, which stood for the Covenant of the law, were both *συστοιχα*, of one rank, and either or them might be called an *Hagar*, a mother engendering their children unto bondage. And indeed the Church engendereth and breedeth her children, by dispensing and administering the seed of that Covenant, of which themselves are begotten. In like manner the Apostle maketh the other mother *Sarah*, the Covenant of grace to be all one with the true Church of Christ, which he calleth the *Jerusalem* which is above, and maketh her the mother of us all, *v.* 26. Because though she be her self begotten and bred of the Covenant of grace, yet she dispensing and administering the same spiritual seed, begetteth children like her self, partakers of the liberty of the sons of God.

And yet to add a word more (which may tend further to clear the words and meaning of the Apostle) as this seed of the Covenant of Grace, dispensed and administered by true and pure Churches, is rightly called spiritual seed, in which the Spirit of grace delighteth to breath and work; and therefore they that are begotten of it, are said to be borne after the Spirit: So the seed of the Covenant of the Law, is rightly called seed, as that which leaveth men that are begotten of it more carnal then they were before. For it either puffeth them up to a carnal confidence of their own strength and righteousness, or else sinketh them into an horrible pit of diffidence and desperation. And therefore they that are begotten of it, are rightly and fitly said to be born after the flesh. And that is the very true meaning of the Apostle's words, *Gal.* 4:29. As it was then, so is it now: He that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit. Where by such as are "born after the flesh, the Apostle doth not mean (as you understand him) such as are born by an ordinary course of nature, in away of a natural generation; but such as are bred and begotten of the carnal seed of the Covenant of the law; which as it begot in *Ishmael* a carnal confidence of his own strength (or else he would never have sleighted and mocked the promised seed:) so it begot in *Cain*, and *Saul*, and *Judas*, an utter despair of grace and salvation.

Thus then you see (I hope) at the length a true and just answer

unto your first argument against the Baptism of Infants, taken from the supposed want of command or example of the baptising of Infants in all the New Testament. By that which you have heard, it appeareth to the contrary, that the Baptism of Infants hath not wanted a commandment from Christ in the institution of Baptism, *Mat.* 28. nor a commandment from the Apostle (joined with an example) in the first solemn administration of Baptism, *Acts* 2. nor a commandment and example from the Lord God in the institution of a proportional seal of the same Covenant, in the days of *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. which though you seem to undervalue, because it is fetched out of the Old Testament; yet be not you deceived by the equivocation of the name. For the Old and New Testament is sometimes put for the Covenants of the Law, and of grace, (as *Gal.* 4:24, 25.) sometimes for the Books of the Old and New Testament, as *2 Cor.* 3:14. Now true it is, that the institution of the Covenant of grace, and of the seal of the Covenant of grace, *Gen.* 17. is found indeed in the books of the Old Testament; but the substance of the New Testament, and the circumstances of that Ordinance, which are changed in the books of the New Testament, they are not changed by way of abrogation or diminution, but by way of accomplishment and enlargement. The Covenant is enlarged from the stock of *Abraham* to all Nations; the seal of the Covenant, Circumcision, is translated to another more easy and acceptable; the time is enlarged in respect of the day; the Minister is enlarged in respect of his public place; the subject is enlarged in respect of the sex; and surely not diminished, nor straitened in respect of the age. It is therefore a needless pretence to plead, That surely the New Testament, and the Order, Government, and Administration thereof, are no way inferior to the old Testament, where all things are directed by express rule.

For a great part of the New Testament or Covenant is express delivered in the books of the Old Testament. *Paul* professeth publicly, he taught nothing but what *Moses* and the Prophets did say should come, *Acts* 26:22. And the greatest part of the books of the Old Testament hold forth the Doctrine, Worship, Order and Government of the New Testament, to such who have not a veil laid over their hearts in the reading of the Old Testament, *2 Cor.* 3:14. Let us therefore proceed to your other arguments, against the baptism of Infants, and consider if there be any greater weight or strength in them.

CHAP. V.

Silvester. I Have met with this as a second argument against the Baptism “of Infants, That in the Baptism of infants there is an high “contempt and injury offered to Christ, as he is the husband of “the Church, (his holy Spouse) to force upon him a natural “wife, himself being spiritual, and desireth the like associate) “whereas such a Church is founded upon the natural birth, name- “ly Infants; because commonly to one that is born of the spirit, “there is twenty born of the flesh.

Silvanus. Christ did not take it as well an high contempt or injury offered to him by *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and the whole house of *Israel*, that the infants of his people, and of the Proselytes that joined to them, were received into Covenant with him, and admitted to the seal thereof; when as yet himself was as spiritual then as now he is. You do herein apparently charge Christ himself with folly, and with indignity offered to himself; that he should so much forget himself, that he being spiritual, should take so many thousand Infants into the Covenant with him, who for the most part are natural, and (as you say) for one that is born of the Spirit, there were twenty born of the flesh.

But again, let me tell you, that though Christ in taking a company to be a Church unto himself, doth enter into marriage Covenant with them, both in the Old Testament, *Jer.* 31:32. and in the New, *2 Cor.* 11:2. yet not into a marriage Covenant with each member at first. Christ entered into a marriage Covenant with the Congregation of *Israel* in the wilderness, *Ezek.* 16:8. yet the children of this Congregation he calleth them not his Spouses, but his children, *v.* 20, 21.

Furthermore, you shall do well to observe, what Spirit breaths in such a speech, when you say, That such a Church as receiveth infants of believing parents into the fellowship of the Covenant, “and seal thereof, that such a Church is founded upon the natural birth. For the Lord himself speaketh of such a Church of *Israel*, as founded upon his Covenant, *Ezek.* 16:8. And the Apostle saith, We are built upon the same foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, *Eph.* 2:19, 20, 21. See what a vast difference there is between the Spirit of your language, and the language of the Spirit of Christ.

CHAP. VI.

Silvester. 3. I Find this for a third Argument, against the Baptism of Infants.

“That this practice overthroweth and destroyeth the body of Christ, the holy Temple of God. For in time it will come to consist of natural, and so a Nation, and so a National Generation, and carnal members. Amongst whom, if any Godly be, they will be brought into bondage, and become subjects of scorn and contempt: and the power of Government rest in the hands of the wicked.

Silvanus. This Argument putteth a fear where no fear is, or at least a causeless fear. For suppose all the Children of the Church be baptised, It is an unwonted and unexpected enlargement in these days for one Congregation to grow so populous as to become a Nation. We read of no such increase of any Congregation since Christ’s time.

But suppose that all the children in a Nation were baptized, yet that of it self will not make a National Church, but many Churches in one Nation.

Besides, if one Family should grow a Nation, as the house of *Jacob* did, and all the children being received into Covenant, and unto the seal thereof, the whole National Generation should become members of the Church, as they did in Israel: Yet that will not bring the godly into bondage, and into scorn and contempt, nor put the power of Government to rest in the hands of the wicked.

For the faithfulness of God (who keepeth Covenant and mercy with his People) prevented that in the House and Church of Israel. Where, though the whole Nation was in Covenant with God: yet ordinarily the Government was kept in the hands of such, as either were Godly, or for the most part favoured godliness. Or, if they failed therein, God was wont to deliver both them and their Governors, into the hands of their Enemies, that they might learn to rule with God, and to be faithful with his Saints.

But furthermore, this above all may justly satisfy you: That in the state of the Churches of the New Testament, God hath instituted such an order therein, that though all the Infants of the

Church-members be baptized; yet none of them are received (by the order of the Gospel) unto Communion at the Lord's Table, nor unto liberty of power in the Government of the Church, untill they do approve themselves both by public Profession before the Church, and also by their Christian conversation, to take hold of the Covenant of their Fathers, and of the Church, and to walk in the steps of their Faith, and professed subjection to the Gospel of Christ. For it is an express Commandment given, as to all Christians in their place, so especially to the Officers and Brethren of the Church, Not to call holy things to dogs, nor Pearls before Swine, *Mat. 7:6*. Nor to receive such to the Lords Table, as have not on a Wedding Garment. But in such a cafe the Servants and Ministers of Christ, are to bind such hand and foot, (to wit, by the censures of the Church,) and to cast them out, unto outer darkness, (*Matth. 22:11, 12, 13.*) that is to say, into such an estate of darkness, and misery, wherein they live that are without. For without are Dogs, and Sorcerers, and Whoremongers, and Murderers, and Idolaters, and Liars, *Rev. 22:15*. And there want not holy, and judicious, and faithful witnesses of the Gospel of Christ, and of the ways of pure Reformation, who do so expound the principles of the Apostles' Catechism, *Heb. 6:1, 2*. That none of the Members of the Church were admitted to the fellowship of the Lord's Table, but such as were enlightened to Repentance, and had tasted of the Heavenly gift of Faith, and were partakers of the Holy Ghost (in some kind) and had tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, through the acknowledgement of the Resurrection of the dead, and of the last judgement.

Of these six Principles of the Apostles' Catechism, the Lord's Supper is not mentioned for one amongst them, because these chiefly concerned the baptized members of the Church, to be trained up unto the knowledge (and taste at least) of them, before they could be admitted to the Lord's Table. And if their savoury profession of these things were approved before the Church, then they were received (as confirmed Members) by laying on of hands. Which holy order was a long time preserved pure in the purer sort of Primitive Churches. But afterwards, it (as all other the Institutions of Christ,) were abused and adulterated in the Papacy: this profession and confirmation of baptized Infants, being translated from the Church, whereof they were members, to

the Bishop; and their holy Profession of the principal Doctrines and Duties of Christianity transformed into a Catechism touching the Faith, and Promise of their God-fathers, and God-mothers: and the Imposition of hands upon them by the Pastor, or Bishop, was finally transformed into a Sacrament. But all these gross superstitions, were but super-additions to the first primitive holy institution. And yet, as by the straw and stubble, you may gather what kind of Grain grew in the field: So by these abuses of this Ordinance, it may easily be gathered, what was the practice of the Primitive Apostolic Churches in this case. Let then this primitive practice be restored to its purity (as it is in some of the first Churches planted in this Country) and then there will be no more fear of pestering Churches with a carnal Generation of members baptized in their Infancy, then of admitting a carnal company of Hypocrites, confessing their Faith and Repentance in the use of the Congregation. Either the Lord in the faithfulness of his Covenant, will sanctify the hearts of the baptized Infants to prepare them for his Table: or else he will discover their hypocrisy and profaneness in the presence of his Church, before Men and Angels, and so prevent the pollution of the Lord's Table, and corruption of the Discipline of the Church, by their partaking in them.

CHAP. VII.

Silvester. THE Fourth Argument, that I find against the Baptism of Infants, is,

“That it is a ground both of ignorance and error, for it holdeth people in blindness, that they cannot come to know the nature of the holy Ordinance, nor what the same requireth in the subjects thereof, and also it causeth the simple to conceive, that Baptism is of necessity to salvation.

Silvanus. Do you think that the Circumcision of Infants in the days of the Old Testament, was any ground of ignorance or error? that it held people in blindness, that they could not come to know the nature of that holy Ordinance, nor what the same requireth in the subjects thereof? Surely, God was of another mind, when he said, he knew *Abraham* (who had lately circumcised his children and household) That he would command his children and

household, to keep the way of the Lord, &c. *Gen.* 18:19, which how could he possibly do, unless he first taught them to know it? In like sort, the Baptism of a man's children, doth not allow him to keep them in blindness and error, but rather bind and charge him to train up his children in the knowledge, and faith, and obedience of the Father, Son, and holy Ghost, into whole name they have been baptized. It is not the baptism of the children of believers, but of the children of carnal, and ignorant, and profane persons, that holdeth or keepeth men in the blindness of ignorance and error.

“When you say, that Baptism of infants causeth the simple to conceive, that Baptism is of necessity to salvation. I would know whether the Circumcision of infants did cause the simple to conceive the necessity of Circumcision to salvation? If not, why should the Baptism of infants, rather cause such an error, then the circumcision of infants? If yea, whether did the people of God forbear the circumcision of their infants, for fear they should cause such an error of the necessity of circumcision in the hearts of simple people? were it not that we know, when men have once set up an idol in their hearts, every wind and shew of an argument will prevail with a man's mind to bow down to it, we should not think that men disputed in good earnest, that used such arguments in such a cause. Have you not met with any other argument of more weight?

CHAP. VIII.

Silvester. YES, this fifth Argument seemeth to me to have more in it: The “Baptism of infants keepeth up the state of Antichrist, by “granting him this so chief a corner stone of the Lord's house to “lie in his foundation. For that Church where baptism is the “true Ordinance of God, in the administration thereof; it is by “the rules of the Gospel a true Church. So that if Antichrist's baptism which he administereth, be God's ordinance, then that “Church wherein he doth so administer the same, must be also “the Church of God; and he must be in sin who refuseth communion with it.

Silvanus. Either the words of this argument are ill chosen to express your meaning; or else these words will give no ground at all a-

gainst the baptism of Infants. You say the Baptism of infants “keepeth up the state of Antichrist, by granting him this so chief “a corner stone of the Lord’s house to lie in his foundation.

But I pray you understand first, we never made baptism the corner stone of the Lord’s house, which is the peculiar prerogative of Christ himself; Christ only is the corner stone.

Secondly, when we make (I mean acknowledge the Baptism of believers and of their seed, a true and precious ordinance of Christ, and one of the holy vessels of his Church, we do not grant unto Antichrist this authority, to lay this stone in his foundation; unless himself were first invested with a lawful calling to baptize; and unless those whom he did baptize were believers, and the seed of believers. Our baptizing of believers and their seed, do not grant him leave to baptize idolaters and their seed.

If you say, but we take in such to be members of our Church, who have been baptized in his Church (or at least their fathers before them) and so take a stone out of the Temple of *Babel*, to lay in the foundation of *Zion*, contrary to the Word of the Lord, *Jer.* 51:26.

Answ. This is another matter, but your words express no such thing. Your words carry it, as if we granted him a chief corner stone of the Lord’s house to lie in his foundation; and not that he granteth us a stone out of his Babylonish Temple, to lie in the foundation of the Lord’s house. But in very truth, neither do we take a stone from him to lay in God’s house, by continuing the seal of the Covenant to believers and their seed, from *Abraham’s* time to the Apostles time, and Baptism from the Apostles time till now. For the Baptism of believers and their seed is no more a stone that lieth in the foundation of Antichrist, then is the doctrine of the Father, Son, and holy Ghost, (three persons and one God) into whose name we and our children are baptized. Though the people of God would take a stone of *Babel* for a corner, or for a foundation of *Zion*, (according to *Jer.* 51:26.) yet they did not refuse to take those vessels out of *Babel*, and to store them again to the Lord’s Table in *Jerusalem*, *Ezra* 1:7, 8. with 6:5. Do not therefore tell us, that if Antichrist’s Baptism “which he administereth, be the ordinance of God, then that “Church wherein he doth so administer the same must be also the “Church of God, and they in sin that refuse communion with it.

For you might as well say, that if the vessels of the Temple, wherein the *Babylonian* Priests, ministered to their idols, were indeed the holy vessels of the Lord God of Israel, then that idol's Temple it *Babel*, (in which they were used to Ministry) was the holy Temple of the Lord, and the people of Israel did sin in coming out of *Babel* and refusing communion with that Idol's Temple.

CHAP. IX.

Silvester. A Sixth argument against the Baptism of Infants I have found “to be this, because it buildeth faith upon human testimony in matters fundamental, for such as are baptized in their infancy, have no other way to satisfy themselves or others, but the bare word of man, that must stand in the place of the Word of God, for such to believe their true receiving of so holy an Ordinance of God.

Silvanus. If Baptism be a matter fundamental, why did your fourth Argument make it an error in the Baptism of infants, that it caused the simple to conceive, that Baptism is of necessity to salvation.

Surely if Baptism be a matter fundamental, it is no offence to make both the simple and the wise, and all sorts to conceive, that it is of necessity to salvation. But such indeed is the wise and righteous hand of God, that such as will contradict the truth of God, shall be ready also to contradict themselves, and that sometimes within a very few words.

But to speak to your argument, do you think that the Circumcision of infants was a matter fundamental? If so, do you think those infants growing up to years, did build their faith in matters fundamental upon human testimony? And had they no other way to satisfy themselves or others, for their true receiving of so holy an Ordinance of God, but only the word of man, which must stand them in stead of the Word of God?

Yea, let me demand a further Question, What if a man were baptized at as ripe years as the Treasurer of *Candace*, *Act.* 8. who saw himself baptized by *Philip*? What hath such a man to build the faith of his Baptism upon, and to satisfy himself and others therein, but only the testimony of his own eyes, and sense of feeling but neither a man's eyes, nor his sense of feeling are any whit more the Divine testimony of the Word of God, then the

testimony by word of mouth of many scores of witnesses: yea, put the case a little further, (and no more then possible) what if a man of grown years (suppose a Pagan) were converted to the faith by the hearing of the Word, and yet had been blind from his mother's womb? If he shall come to be baptized, he will want the testimony of his eyes to see himself baptized. And though he may hear the words of him that baptizeth them, yet he hath it only by the words of men, that he that baptizeth him is a Minister. For himself did neither see him elected nor ordained; which it also the case of any man, though of grown years, that cometh to be baptized of such a Minister who was ordained to his Office before himself was born; must such a man's faith think you be built upon the word of man for the truth of his baptism? But be willing to call to mind, the Lord Jesus upbraided his eleven Apostles with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen from the dead, *Mar. 6:14*, And yet some of them mentioned In the former part of the Chapter were but women; and others of them were private disciples, neither sort of them were Apostles. The truth is, if one Proposition in a Syllogism be found in the Word of God, and the other Proportion be found certain and evident by sense or reason, the conclusion is a conclusion of faith. As for example, it is a proposition found in Scripture; That the City which reigned over the Kings of the earth in *John's* time, is that woman, the great Whore *Babylon*, which shall be destroyed, *Revel. 17:18*. But *Rome* is that City which reigned over the Kings or the earth in *John's* time. This proposition we have by certain and evident testimony of the history of those times. Therefore *Rome* is that woman, the great whore *Babylon*, which shall be destroyed. This Conclusion is a Conclusion of faith, not built upon the word of men, but upon the word of God. Apply the like manner of arguing to the point in hand, thus;

Every disciple of Christ (that is, every believer and his seed) that is baptized by a Minister of the Gospel in the name of the Father, Son and holy Ghost, is truly baptized.

This Proposition is delivered in the Gospel.

But the child of a believer was baptized by a Minister of the Gospel in the name of the Father, Son, and holy Ghost.

This Proposition is confirmed by so many eye-witnesses, and

such approved records, that no reasonable man can doubt of it. The conclusion then is a conclusion of faith.

Therefore I the child of a believer was truly baptized.

CHAP. X.

Silvester. FOR a seventh Argument against the Baptism of Infants. I have met with this.

“To baptize Infants maketh the holy Ordinance of God a lying sign: because none of those things can be expected in an Infant, which the said Ordinance holdeth forth, or signifieth in the administration thereof; which is the parties Regeneration, and spiritual new Birth; a dying and burying with Christ in respect of sin, and a rising with him in a New life to God, and a confirmation of Faith in the death and Resurrection of Christ and a free remission of sin by the same, as *Rom.* 6:3,4. *Col.* 2:12. *1 Pet.* 3:21. *Act.* 2:38. None of all which can be expected in an Infant.

Silvanus. That which hath been found in some Infants (as in *John Baptist*, and *Jeremiah*, and many more) that they have been Sanctified by the holy Ghost from their Mother’s womb, there is nothing hindreth but the same may be desired, and expected in any Infants of believing Parents. The Faith of believing Parents hath prevailed with Christ to cast out an evil spirit out of their children; And wheresoever the good spirit of grace entereth, there wanteth not Regeneration, fellowship with Christ in his death burial, Resurrection; there wanteth not Faith nor Remission of sins.

But besides, suppose that none of these things were found in Infants, yet it is a profane and blasphemous speech, to say that the Baptism of Infants maketh the holy Ordinance a lying sign because now of those things are found in Infants, which the Ordinance holdeth forth, and signifieth unless you were able to make it good, that Baptism holdeth forth and signifieth nothing, but what is already found in the Infants. But you cannot be ignorant, that Baptism signifieth and sealeth up not only good things found already in the baptized, but also good things promised, and as yet to come, as Resurrection from the dead, *1 Cor.* 15:29. Saving out of afflictions and perfections, which were then ready to overwhelm all the Churches in the Roman Empire, as

Noah's flood did the whole world, which is the meaning of *Peter's* words in the place which you quote, *1 Pet. 1:21*. To say nothing, that baptism signifieth and sealeth up the growth of all spiritual gift, and blessings, as well as the gift of them. And growth is a blessing future to the baptized, as well as the gift may be future to some infants baptized. Yea, it is an holy truth of God, that Baptism is as well the sign and seal of the promise of God, as the sign and seal of any gift of God already bestowed. Now Promises are of blessings to come. Circumcision was a sign and seal of the Land of Promise, to be given, as well as of the righteousness of Faith to *Abraham* which he had already received. Yea, the same Circumcision which was to *Abraham* a sign and a seal of the righteousness of the Faith, which he had already received, was to *Isaac* a sign and seal of the righteousness of Faith promised, but not received. Yea, that gracious promise of God, that he would circumcise the hearts of his people Israel, and of their seed, (*Deut. 30:6.*) what was it else but an exposition and declaration of the meaning of their Circumcision, that as they had received the outward sign in the flesh, so they should receive (they and their seed) the thing signified in their, heart and spirit? It is no lying sign that holdeth forth and sealeth, that which is done, or which is promised to be done in due time, as much as is meet for him that do that promiseth.

The Baptism of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, of *Simon Magus* and *Demas*, was no lying sign, though they neither were Regenerate when they were Baptized, nor ever afterwards came on to be Regenerate; because the lie lay not in the Lord's Covenant, nor in the sign of it: but in their affected hypocrisy which would not be healed.

CHAP. XI.

THe eighth Argument against the Baptism of infants is, because "cause the subject of Baptism is to be Passive, but an Infant "is no way passive, as that Ordinance requireth. I mean a passive "subject threefold.

"1. A thing incapable and thus is a stone.

"2. A thing forced, and thus is an Infant who opposeth his

“Baptism to the utmost of his ability, so far is it from being passive in the same.

Silvanus. “3 A thing is passive by a subjecting power producing the same in the subject, by bringing it to a free and voluntary subjection. And thus is the true subject of Baptism. None can be passive to receive grace, but by grace, because it consisteth of self-denial: Obedience to Christ ought to be free: but Baptism is forced upon an Infant against its will.

I will not examine the terms of your Distinction of a three-fold passive subject (though I would not have you taken with it) which is indeed, neither Natural, nor Artificial, nor spiritual. For when you make the first sort of a passive subject, a thing incapable, as is a stone: I might demand whether you mean incapable lawfully, or unlawfully. If you mean a stone it incapable lawfully, so you conceive children to be incapable likewise, and all they upon whom Baptism is forced. And then the first part of your distinction, is all one with your second part: And a good distinction cannot admit such confusion. If you mean a stone is incapable of Baptism unlawfully, you know the contrary. For the Papists do baptize their Fonts and Altars (which are but stones) as well as their Bells, which are not more lawfully capable of Baptism than stones be.

Again, When you make your second sort of your passive subject of Baptism, to be a forced subject, and Infants to be such a forced subject, as who do oppose it to the uttermost ability.

I dare be bold to say, the speech is not generally true. For of those many hundreths which I have seen Baptised, though some have seemed to oppose it with crying and struggling, yet I cannot say with truth, that either all of them, or most of them have so done. And for those that have so done, I demand whether the Infants in times before Christ, when they were circumcised, did not more generally, and strongly oppose their Circumcision to the uttermost of their ability, when they felt much more smarting pain in the cutting off of the foreskin of their flesh, than our children can do in their Baptism? And why may such a forced Israelite or Proselyte be a capable subject of Circumcision and not a forced Infant of a Christian be in like sort as well capable of Baptism? The Truth is, in administering either of Circumcision to the Infants of believing Israelites, or of Baptism to the Infants of believing Christians, respect is not had to the voluntary sub-

jection of the Infants, but to the free, and voluntary subjection of their Parents. It is enough for Infants, that as they received original corruption without their own personal consent, but in the will of their first Parents: so now they receive (through the grace of the Covenant) a remedy against their original corruption with one their own personal consent, but in the will of their parent.

“But when you make the Infants opposition of his Baptism to “his uttermost ability, a sign of its far distance of being passive “in the same.

The truth is by how much the more the Infant opposeth his baptism, by so much the more he is active against it, and therefore being baptised nevertheless, he is so much the more passive under it. Your phrase therefore of a passive subject of Baptism, is ill chosen to express your meaning, you might have more suitably said in plainer terms, None are capable subjects of Baptism, but such as gladly receive it. And for that you might have had some colour from the Word, but that the free and voluntary acts of parents in the matters of the second commandment, are accounted of God for themselves and their children, as was showed above.

Furthermore, when you exclude Infants from being true passive “subjects to receive Baptism, because they are not brought to a free “voluntary subjection to receive Baptism: Do but consider a while, what kind of passive subjection it found in men in their regeneration, whereof Baptism it the sign. The subjects of regeneration, are neither active subjects to receive grace, as the Moon is to receive light from the Sun a (being a lightsome body of it self) or as a beggar is to receive an Alms, that stretcheth out his hand for it: nor passively subject, as the air is to receive light, which though it be dark maketh no opposition against it: but they art forcibly subject, as being neither able nor willing to come to Christ, except they be drawn, and drawn by the same Almighty power, as whereby a dead man is raised to life. Now if men be forcibly subject to receive converting grace in their regeneration, there is in it nothing repugnant to the nature of Baptism in it self (which is a sign of regeneration) to admit Infants to it, though they shall be forcibly subjection. This forcible opposition to Baptism of simple Ignorance, not knowing what the Ordinance is: and their opposition is easily overcome by human power. Whereas our opposition in receiving regenerating grace it far more perverse and untractable, not to be overruled but

by a divine Almighty power. It is true, such is the nature of Baptism by God's Ordinance, that it requireth in men of years regeneration and voluntary subjection to it, before they can be admitted to it, because to them it is a sign and seal of regeneration wrought, and of the righteousness of faith imputed to them. But in Infants the Voluntary subjection of Parents in offering them to *Christ* is a sufficient recommendation of them to him for his acceptance of them unto Baptism, because he accepteth the offer of their parents, as the gift of their children; and because baptism is as well a sign and seal of regeneration, and righteousness promised; as wrought and bestowed. For it is a sign and seal of the Covenant, and so of all the blessings promised in it, amongst which are regeneration, faith, and forgiveness of sins, *Jer.* 31:33, 34. It is true, "that you say, no man can receive grace, but by grace: not only "(as you say) because it consists of self-denial, but because it consists in laying hold on Christ, who above the reach and power of corrupt nature. But it is a grace and favour at Christ, that he encourageth parents to come to themselves, and to bring their children in their Arms to him. And this grace is a blessing and favour to the children also so brought. For the children that were so brought to Christ, they returned home with a blessing, *Mark* 10:16.

"It is true also, which you say, that obedience to Christ ought "to be free.

But when you say, Baptism is forced upon an Infant against his will. It is neither altogether true, not at all material. Not true, for it may be Infants do as often cry, when they are carried home from Baptism, as when they are brought forth to it. And in proper speech, Infants can neither be said, to will, or to will, what they, understand not. The will is a faculty of the reasonable soul: Infants till they have the use of Reason, they have not the exercise of their will. Neither is it material, whether Infants be willing to their Baptism, or not seeing at that Age God attendeth not; to the will of Infants, but to the will of their Parents, and to his own gracious Covenant, in which he is wont to heal the forwardness, and to take away the uncircumcision of the heart for his Name sake.

CHAP. XII.

ANinth and last Argument against the Baptism of Infants is, that the doctrine thereof opposeth directly the express “word of God, by teaching that Infants are in the Covenant of “grace being born of believing parents, and so an holy seed, “by virtue of which they have right to Baptism as a Privilege “of Grace, against which the Holy Ghost affirms, that all are “conceived in sin, brought forth in iniquity, and so by nature “the children of wrath and under curse, and except they be born “again from above, they cannot see the Kingdom of God, *Psal.* “51:5. *Ephes.* 2:1, 2, 3. *Rom.* 3:9. *Gal.* 3:10, 13, 14. *John* 3:3, 5, “6. *Joh.* 1:12. Here man saith, that Infants are clean and holy “in and from the womb, and so are subjects of grace and glo- “ry: but God saith, that all Infants, one as well as another, are “first in sin and unholy, and so are subjects of wrath, until the “second birth make the difference, *Joh.* 3:5, 6. And now which to “believe, let the upright to God judge.

Silvester. This whole Argument hath received a full answer above, we freely acknowledge what the Lord saith, and as we believe we profess. That all of us, we and our children, are conceived in sin, and born in iniquity; by nature the children of wrath and under the curse at well as others, nor can we see the kingdom of God, nor partake in any saving, mercies of the Covenant, except we be born again from above; which is all that your al- te- ged Scriptures hold forth touching this point. But this we say withal as the Holy Ghost also doth, That though this be the condition of us all by nature, yet by the grace of the Covenant God is a God to us, and to our seed: and therefore by the faith of either believing Parent, the children are holy, and so have the like right to Baptism, at the children of *Abraham* had to Cir- cumcision, Baptism being now appointed to us to God in the room of Circumcision to them. All which have been cleared a- bove, in opening sundry Scriptures that speak to this purpose. *Gal.* 3:13, 14, 15, 16. *Act.* 2:39. 1 *Cor.* 7:14. *Col.* 2:11, 12. which it were needless to expound again, unless I know what would be further objected against that which hath been gathered out of them.

It is a notorious falsehood to say, That because we hold In-

fants of believing Parents to be holy by the Covenant, that “therefore we hold them so be so clean and holy in and from “the womb, as to exempt them from Original sin, and to “make them subjects of grace and glory. For though we did hold that all the Infants of believing Patents, were regenerate from the womb, (which we do not) yet that would not hinder the truth of the Text, that they were conceived in sin, and born in iniquity: nor would it argue, that we hold them to be so clean and holy from the womb, as to be without sin. No, no, we do believe, that the most holy regenerate Saints on earth are unclean, and sinful from the womb, and are still such, defiled with original sin, and the fruits thereof, even after they be Regenerate; and though we say that some of the Infants of believing Parents have been regenerate from the womb (as *Jeremiah*, *John Baptist*, and others) and accordingly that they were subjects of saving grace and glory: yet we never denied, but do constantly believe, that they also were conceived in sin and born in iniquity, and were by nature the children of wrath, as well as others, else what need should they have of reconciliation and Atonement by Christ? But as for other children of believing Parents which are not regenerate by the Holy Ghost (as they were) from the womb, we do believe and hold, that though they be the subjects of the common grace of the Covenant, and so have right to the seal and sign thereof: yet we do not hold them to be subjects of saving grace, much less of glory, (as you do pretend) but to be still carnal till the Lord be pleased to apply the saving grace of his Covenant to them in their regeneration, which he doth to all that belong to his election of grace, and that according to his Covenant in due time. Now therefore when you put it to the upright in heart to judge, which to believe, whether your selves, or us, as you state the difference, we desire the Lord not to lay it to your charge at the day of his righteous judgement, that you put such a false and fraudulent question to the lodgement of the upright. But because I do from my heart unfeignedly desire your full satisfaction in this great point of Christian practice which doth so nearly concern the free passage of the grace, of the Covenant, both to you and your children, tell me yet, if there yet be left any stumbling block in your way which might hinder the presenting of your infants to the Lords waiting in the laver of Baptism.

CHAP. XIII.

Silvester. “YEs, besides all the former Arguments which I have alleged (at “I find them) against the Baptism of Infants, I have met with “sundry evil consequences, which do unavoidably attend your “Doctrine of Infants Baptism.

“First, it makes void the stability of God’s Covenant it self, “thus, If the Covenant of Grace be absolute and stable, then “all within the same must be saved. But all within the “said Covenant were not saved: *Ergo*, the Covenant of Grace “is not absolute and stable. The Major is confessed, that a “believers seed is in the Covenant of Grace without excepti- “on. The Minor is proved from *Ishmael*, *Esau*, and the rejected “Jews: all which were the seed of believers, and yet all not “saved.

Silvanus. If all the evil consequences, which you say do unavoidably attend our Doctrine, be all of them «s easily avoidable as this, I hope you will see no cause to judge of them, as you do, so unavoidable. For this evil consequence is easily avoided by such as maintain the Baptism of Infants two or three ways.

1. There be some that will deny that which you call the Major, though indeed it be not the Major of that Syllogism, which your self propound; For that Major was this, If the Covenant of Grace be absolute and stable, then all within the same must be saved. But I will not stick with you upon terms, though they be your own. If you call it a Major, let it go for a Major: But this which you call a Major, there be some who will deny it, and tell you, that all the seed of believers without exception are not in the Covenant of Grace, but the Elect seed only. They will grant you, that *Ishmael* and *Esau*, and all such Apostates, as do fall off from the Covenant, and grace offered to them, they were never under the Covenant of grace, but of works only. And yet as all the children of the faithful, were circumcised then (*Ishmael* as well as *Isaac*, *Esau* was well as *Jacob*) so ought they to be baptised now. In this case they conceive the Apostles words stretch so far, *Gal.* 4:29. As it was then, so is it now.

But 2. Others will answer you another way, that though the Covenant of grace be liable, yet it is not absolute: stable to the faithful seed, but not absolute, but requiring the Condition

of faith, which condition also God will work in the elect seed. And therefore though *Ismael* and *Esau* were not saved yet it is no impeachment to the liability of the Covenant, because the Covenant is only liable to the faithful seed, which these were not.

A third Answer somewhat like to this, and yet different, may be this, That though the Covenant of Grace be absolute, and stable, yet it will not follow, that all within that Covenant must be saved, for the Covenant though it be absolute and stable to all the elect seed, yet not to all the seed, because all of them are not Elect, to whom only the Grace of Christ is absolute and stable. And yet such as are not elect may be truly said to be under this Covenant. For we do not read in Scripture of any Covenant which is everlasting, but only the Covenant of Grace, *Jer.* 32:40. And yet you read of a wicked generation, that have broken this everlasting Covenant, *Isa.* 24:5. which argueth they were under the bond of it, or else how could they be blamed (as there they be) and cursed, for the breach of it? They therefore who were not Elected but accursed, were under this Covenant, and yet they making it void unto themselves, it is evident it was not absolute and liable to them. The unbelieving Jews (of whom the Apostle speaketh, *Rom.* 11.) who were broken off from Christ (as branches from the fat Olive tree) they had been in some sense in Christ, or else how could they be said to be broken off from him? And if they were in him, and not by faith, then were they in him some other way, and yet not by Election: therefore only by Adoption, or admission into the Covenant of their Fathers, which was a Covenant of Grace.

CHAP. XVI.

“**A** Second evil consequence, which I find to be gathered “from your doctrine of the Baptism of Infants is this, that “it is a ground of falling from Grace, thus. All that God took “into his Covenant of Grace, were in an estate of Grace. But “all that God took into his Covenant of Grace, did not therein “continue, *Ergo*, Such fell from an estate of Grace.

An easy and common distinction will easily avoid this evil con-

quence, For all that God took into his Covenant of grace, may be said to be in a state of Grace, but what Grace? either of commoner of saving Grace. If your meaning be, all that God took into a Covenant of Grace are in an estate of saving Grace: we deny that Major proposition, as utterly untrue. But if you meant it of common Grace in the carnal seed, and of saving Grace in the Elect seed, then indeed your Major proposition is very true: but no evil consequence will follow upon it. For the Elect and faithful seed that are in an estate of saving Grace, can never fall away. And they who do fall away were only in a state of common Grace: which is no ill consequence nor prejudice to the truth, though they do fall away.

CHAP. XV.

Silvester. 3. THE Baptism of Infants is a ground of universal Redemption, for it maketh the Grace of Christ equal as well “to such as perish, also such as be saved. Thus all that are in “the Covenant or Grace, Christ died for. But all that were in the “Covenant of Grace were not saved. Ergo, Christ died for such “as were not saved. The proof of this is the same with the former: If God took *Abraham* and his seed into his Covenant of “Grace without exception.

Silvanus. Though God did take the seed of *Abraham* and of all other believers into the Covenant of Grace without exception: yet not without distinction. The Elect seed he taketh then, all into his Covenant of Grace, and into all the sure and saving mercies of the Covenant. But the carnal and unfaithful seed he taketh them also into his Covenant of Grace, yet given them not the sure and saving mercies thereof, but the common grace, only, and the outward dispensation of the Covenant, and the seal thereof, together with such spiritual gifts of the Covenant, as *Judas* or *Demas*, *Saul*, or *Judas*, partake of. And even those common gifts the Apostle doth acknowledge, that Apostates are sanctified with them by the blood of the Covenant, *Heb.* 10:29. The Covenant ratified by the blood of Christ, was doubtless Covenant of Grace. And yet it was by the blood of this Covenant by which they were sanctified. But to apply my answer more punctually to the terms of your Syllogism; your Major proposition will

be denied, all that are in the Covenant of grace Christ died for them; If you mean he died for them out of Grace to save them, it will utterly be denied you. That Christ should die for any out of his grace to save them is a sure and saving mercy of the Covenant: which is not granted to all the seed within the Covenant, but to the elect and faithful seed only. The very common gifts which such receive from the blood of his Covenant and so from his death, they flow not from the death of Christ out of his saving grace to them, but out of his grace to his Church and chosen people, for whole lake he bestoweth such gifts upon Hypocrites.

CHAP. XVI.

Silvester. THE 4. evil confluence which I have found gathered from the doctrine of the Baptism of Infants, is this, That it makes “God the Author of man’s believing an untruth, by enjoining “him to believe the salvation of such as he himself knows and “reveals the contrary, as *Ishmael, Esau*, and but a remnant among “the Jews, nay none at all but such as believe, *Gen. 17. Gen. 25. Gen. 48. Rom. 9:27.* Against which opinion and evils aforesaid, “I Argue thus: The Covenant is absolute and saving to all once “within the same. But all the personal seed of believers are not saved, Therefore all the seed of believers are not in the Covenant “of Grace. The proposition is clear from these Scriptures. *Jer. 32, 40. Isay 49:21. Jer. 31:3 Joh. 13:3. Mal. 3:6. Joh. 10:28, 39.* The “assumption from these, *Gen. 21:10.* with *Gen. 4:29, 30. Gen. 25:23.* with *Rom. 9:11, 12, 13, 27.* God requireth no man to believe “untruth, therefore God requireth no such thing.

Silvanus. I do not delight to take exception at words, when one may guess at your meaning, though it be contrary to your words. But because you would pick an argument, from a true doctrine of God, to gather an evil consequence, that so God should be an Author to make a man believe, that which he himself knoweth and revealeth the contrary: I conceive it to tend to the glory of God, to observe, that your self in laying down this Argument do express your self contrary to that which you know to be your meaning: and do affirm God to know that, which you know

is contrary to his knowledge. For you expressly make it an untruth and contrary to what God himself knoweth and revealeth to believe the salvation (I do not say of *Ishmael* and *Esau*, for it is an untruth indeed to believe their salvation) but to believe the salvation of a remnant among the Jews, nay of none at all, but such as do believe. Truly if God had not blinded you for offering to argue God to be an Author of an untruth, upon the supposition of the Baptism of infants (which is an holy truth of God) you would never have delivered so palpable an untruth contrary to “your own knowledge, as to say, this is an untruth contrary to “what God himself knoweth and reveals, to believe the salvation “of a remnant among the Jews, nay of none at all but such as believe. But to leave your inconsiderate boldness in arguing God of an untruth, which falleth upon your self; to your Argument I answer (as before) by denying your proposition. This (deny, that the Covenant of Grace is absolute and saving unto all once within the same: you heap up many Scriptures to prove it, but none of them without violence will be wrested to bear witness to it; your first Scripture in *Jer.* 32:40. Do you think it speaketh of all the people, whom *God* brought out of *Babel* into *Jerusalem* again? or of the Elect only? If of all the people, (as *v.* 38. might seem to imply) surely the Covenant of Grace was not absolute and saving to them all. There was among them *Shemaiah*, and *Noadiah* false Prophets which sought to discourage the hands of *Nehemiah* in his work, *Nehem.* 6:10. to 14. And there were also Nobles of *Judah*, that kept intelligence with *Tobiah*, and were sworn to him, *v.* 17, 18, 19. and can you think that the Covenant of Grace was absolute and liable unto such as these? But if you mean that the Covenant of Grace was absolute & stable to the elect seed, you speak truly and safely, and therein also we agree with you. But then you must not stand to your former proposition, “that the Covenant of Grace is absolute and liable unto all once “within the same. For as it was before the captivity, there were some that brake the everlasting Covenant, *Isa.* 24:5. and therefore some were once within the Covenant, to whom it was not absolute and liable: so was it also after the captivity, that Covenant promised to give them one heart, that they might fear the Lord for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them, verse 39. And yet some of them did not fear God themselves, and many of their children did soon degenerate, in so much that in

the days of *Malachi* the whole Nation fell to the robbery of God and were cursed with a curse in stead of the sure mercies of the Covenant, *Mal.* 3:9. The other Scriptures which you do allege to prove your proposition (that the Covenant of Grace is absolute and liable unto all once within the same) they none of them speak to your purpose. The Text in *Isay* 49:21. speaketh that the Church shall wonder at the increase of her children, after she had lost the other, and shall therefore enquire, who had begotten these to her. But what maketh this to prove that the Covenant of Grace is absolute and liable to all those who are once within the same? It rather proveth that some of the children of the Church, and so some within the Covenant of the Church have been lost, and that is contrary to your proportion.

Your next place in *Jerem.* 31:3. holdeth forth that God loved the house of *Israel* with an everlasting love; and the text in *Joh.* 13:1. declareth that whom Christ loveth he loveth to the end: And that in *Mal.* 3:6. teacheth us that the Lord Jehovah is unchangeable, and therefore that the sons of *Jacob* perish not. And your last place in *Joh.* 10:28, 29. sheweth us that Christ giveth unto his sheep everlasting life, that they shall never perish. But what is all this to prove that none are within the Covenant of grace but such as God loveth with an everlasting unchangeable love unto the end, and who shall receive everlasting life? All these places do prove indeed that God hath a people to whom his love is liable and also absolute, but saith nothing to any such purpose, that all once within the Covenant of Grace do partake in this state of absolute unchangeable and everlasting love and life of Christ.

CHAP. XVII.

S*ilvester.* There be four or five other Arguments against that Baptism of Infants which were received in *England*: which though they do not so take with me, as the former do, yet I desire to hear what you think of them, because I find more difficulty in them, “then I can easily resolve. The 1. is taken from the false power by “which Baptism is administered in *England*, and that is by power “received from the Bishops.

“2. From the false ground upon which it is there admini-

“stered upon the faith and profession of the Godfathers and God-
“mothers.

“3. From the false manner, in which it is administered, that is, by
“sprinkling and not dipping.

“4. From the false end, for which it is administered, which is
“for the Regeneration of the Infants.

“5. From the false subject of Baptism; which being only
“Infants, it cometh to pass, that now in *England* the Baptism
“of believers (which the Gospel acknowledgeth) is worse out of
“use, and instead thereof the Baptism of Infants, is come in place:
“of whom it may be, not one of a thousand at that age is a be-
“liever. But of this subject of Baptism, we have had much speech
“already.

“Now for the first of these, the power whereby the Ministers of
“*England* do exercise their office, and so baptize, It is derived
“from the Bishop, and the Bishop is not ordained by Christ
“but by Antichrist, at least, by human power, and such is all
“the power derived from him, Antichristian, or at best, Hu-
“man.

Silvester. Such as hold the Bishops to be of divine Institution (as many English Ministers have done) they will easily avoid your Argument, if they could at easily make good their own Tenent of the divine right of Episcopasy. But let them pass, and every plantation which our heavenly father hath not planted, let it be rooted out. Take it therefore thus rather the powers, whereby the Ministers in *England* do administer the word and Baptism, it is either spiritual and proper, &c. essential to their calling, or adventitious, or accidental. The former they have received from Christ by a double Act of his.

1. He hath furnished many of them with Ministerial gifts.

2. He hath inclined the hearts of his people, either to choose and call them (as in many parishes of the City, and in sundry Market Towns and elsewhere:) or at least to accept them, and to submit to them being commended to them by the Patron. The latter power, which is adventitious and accidentally that which they receive from the Patron who presents them to the Bishop, and from the Bishop, who ordaineth and licenseth them to administer unto Christ, and his people. This power though it hath been established by the law of the Land, yet it is both adventitious. and accidental (for the Minister’s power is complete without it)

and it is also usurped; For neither had the Law lawful power from Christ to give such power to the Patron and Bishop: nor had the Bishop and Patron lawful right from Christ to receive it. But as the Law then stood in force, neither could the People choose their Minister without leave of the Patron, nor induct him into their Church without the Ordination and license of the Bishop. Thus when Pirates have invaded a ship, no man in it (neither Officer nor Passenger) can come by his own goods, but by leave of the Pirates; who upon their submission to them, will give them the keys of their own vessels and chests. This power (to come to their own goods) received from the Pirates, is not that which giveth them true and proper right to enter upon the possession and use of their own goods (for that right they had by a former just title,) which Pirates cannot disannul, but it is only adventitious and accidental. I need not apply it to the case in hand, the Application is obvious.

Silvester. But all such submission either of People or Ministers unto such usurpation is it not a sin?

Silvanus. That is another Question, and meet to be considered by the persons whom it concerneth: but not much material to the cause. The persons surprized in a ship by pirates whom they are not able to resist, may submit to this power which they cannot neither overcome, nor avoid: But Ministers and People, if they cannot overcome such usurped power in the Church (which now by the help of Christ they begin to do by the aid of some superior Power,) yet they may avoid it, by seeking the liberty of their consciences, and of their Churches, in some foreign Countries or Plantations. Neither can any men so lawfully give away upon any terms, the liberty of their consciences, and of their Churches, as they may give away the possession of their goods. But to speak to the cause in hand, though it be granted that the Patron and Bishop do unlawfully usurp such Power, and that the Ministers and people do unlawfully also submit to it: yet such adventitious & accidental corruptions of the Persons do not make void the spiritual true, and holy calling, which the Ministers receive from Christ, nor make their administrations dispensed in that calling to be of none effect Nay verily their calling and the work of it (for the substance thereof) God hath born witness to it from heaven, by setting the seal of his blessing, upon their labours in the Ministry. The Apostle *Paul* proveth himself to be sent of Christ, to the *Corinthians*

especially, by the conversion of many of them unto God by his Ministry. Though I be not an Apostle to others (saith he) yet doubtless I am unto you: for the seal of mine Apostleship are ye in the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 9:1, 2. with Chap. 4:15, 16. By the same Argument *paul* gathered that the Gospel or the Circumcision was committed to *Peter*, and the Gospel of the uncircumcision to himself, because of the gracious and effectual power of Christ, which breathed in his Ministry to the Gentiles, and in *Peter's* Ministry to the Jews. *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, they saw (saith he) that the Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed to me, and the Gospel of the Circumcision unto Peter: For he that wrought effectually in *Peter* to the Apostleship of the Circumcision, the same was mighty in me to the Gentiles, *Gal.* 2:7, 8, 9. And this Argument taken from the Powerful presence of God with a Ministry to confirm the lawful authority of it, though know meet with exceptions, cavils from the sons of men: yet God himself judgeth it to be of that weight, and convincing power, at to stop the mouths even of gainsaying Rebels, and quite to take away all murmurings against it, and against him in it. The story is well known, when the People of *Israel*, and some of the tribe of *Levi* had often murmured against *Aaron* and his sons for executing the Priest's Office; the Lord commanded *Moses* to take twelve Rods from the fathers of the twelve Tribes of *Israel*, and to lay them up, and *Aaron's* rod amongst them, before the Lord in the Tabernacle: to the intent that the Lord might shew by his blessing upon any of the Rods, which of all the Tribes' himself had chosen to minister before him. And in the morning when the Rods were taken forth, the Rod of *Aaron* had budded, and brought forth buds and bloomed blossoms, and yielded Almonds, *Num.* 17:5. to 10. which was an effectual demonstration of the divine approbation of *Aaron's* Ministry. And if this be such an effectual demonstration of a ministers calling to be of god, that the Lord blesseth the Rod of his Ministry with fruitful increase; then let all the murmurings of God's people against the truth of the calling of the Godly Ministers in England cease for ever.

Silvester. Harlots are sometimes blessed of God with fruitful increase as well as chaste wives. And therefore though Ministers and Churches may be blessed with Conversion and Regeneration of soul unto God, yet it is no evident Demonstration of the truth, either of such Ministers or such Churches.

Silvanus. Then is the Argument of God taken from the miraculous bud-

ding, and Hoflbming and fruitfulness of *Aaron's* Rod of none effect. For in the conversion of souls there is a concourse of all the miracles of Christ together, the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, the dead are raised up, dead and dry bones live, dry sticks bud, and blossom and bring forth fruit. All such miracles (which do all meat in the conversion of a sinner) they are all of them divine Testimonies, and can be wrought by none other but by God himself: And God never worketh any such to confirm, either a false calling, or any false doctrine.

It is true, Harlots are sometimes followed with fruitful increase, but that is because God hath given a general blessing in nature to men, and beasts. That in the mutual fellowship of both texts in either kind, they shall increase and multiply children to himself.

Besides, though Harlots sometimes be fruitful, yet the husbands of such Harlots will not acknowledge the children of whoredoms for their own children: No more will the Lord acknowledge so many of the People of *England*, to be children unto himself, if they were the children of whoredoms, born of a wife of whoredoms, *Hos.* 2:2, 4. The 7,000. in *Israel*, that did not bow their knees to *Baal*, they were not begotten to God, by the Ministry of the Priests, either of *Baal* or of *Jeroboam*, but of the Prophets of the Lord, *1 Kings* 18:57.

Silvester. But it is certain many are baptized in *England* by dumb dogs that cannot preach, and therefore cannot beget souls to God; and such Christ never sent to baptize, *Mat.* 28:19.

Silvanus. If they cannot preach, the greater is their sin to baptize, or to enter into such a calling whereto the administration of Baptism pertaineth. But nevertheless, though God delighteth not to make use of such instruments for the conversion of souls: yet their administrations of the seals (which are given not for conversion, but for confirmation of grace, either formerly wrought or to be wrought) they are not nullities. Circumcision of the ten Tribes after the Apostasy of *Jeroboam*, and after the calling out of the Priests and Levites (*2 Chron.* 11:14, 15.) was generally administered by unclean hands. For though Circumcision at first might have been administered by the father of the family (as might also the Passover be killed by them) yet after the Priests & Levites were set apart for the public service of God and his people, then look as their Passovers were to be killed only by the Priests and Levites:

So the Analogy of the seals requireth, that Circumcision also should only be administered by the Priests and Levites. Now when the Priests and Levites were cast out of office in the ten Tribes, *Jeroboam's* Priests that came in their room, were as Ignorant and unskilful to expound the Law, as any (whom you in the Prophets phrase call) dumb dogs, are unskilful to preach the Gospel, *1 Kings* 13:33. *2 Chron.* 15:3. But if Circumcision were then dispensed by the Fathers of the families, they were also an Ignorant and rebellious people, a people Apostate from God, and such as lived either without Law, (*2 Chron.* 15:3.) or in open transgression of the Law (*1 Kings* 19:10.) In which case the Apostle saith in some sense (that is, in respect of the spiritual benefit of it) their Circumcision is made uncircumcision, *Rom.* 2:25. Notwithstanding let it be remembered, that in Israel, though none were allowed to partake in the Passover, but such as are circumcised, (they and their families) *Exod.* 12:48. yet this people of the ten Tribes, after they came to humble themselves before the Lord, they (in such Circumcision as they had) were accepted to the Passover: which was an Evidence, that the Church at *Jerusalem* did not look at the Circumcision of the ten Tribes as a Nullity; or else they would have kept them from the Passover, which they did not, *2 Chron.* 30: 5, 6, 11, 18.

Silvester. But the Church of Israel had sometimes a true constitution: and therefore their administrations were not nullities, though after their Apostasy all their Ordinary administrations were corrupt and polluted. But the Church of *England* never had a true constitution, but an Antichristian, and therefore such are all their administrations.

Silvanus. Be not unwilling to receive a double Answer, and both of them just.

1. The Church of the ten Tribes, it never had a true constitution. It was at first founded in a Public profession of a general rejection of the promised seed, which was to spring out of the house of *David*, *1 Kings* 12:16. And that rejection of the promised seed out of *David's* house, was as much as the rejection of the promised *Messiah*, to have any part or portion in their Church. Now can there be a true constitution of the Church, where there wanteth a true foundation? Besides, when God faith, that for a long season (to wit, ever since the time of their Apostasy, Israel was without God, without a Priest to teach, without the Law, (*2 Chron.* 15:3.)

could they have the true constitution of a Church without God without Priest, without Law?

Answ. As it is a false and erroneous speech to affirm the Church of the ten Tribes to have had sometimes a true constitution, so it is no less false and rash to deny the Churches of *England* ever to have had a true constitution. Rash, for can you say it, or do you know it because you were then born, or because the number of your days is great? As God questioneth *Job* in another case, *Job* 38:21. Or have you found out such a matter by reading of ancient records and stories? truly if you dare credit them (and doubtless they are more worthy of credit that lived nearer those ancient times, and had the view of ancient records, rather than some of your late books, who speak either out of Partiality to *Rome*, as the Jesuits, or out of prejudice against the state of the Church of *England*, as some rigid Separatists do:) but those ancient records will tell you that *England* received the faith of Christ by *Joseph of Arimathea*, by *Simon Zelotes* by others of those primitive Apostolic Saints who doubtless planted Churches not after the pattern of Antichrist, but after the manner of the Apostles. And though English Jesuits will needs make *England* beholding to *Rome* for their conversion: yet *Baranius* is more ingenuous (though himself a Cardinal, and wanting no affection to *Rome*) who ingenuously confesseth, *England* received the Gospel ten years (though others speak but of five years) before *Rome* it self. For he speaketh out of Manuscript records, That the Gospel was brought to *England* in the year of Christ 35. and to *Rome*, in the year 45. Any whom you dare trust may compare his Annals in the year 35. number 5 with the year 45 number 1. But because you will not enquire what is written in Latin books, it may be of some use to help you, to read of this point what you may find in Mr *Foxe* his book of Martyrs, in the beginning of the 2 book of his first Tome, in the Reign of King *Luius*: as also in *Cambden's* description of Britany during the times of the Romans' government, and in *Speedes* Chronicle, 9. Chap. of the 5 book. Yea many years, (and some ages) after when the Bishop of *Rome* sent *Augustine*, the godly teachers and people of *England* refused to receive him, either in way of subjection to his government, or of conformity to the rites of *Rome*, as *Bede* recordeth in his History of the English Nation. 2. Book 2. Chap. And in the former part of the History (1. Book 26. Chap.) he acknowledged the Churches of *England* compelled none to

receive Christian Religion, but received such as offered themselves. Now though it came to pass, that the Christians in *England* (above 200 years after the first planting of the Gospel amongst them) were much wasted by the persecution of the Emperor *Diocletian*, and after that by the Initiation of *Augustine* the Monk: yet God is never wont so to forsake his people, as to leave no remnant amongst them to call upon his Name, who though in process of time, they came to be corrupted and polluted by Antichristian usurpations and inventions, as all other Christian Nations were, yet that did not cast them into a worse estate, then the estate of the ten tribes of Israel under *Jeroboam* and his successors, especially under *Ahab* and *Jezebel*, & the times succeeding; when as yet their Circumcision was not a nullity, as hath been declared above. Unless therefore you have any more to object against our Baptism received in *England* from the power by which it is administered, let us proceed to your next exception against our Baptism in *England*.

CHAP. XVIII.

Silvester. THE second exception against our Baptism received in *England*, is taken from the false ground upon which it is administered, as the former was from the false power, by which it is administered. Now that false ground upon which it is administered, is the faith and profession not of the Parents (whose Covenant you are wont to stand upon) but of the God-fathers and God-mothers, whose Covenant doth not reach by any Institution of God to their gossips children, whatsoever it may do to their own.

Silvanus. I do wittingly acknowledge, where the Parents of the baptized are still living, and do intend to educate the children themselves, there the use of God-fathers and God-mothers (as they call them) in Baptism (though it be ancient) yet it is a sinful superaddition to the institution. But when the Parents are dead or absent, and the child is to be brought up in the house of a Christian friend and brother, the Covenant of such a Christian brother exceedeth to all that are born in his house and bought with his money. And his profession before the Church to bring up the child committed to him, in the way of the Covenant of grace, it is as acceptable for the receiving of the child to Baptism, as the Cove-

nant of *Abraham* was available to bring not only his sons, but also all that were born in his house, or bought with his money, under the Covenant and seal of Circumcision, *Gen.* 17:12, 13.

2. I may further answer and testify upon knowledge, that many children have been and are baptized in *England* without God-fathers and Godmothers, and without any Interrogatories propounded to them, only upon the Covenant and profession of their parents.

3. When children are baptized upon the profession of their God-fathers and God-mothers, It is not the intendment or doctrine of the Church, to baptize them, upon the Covenant and profession of their God-fathers: but to bind the sureties that when the child groweth up to years of capacity, they shall assist the parents in the Christian Education of the child, that he may learn and practice those good things, which at his baptism they promised & undertook for him, as appeareth by the charge given to the sureties.

4. The superfluous superaddition of the sureties or Witness to the Sacrament of Baptism, doth not make Baptism a nullity; no more then the superaddition, of Love Feasts to the Lord's Supper, doth make that a nullity. Wood, Hay, and stubble laid upon a good foundation, doth not take away the foundation. And he that so buildeth doth not lose his foundation, but his superstructure, the superfluous works which he built upon it, *1 Cor.* 3:12, 13, 15. If a defect in the faith of man, doth not make the faith of God of none effect, *Rom.* 3:3, 4. much less doth a defect in the manner of the profession of the faith (to wit, by a Deputy rather then by a man's own mouth) make the Covenant or the Seal of the Covenant of none effect.

CHAP. XIX.

Silvester. GO on a long and tell me what you answer to the third exception against our English Baptism, that is, the false manner, in which it is administered, to wit, by sprinkling, not by dipping.

Silvanus. I might answer you truly, that if dipping were the only way to be chosen, in which children are to be baptized, yet even so by dipping is Baptism appointed to be administered in *England*, by the very Rubric in the Common-prayer book. The Minister "saith the Rubric shall take the child in his hands, and asking

“the name shall dip it in the water (so it be discretely and warily done) And if the child be weak, it shall suffice to pour water upon it. Blame not therefore the Baptism in *England* for being administered in such a manner, as your self desire; and not directing the other way, but in case of the child’s weakness, where God himself would rather accept of mercy then sacrifice.

Silvester. But I see not how sprinkling in any case can be true Baptism.

‘For 1. Baptism never signifieth sprinkling, but dipping. So that sprinkling is against the Institution whereby the Apostles are commanded to baptize Disciples which is to dip them, not to besprinkle them,

2. The examples of Baptism in the New Testament shew that Baptism was administered by Dipping, not by sprinkling, *John Baptist* baptized by Dipping, *Joh.* 3:23. *Mat.* 3:16. so did *Philip* the Evangelist *Act.* 8:38, 39.

3. Dipping doth lively Represent our fellowship, with Christ in his Death, Burial, resurrection, not so sprinkling.

Silvanus. It is utterly untrue that Baptism never signifieth sprinkling, bat dipping. It signifieth generally washing, whether by dipping or sprinkling: infusion, or affusion. In *Acts* 22:16. Be baptized and wash away thy sins, the latter word interpreteth the former. In 2 *Cor.* 10:2. the Israelites are said to have been all baptized in the cloud, and in the sea: Wherein nevertheless they were not dipped, nor drenched, nor doused, but only sprinkled, for they went over dry-shod, *Exod.* 14:22. In *Heb.* 9:10. where it is said in the Greek the service stood in divers Baptisms, the translation readeth it, in divers washings. In *Dan.* 4:33. where it is translated he was wet with the dew of Heaven, the Greek Septuagint expreseth it in the same word, whereof Baptising it derived.

Touching the second instance, whereby you plead for dipping from the example of *John Baptist* and *Philip*, I willingly acknowledge, that Dipping is a lawful manner of Baptising. But if you contend from these examples, that dipping is the only way of Baptising, and such a dipping as amounts to drenching, or dousing, that is, to dipping of the whole body over head and ears, those examples do not press upon us either of these: For though *John Baptist* did baptise sometime in *Jordan*, sometimes in *Ænon*, where there might be water enough to drench the baptised, yet where had the Apsotles water enough in the streets of *Jerusalem* to drench the 3,000 persons, whom they baptised in one day? *Acts*

2:41. It is much more probable, that they either sprinkled them with water, or poured water upon their face or heads. For it is not said, that the Apostles carried them away from thence to any pool, or river, where they might be drenched. In *Philip's* baptizing of Eunuch, it is said, they went down both together into the water, to wit, both *Philip* and the Eunuch, *Act* 8:38. But their going down into the water was not part of the Baptism: For *Philip* went down into the water, as well as the Eunuch. And it was no part of *Philip's* meaning to baptize himself. Besides, the words translated they went down, expreseth no more but that they descended out of the Chariot into the water: but how deep is not at all mentioned.

Furthermore, It is a consideration of weight with me, that though the person baptized be said to descend into the water, yet the baptizing lay not in the descending, or dipping of the body into the water, but in the sprinkling, or pouring the water upon the body. For in dipping we apply the body to the water: In sprinkling, or pouring the water, the water is applied to the body: which doth more lively set forth the grace of Christ in the washing, away of our sins, which is done, rather by applying Christ's, blood to us, then by applying our selves to the blood of Christ.

Moreover when you stand so much for dipping, I demand, and I pray you answer to me, (or to your self ingenuously) Whether would you have the whole body dipped or part only? If the whole, body, whether naked, or clothed? If clothed, then outward baptism is not a washing of the flesh, bur of the clothes rather; If naked, how will it stand with civility or modesty to Baptize men and women of grown years, (for children you admit none) in the face of the whole Congregation? No marvel then, if the Sect of the Adamites grow out of your Sect. But if you require but part of the body, to be baptized, I demand what part? If the face, that is our usual manner of baptizing in *England*; but that you implead, as false. If the hands and feet, and head also, that is it indeed which *Peter* offered in a like case, *Joh.* 13:9. But Christ answereth him the washing of one part was enough, and would suffice to signfy the washing and purifying of the whole man, every, whit, v. 10. And in very truth, the whole virtue and efficacy of the death of Christ is at well and as fully applied in the Act of sprinkling, as of dipping. When *Esay* prephesied the Application of the death of Christ to the Redemption of many Nations,

he foretold, that Christ should sprinkle many Nations, *Esay* 52:15. And when the Apostle exhorteth us to draw near unto God in full assurance of faith (in respect of the perfect Oblation of Christ for us once for all, *Heb.* 10:22.) he expresth our drawing near as having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water, The faithful people of God are not wont to value the virtue of the gifts of Christ, from the bulk of outward signs, but from the lively virtue and power of the Spirit of life conveyed in them, The Spirit of a Cordial is as much conveyed in a fatal *dôsis*, as in a gross drug. It is a small morsel of Bread, and a little cup of Wine, which we partake in at the Lord's Supper: and yet therein we partake of whole Christ, God and Man. If we should eat the whole Natural body of Christ, and drink all his Blood, it would not profit us so much. It is the Spirit that quickeneth us. *Joh.* 6:36. Bodily exercise profiteth little. *1 Tim.* 4:8.

“But say you in your third exception, against sprinkling, sprinkling doth not so lively represent our fellowship with Christ in his Death, Burial, and resurrection, as dipping doth.

Answ. Why not as lively, seeing as fully? Being sprinkled in our hearts, from an evil conscience, we draw near unto Christ in full assurance of Faith, as you heard even now out of *Heb.* 10:22. and Christ in sprinkling many nations applied to them the whole efficacy of his Death, *Isa.* 52:15. And the Apostle setteth forth the faithful of the New Testament, to have come to the right fruition of the riches, of gracious, and glorious Privileges of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, in that we are come to the blood of sprinkling, *Heb.* 12:34. and *Peter* also setteth, forth the full benefit of our election, in being chosen (as the original words run) to the obedience and sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus, *1 Pet.* 1:1. If therefore being sprinkled with the blood of Christ, we have full fellowship with Christ in his Death, surely the sprinkling of the person baptized with water in Baptism, doth fully and lively resemble the sprinkling and pouring out of the blood of Christ upon him. And in his lying under the water poured and sprinkled upon him, thereby is plainly shewn forth his fellowship with Christ in his Burial. And in his arising from under the water, is in like sort held forth his fellowship with Christ in his Resurrection.

CHAP. XXII.

Silvester. WHAT say you then to the fourth Exception, against the Baptism received in *England*, taken from the false end for which it is Administered, to wit, for the Regeneration of the present Infants? And it plainly seemeth no otherwise to me by the prayers and Collects which are appointed to be read in the “book of the Common Prayer before, and after Baptism. For “before Baptism they pray, that the Infants coming to this “holy Baptism, might receive remission of sins by spiritual Re-“generation. And after Baptism, the Minister is appointed to “give thanks upon this ground, that seeing these children are Re-“generate and grafted into the body of Christ’s Congregati-“on &c.

Silvester. For Answer, take these two things, and either of them will avoid your exception.

First, That the Church of *England* doth not administer Baptism for this end, to work Regeneration.

Secondly, That though it should aim at such an end, yet that would not make the Baptism false.

For the first, The Church of *England* doth professedly teach the contrary Doctrine, not only in their Pulpits, but in Books allowed by public authority, That the Sacraments doth not beget Faith, nor Regeneration, *ex opera operato*, but they are signs and seals of both. Neither do the public prayers of the Church hold forth their judgement otherwise. But as in judgement they do believe, that God by Covenant promiseth to pour clean water upon us, and upon our seed, *Ezek.* 36:25. *Isa.* 44:3. and that he sealeth the Covenant and promise by Baptism: So before Baptism they pray him to accomplish this Promise according to his Covenant, which God is about to confirm by that seal. And after Baptism they taking God’s Word and Seal as a Pledge and assurance of the thing already done, which will indeed in due time be done according to the true intent and meaning of God’s Word and Seal, (that is, to the elect seed absolutely, to the natural seed sufficiently to leave them thanks for it, as done already. When *Israel* heard their redemption out of *Egypt*, and saw the signs which *Moses* wrought for the confirmation of it, they be-

lied and bowed their heads and worshipped, as if they had seen the work already wrought, which they saw only in the promise and in the sign, *Exod.* 4:30, 31. When *Gideon* had received the promise of deliverance from the *Midianites*, and saw the same confirmed by a sign (though it were but by a dream) he worshipped God with praise and thanksgiving; as if the deliverance had been already wrought, *Judges* 7:13, 14, 15. I need not apply it.

For the Second, Though the Church of *England* had such a corrupt and false end in their Baptism (which they have not) as to administer the same for the working of Regeneration: yet that would not make it a false Baptism. The Nature and virtue of the Sacrament doth not depend upon the intention of the Minister. The Jewish Teachers in the time of Christ, and of his Apostles had a corrupt and false end in Administering Circumcision, to wit, as necessary to Justification and Salvation, *Act.* 15. yet that misbelief or unbelief of man did not evacuate the Faith of God, nor the truth of his Ordinance, *Rom.* 3:3. In the Dispensing of any Ordinance of God, a corrupt, or false end may vitiate or evacuate any Ordinance to the Dispenser himself; not so to the receiver; They that preached Christ of envy, leading to add affliction to *Paul's* Bonds, their intent was corrupt and false, and so made their Ministry unprofitable to themselves. Nevertheless *Paul* rejoiced in the preaching of Christ even in such a way, *Phil.* 1: 15, 16, 17, 18. which doubtless be would not have done if the Preaching had been false, and produced only false effects in the people of God.

CHAP. XXI.

Silvester. THE Fifth exception against the Baptism received in *England*, Staken from the false subject (meaning Infants) I am loth to trouble you any more with that, we have had already speech enough for the present about it. But because I meet with a further doubt about it, which stumbleth many, I pray you speak a word "further to it. The true subject of Baptism, is believers: and "though you add, their seed also, yet believers are the principal "subject. But now all the people of *England* being Baptized in "their Infancy, it is now come to pass, that the Baptism of be-

“lievers is utterly abandoned out of *England*. And if all other “Churches did the like (as generally they do, except it be a few “whom the rest do commonly, but falsely call Anabaptists) then “the Baptism of believers would utterly be abandoned out of the “world.

Silvanus. Our answer is ready in two or three words.

First, If Infants themselves be believers (as some of them be, or else all of them be damned, *Mark* 16:16.) then in baptizing all the Infants of the faithful, the Baptism of some believers is continued in them.

Secondly, If all the people of *England* be baptized, and many of them be believers, then supposing (as hath been proved) the Baptism of the seed of believers to be lawful, there is no believer in *England*, nor in any such like Church in the world, that is left unbaptized.

Thirdly, If a believer be not in God’s account baptized himself, till his seed be baptized also, (as hath been shewed above) then abandon the Baptism of the seed of believers (to wit, the Baptism of Infants) out of the world, and abandon the baptism of believers out of the world, neither is there any competent, reason, that should exclude Infants (the seed of believers) from being capable and competent subjects of baptism, as well as their believing Parents.

For first, They are confederates with God (partakers of his Covenant) as well as their parents, I will be (saith God) a God unto thee, and to thy seed.

Secondly, They are Disciples of Christ, Holy, Freeborn, receivers of the Kingdom of God, as hath bene opened above.

Thirdly, There is no Impediment in them to the Grace offered in Baptism, but what by Grace they are capable of the removal thereof.

For first, Their a version from God is Habitual not actual: and therefore the pouring forth of the habit of Grace into them may remove it, which the Holy Ghost is wont to do in the warning of Regeneration, *Titus* 3:5, 6.

Secondly, Their sin was by the fall of their first parents, therefore their restoring may be by the faith of their next parents. God is wont to observe such a proportion, in Captivity, and Redemption; Ye sold your selves for nought, and ye shall be redeemed without

Thirdly, Lest the want of ability to make profession of their faith, should have been taken up for an Impediment of their Baptism, God himself professeth in their behalf, that they are holy, the Disciples of Christ, Partakers of his Covenant, Receivers of his Kingdom.

In a word, therefore, if by all this conference, (that we have had together) it may appear, that the Infants of believers are true and capable Subjects of Baptism; then such as having been baptized in their Infancy, shall afterwards receive another Baptism, they are as well justly as commonly called Anabaptists: that is, such as are rebaptized, when they were once truly baptized before.

CHAP. XXII.

Silvester. I Will reply no more for the present, only this let me say, I find my self by Grace able to believe for my self, but not so well able to believe for my Children.

Silvanus. I deny not, but that is possible, that a Christian man may believe some promises, when he cannot so readily believe others.

But first believe it, it is a sin to us, not to believe all the gracious promises which the Lord maketh to us *Zacharias* could not believe that he should have a son, no not when a son was promised him; but yet the Lord did not fail to perform his promise and chastened him for that unbelief, *Luke 1:18, 19, 20.*

Secondly, The former leaving of your judgement against the Baptism of your seed, is such a killing sin to the life of the Covenant (as much as in you lieth) that till you do unfeignedly repent of it, the Lord may justly leave you to straitness of heart, and unbelief in the promise for your child.

Thirdly, Notwithstanding the straitness of your heart and Faith towards your child, yet if you submit yourself and child unto the Lord, and to his Covenant and to the seal thereof, the Lord knoweth how to perform his promises with us, and our children, not only above what we can believe, but above all that we can ask or think. *Ephes. 3:10.*

Fourthly, Remember you had a faithful Father, and gracious Mother, whom God did enable to believe for themselves, and for their children to many Generations. God is not wanting to respect children for the Covenant of their Fore-fathers, when their next Fathers may be straitened towards them, *Rom. 11:28.*

Fifthly, Remember also, that *Sarah*, though she believed not the promise of God for a child at the first, but laughed at it (*Gen.* 18:12, 13, 14.) yet afterwards, by meditation upon the promise, and upon the faithfulness and power of him, that made it, she at length received strength both of faith to believe the promise, and of body to conceive seed, because she judged him faithful who had promised, *Heb.* 11:11. Follow her Godly example, meditate on all the gracious promises have bene alleged, and such other grounds of Faith in this point, which have been (by the help of Christ) propounded to you: and who knoweth, but you may receive of Christ strength of Faith, to believe as for yourself, so for your child, and be ready to offer it up (as your faithful parents offered you) to the Lord, and to his Covenant, and to the seal thereof? That so God may bring upon you, and upon yours, all the good that he hath promised to them that love him, and keep his Ordinances: and may prevent and keep of those fruits of his wrath and jealousy, wherewith he is wont to visit the sins of the Fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth Generation. For the Lord even our God, is a jealous God, a consuming Fire.

Consider what I say, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.

FINIS.